

## SOCIETIES AND MEETINGS

## FORMATION OF AN ACADEMY OF MEDICINE IN WASHINGTON, D. C.

ON April 28, 1936, the Academy of Medicine of Washington, D. C., was organized and had its initial meeting. Officers elected were: *President*, Dr. William A. White; *vice-president*, Dr. Carl Voegtlin; *treasurer*, Dr. William C. White; *secretary*, Dr. Errett C. Albritton; *directors*, Drs. Aleš Hrdlička, Sterling Ruffin, Lyman J. Briggs, Earl B. McKinley and Matthew W. Perry. The academy membership is limited to 60 ordinary resident members and 30 associate and non-resident members.

As stated in its constitution, the academy has been organized "for the advancement of the science of medicine and to promote the mutual exchange of knowledge between medical and other scientific groups."

In the formation of medical groups two opposite trends may be noticed, the main one toward a greater differentiation of function, the other toward a reunification of interests. The first is a reflection of the process of cleavage and development, still going on, by which an amazing number of sciences has been derived from the originally undifferentiated profession of the healing of the sick; the other represents an effort to overcome the disadvantage of divergence that accompanies differentiation.

Two large groups in particular have been carried apart in this process, the clinicians and clinical investigators, and the laboratory investigators in medicine. Two others may be named that have little professional contact with these, workers in public health and men in the sciences allied to medicine. In each of these groups professional societies or sections of societies have grown up with ever more precisely limited objectives. Work is so active at every frontier that only an occasional guest speaker from one field can bring word to those in another that permits direct interchange of ideas between them.

The organization of the Academy of Medicine of Washington is one of the infrequent instances of a movement counter to this general trend. It draws its membership from all medical and associated scientific groups, and will serve as a forum for exchange of ideas and discussion of problems of general interest in medical science.

To one who is aware of the remarkable diversity of medical and related fields represented in Washington, an organization of this sort would seem long overdue. In addition to the various clinical fields, those of pharmacology, nutrition, chemistry, medical zoology, immunity and others are represented in the staffs of the National Institute of Health and the Beltsville Research Center; anthropology is represented in the

staff of the National Museum; research in physics and physical chemistry is in progress at the Bureau of Standards; laboratories of the various preclinical medical sciences are found in the medical schools of the city, and in other organizations such fields are represented as army and navy medical administration, public health administration, epidemiology, parasitology, experimental medicine, national medical library administration, medical sociology, entomology, mycology and others.

The situation in Washington is uniquely favorable for the development of a forum in which problems of general interest in medical science may be examined from all angles. In the presence of an opportunity so unusual it is believed that the academy has acted wisely in giving no special emphasis to the medical degree as compared with the doctor's degree in one of the medical or allied sciences, and that in this sense its membership is non-medical as well as medical.

E. C. A.

## THE NEW ORLEANS ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

THE New Orleans Academy of Sciences held its eighty-third annual meeting on March 20 and 21, at Tulane University, New Orleans, with a formal registration of 226 and a gross attendance, at all sessions, lectures and demonstrations, of approximately 700. Thirty-eight papers were presented at the technical sessions on Friday afternoon, distributed as follows: Sections A and E (Physics, Engineering, Mathematics, Astronomy, and Geology), 8; Section B (Chemistry), 7; Section C (Biological Sciences), 9; Section D (Medical Sciences), 8; Section F (Social Sciences), 6.

The annual public address, delivered this year by Dr. Otis W. Caldwell, general secretary of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, on "Some Studies Regarding Popular Notions and Modern Science," has already been noted in *SCIENCE* for April 3. Dr. Caldwell also spoke on "The Junior Academy Movement" at the Saturday morning symposium on stimulation of scientific interest at the high-school level. Six local speakers, three of them sponsors of science clubs in New Orleans high schools, also contributed to this symposium.

In connection with the junior academy movement, the department of physics at Tulane University provided a demonstration lecture by Dr. Walter C. Bosch, especially for science students from the public, parochial and private secondary schools. His subject was "The Magic of Modern Science," and the chief features of the demonstration were the astonishing effects, such as visible sounds and audible light, obtainable by appropriate manipulation of the phenomena of ionization. This is the second year such a demonstration

has been given for a junior audience, and this feature of the annual meeting has proved so popular that admission has had to be by cards distributed through the science departments of the schools, to keep the audience within the limits of size made necessary by the nature of the display itself.

