SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE FIELD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

THE annual report of Stephen C. Simms, director of the Field Museum of Natural History, has been issued. The continued financial difficulties which confront the museum as a result of depression are emphasized in Mr. Simms's introductory remarks to a description of the work carried out in 1934. He writes:

The budget adopted was again substantially reduced, and no expeditions or purchases of collections were provided for except where made possible by contributions for specific new research during the year. As anticipated, income from endowments and tax collections was less than in 1933; income from contributions was very much smaller; and, while the downward trend in income from memberships was greatly retarded, there was nevertheless a reduction of receipts from that source. Revenues from admissions and sundry receipts, which in 1933 were far above average, decreased in 1934 as a natural result of the smaller number of visitors, especially those from out of town, to the Century of Progress exposition in its second year. By rigid economies the museum succeeded in keeping actual expenditures well within budget appropriations and was enabled without reduction in salaries or personnel to cover its essential operating expenses, and to reduce notes payable caused by previous years' deficits from $105,000 to $95,000.

Donations of funds received by the museum in 1934 include gifts from Marshall Field, of New York and Chicago, of $26,140; from Mrs. Oscar Straus, of New York, of $11,105, and from Mrs. James Nelson Raymond, Chicago, of $4,000. A bequest of $100,000, subject to the life interest of Frederick R. Babcock, is provided in the will of the late Mrs. Abby K. Babcock. Income of $2,500 was received from a bequest of the late Mrs. Augusta N. Rosenwald. Large amounts of material for addition to the exhibition and reference collections, and for the library, were received from friends of the museum.

On the museum's attendance in 1934, Mr. Simms reports in part as follows:

Insofar as those activities directly connected with serving the public are concerned, the museum, despite the severe economies which had to be instituted, managed to maintain its customary standards. The number of visitors at the museum was 1,991,469, which, while it represents a large decline from the attendance of 3,269,390 recorded in 1933, was nevertheless the second highest year's attendance in the history of the institution. The decline from the 1933 peak was a natural and expected consequence of the smaller attendance experienced by A Century of Progress.

Taking into consideration extra-mural activities, the museum's educational influence was carried directly to a total of more than 2,650,000 persons during 1934. This figure includes the visitors received in the building itself, together with approximately 662,000 persons (chiefly children) reached by the outside work conducted by the institution through the James Nelson and Anna Louise Raymond Foundation for Public School and Children's Lectures, and the Department of the N. W. Harris Public School Extension. Only 99,553 persons, or approximately 5 per cent. of the total attendance, paid the 25-cent admission fee.

Lectures in the schools and motion picture programs at the museum, provided by the Raymond Foundation, reached 213,579 children. The traveling natural history exhibits of the Harris Extension were circulated to more than 400 schools where approximately 500,000 children saw them daily.

The report contains detailed accounts of the many new exhibits added during the year, of research conducted by the departments of anthropology, botany, geology and zoology, of the several expeditions which were made possible by special contributions and of all other activities of the museum.

SOIL EROSION CONTROL

To unify all soil erosion control activities of the federal government, Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace has issued an order establishing a separate soil erosion unit in the Department of Agriculture. Under Secretary R. G. Tugwell has undertaken the task of consolidating the various departmental units working in this field. The base of the new organization will be the Soil Erosion Service, which has just been transferred to the Department of Agriculture from the Department of the Interior; this transfer was authorized by the Public Works Board at the request of the President.

All investigational, service and control projects on erosion, heretofore under the supervision of the Bureaus of Chemistry and Soils, Agricultural Engineering and Plant Industry and the supervision of CCC erosion-control work now under direction of the Forest Service, were transferred on April 1 to the new unit.

H. H. Bennett will head the consolidated activities. Mr. Bennett has been in charge of the Soil Erosion Service since it was organized, and previously was in charge of soil erosion investigations of the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils.

Research into the soil, plant and engineering aspects of the cause and methods of controlling erosion will continue to be conducted at ten field stations. Using the facts developed by this research, large-scale demonstrations will be continued in various parts of the country.