An innovation this year in connection with the Junior Academy movement was an exhibit of models, demonstrations, collections and dissertations by members of the high-school science clubs. This was kept open throughout the two days of the annual meeting.

High in importance among the items of business transacted at the annual meeting was the election of Dr. Robert Glenk, formerly curator of the Louisiana State Museum, and Dr. Isaac Monroe Cline, formerly in charge of the New Orleans office of the Weather Bureau, to the grade of honorary member. Honorary membership in the New Orleans Academy is not an honor conferred upon persons residing at a distance, but a special form of life membership bestowed upon active members by vote of the entire academy, in recognition of their services to science and to the academy itself. Both Dr. Glenk and Dr. Cline are

past presidents of the academy and have for many years been outstanding members of the group of scientists residing in New Orleans. Honorary members previously elected are Dr. Rudolph Matas and Dr. Brandt Van Blarcom Dixon.

Fifty-six active members and twenty-two associates were elected in connection with the annual meeting, bringing the total membership of the academy to 221, as follows: Honorary, 4; life, 1; active, 185; associate, 31.

The officers elected for 1936-1937 are: *President*, Dr. Ernest Carroll Faust, Tulane University; *Vice-President*, K. A. Maring, S.J., Loyola University; *Secretary*, Philip C. Wakeley, National Forest Service; *Treasurer*, Dr. D. S. Elliott, Tulane University.

Dr. Howard R. Mahorner, recipient of the 1935 grant in aid of research made by the American Association for the Advancement of Science through the New Orleans Academy, reported briefly on his critical checking of hitherto accepted factors resulting in goiter, a study made possible at this time by the grant.

PHILIP C. WAKELEY,  
*Secretary*

## REPORTS

### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RE- SEARCH OF THE AMERICAN PHILO- SOPHICAL SOCIETY<sup>1</sup>

IN view of the fact that three years have passed since the society authorized the establishment of the committee on research and since previous annual reports have not been published, it seems advisable at this time to review the work of these three years and to summarize the results. The charter under which this committee is acting is contained in the following resolution recommended by the committee on policy and adopted by the society at the general meeting, April 20, 1933: "*Resolved*, that a Standing Committee of at least five members representing the several fields of knowledge be appointed by the Council to make recommendations in regard to appropriations for the advancement of knowledge through investigation." On June 14, 1933, the council appointed the following members of this committee: Roland S. Morris, *president*, Edwin G. Conklin, *vice-president*, John A. Miller, *secretary*, President Karl T. Compton, Professor James T. Young. At the same time the council authorized the finance committee to include in the budget the sum of \$50,000 a year for grants in aid of research.

The committee organized with Dr. Conklin as chairman, and early in 1934 adopted a series of general principles and rules defining its purposes and plan

of operation, a blank form of application for grants, and a form of agreement to be entered into by each recipient of a grant. These were printed and submitted to the society at its general meeting in 1934, and they have been in use ever since.

President Compton and Professor Young found it necessary to retire from the committee after nearly two years of faithful and often laborious service, and their places have been taken by Dr. W. F. G. Swann and Secretary William E. Linglebach. Dr. Hugh S. Taylor and Dr. Isaiah Bowman were added to the committee one year ago.

Since its organization the committee has met every two months from October to June, inclusive. Applications and supporting recommendations are manifolded and sent to each member of the committee several days before the stated meeting at which they are to be considered. The members of the committee have taken their duties seriously and in some cases have interviewed the applicants or some of their sponsors in attempting to assess the merits of the applications. Whenever the committee has been in doubt about the merits of a particular application, it has sought and obtained the advice of scholars expert in that field; the committee is deeply indebted to the many persons who have thus aided it.

The total number of applications received and considered by the committee since its organization is 214, and the total amount requested was nearly \$400,000. Somewhat more than 100 applications were

<sup>1</sup> Presented at the general meeting of the society April 24, 1936.