The recent dust storms, as well as the severe dust storm of May, 1934, forcibly called the attention of city and country people to the seriousness of wind

erosion. Water erosion, of course, is much more widespread and destructive because it is a continuous process in many parts of the country. More than 50 million acres of land in the United States has been destroyed for crop production by erosion. Another 125,000,000 acres of land new in crops has lost all or most of its topsoil. About 100,000,000 acres is rapidly approaching that condition. At least three fourths of the farm land of the United States used for clean-tilled crops is subject in varying degrees to erosion, the damage from which to farm lands, roads, reservoirs, irrigation ditches and valley lands is estimated at more than $400,000,000 a year. Studies in Oklahoma show that cultivated fields lost 84 per cent. more rainfall and 667 times more soil than similar fields that were under a grass sod.

The Bureau of Agricultural Engineering has studied control of erosion by artificial structures such as terraces, tile drains, check dams and soil-saving dams. The field research of the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils and Agricultural Engineering has been conducted at field stations at Bethany, Mo.; Guthrie, Okla.; Hays, Kans.; LaCrosse, Wis.; Clarinda, Iowa; Pullman, Wash.; Statesville, N. C.; Temple, Tex.; Tyler, Tex., and Zanesville, Ohio. The Bureau of Plant Industry, in addition to introducing and selecting plants best suited for use in soil erosion control work, recently established large-scale soil erosion nurseries on which will be grown various plants for use in control projects. These nurseries have been financed with emergency funds.

Research primarily discovers how erosion may be controlled most effectively and economically. These results are translated into action by farmers themselves and by the Soil Erosion Service which is demonstrating effective methods of land conservation in forty erosion control projects in 32 states. Ranging in size from 50,000 to 16,000,000 acres each, these projects cover representative watersheds in the major agricultural sections where erosion has become a critical problem.

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

THE sixty-fourth annual meeting of the American Public Health Association will be held in Milwaukee, from October 7 to 10. The society has a membership of 4,500 professional public health workers whose annual sessions review developments in health protection and promotion and outline plans and policies for future advances.

Several related organizations have announced that they will meet simultaneously with the association at Milwaukee. They are: American Association of School Physicians, International Association of Dairy and Milk Inspectors, Conference of State Sanitary Engineers, International Society of Medical Officers of Health, Association of Dairy, Food and Drug Officials, Conference of Wisconsin Health Officers, Conference of State Laboratory Directors and Association of Women in Public Health.

The fourth Health Education Institute sponsored and conducted by the association will be held on October 4, 5 and 6, prior to the opening of the several conventions. The subject will be "Health Education in Small Cities and Rural Communities."

A Health Exhibit including in its scope commercial, scientific and educational displays will be conducted as usual at Milwaukee.

Plans for the preliminary program include special sessions on The Rôle of a Health Department in a Program of Social Security, Mental Hygiene, Professional Education, Veterinary Public Health, Diphtheria Immunization, and a session on the history and achievements of the Committee on Administrative Practise, celebrating its fifteenth anniversary.

The association is divided into ten sections—Health Officers, Laboratory, Vital Statistics, Public Health Engineering, Industrial Hygiene, Food and Nutrition, Child Hygiene, Public Health Education, Public Health Nursing, Epidemiology. Subjects to be discussed include pneumonia, trench mouth, syphilis, measles, outdoor bathing places, scarlet fever, milk sanitation, water sanitation, foods, health education, and many other topics representing the responsibilities of health authorities.

The chairman of the Local Committee on Arrangements is Dr. John P. Koehler, Health Officer of Milwaukee. Information in regard to the congress can be obtained from the American Public Health Association at 50 West 50th Street, New York City.

THE LOS ANGELES MEETING OF THE PACIFIC DIVISION OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

A PRELIMINARY announcement of the forthcoming meeting of the Pacific Division, to be held at the University of California at Los Angeles during the week of June 24, 1935, will be distributed to members early in April.

Two of the principal addresses to be presented during the meeting will be given by Professor Bailey Willis, president of the Pacific Division, and Fred. E. Wright, of the Geophysical Laboratory, Washington, D. C. The subject of Professor Willis's address will be "The Living Globe," while that by Mr. Wright will be on "The Surface of the Moon."

The meetings will open formally on the morning of Tuesday, June 25, with a general symposium on "The