

Those sciences advanced most rapidly for which the objective approach was most easy—in the fields remote from personal prejudice. The success of the method made its application possible in fields lying closer and closer to those in which man's rationality was more highly conditioned. Each success should give increased impetus to the process of the rationalization of life—to the application of the objective attitude and scientific approach in all the affairs of living. An especial responsibility for the furtherance of this process surely lies with the scientists who should so thoroughly appreciate its value.

To-day wide publicity is given to new scientific discoveries and theories. There is no lack of public interest in the results of scientific research. I wish there were a corresponding desire to utilize to the full the simple lesson for life that the success of the scientific method teaches and a compelling belief that the world could be made a different place if this were done.

The Society of the Sigma Xi is a brotherhood of those living the life of science. Let us imagine a new organization—a brotherhood, let us say Alpha Omega—dedicated to the scientific way of living. The possession of special scientific techniques is not necessary for membership in Alpha Omega. Its members believe in finding facts, they know of the stores of accurate knowledge that have been collected by the objective search for truth in all fields of human interest. Some of them they can use themselves—for others they must rely on their fraternity brothers who have special knowledge. The password of Alpha Omega is the question, "How do you know it?" followed by the question, "What of it?"

The Alpha Omegas are not universally popular, for they take an aggressive attitude to some of the foibles of their friends. They do this because they believe that little things add together to make large things, and that mental attitudes are contagious. They continually see small and apparently harmless examples of belief and action that remind them of the burning of witches, of lynchings, of cruel intolerance, of the KKK, of the Black Legion, of mass murder in the name of patriotism. And so they do not keep their passwords secret—they use them every day. They have many lighter moments that serve to keep them in practice. An Alpha Omega who plays bridge has many opportunities for this, and since one thing leads to another, may even gain a convert or two. His

partners give up sitting on their handkerchiefs to change their luck. They know the difference between the statements that "the cards are running north and south" from "the cards have been running north and south." They learn to derive as much pleasure from exhibiting indifference as to which deck they play with as they used to gain in winning the cut and choosing the "lucky" deck. Fewer of his acquaintances believe that they are "poor holders" of cards, or that they always have been, and are to be, in general, unlucky, but this progress was probably gained at a cost and only after some discourteous remarks on mental attitudes to life. After some time the friends of our Alpha Omega begin to see some system in his peculiar conduct in what they judge to be small matters, and if so the heaven is working. They no longer recite as a fact the tale of a man's hair turning white over night, but instead have learned something regarding credulity and a bit of physiology. The universal belief in the old-fashioned winter has been replaced by an appreciation of the reasons for such beliefs and perhaps a little interest in climatology. The family legend of Uncle George, then a thousand miles away, appearing to Aunt Susie is no longer heard. Perhaps an interest in the ability to describe an occurrence as it actually happened and to repeat this many times with fidelity is gaining ground, and may make some headway against the interest in dramatizing an account. While our Alpha Omega hopes to keep his own emotional reactions under control, he lets himself go when he meets the vicious cruelty of the male or female gossip. "How do you know it?" and "Well, how does *he* know it?" is a simple and effective weapon for decency and sanity. Unless there be shown some respect for the characters of our political leaders, we can hardly expect their ranks to be recruited from decent men. Our Alpha Omega has a hard time during a political campaign.

We can not be true to the spirit of science in our laboratories and false to it in our lives. We can not have faith in the rationalization of life without seeking to promote it. In that effort we must not overlook the obvious because it is so simple. We can not follow the example of the common council, which, by motion, resolved: "That the Fourth Ward Marsh be, and it hereby is, drained."

Members of Sigma Xi and friends, I invite you to membership in the Society of Alpha Omega.

OBITUARY

FRANKLIN DAVIS BARKER

In the death of Professor Franklin Davis Barker, chairman of the department of zoology of Northwest-

ern University, on July 10, at the age of fifty-eight years, the profession of zoology and more especially the field of parasitology have sustained a loss. Pro-

Professor Barker was born in Ottawa, Kansas, on September 16, 1877; he received his A.B. degree from Ottawa University in 1898 and two years later the same institution conferred on him the master's degree. In 1910 the University of Nebraska conferred on him the degree of doctor of philosophy. At various times during his early career he was a fellow at Harvard University and also an assistant at the University of Chicago. Because of his interest in parasitology, he spent some time in Bermuda and the Harpswell Laboratories pursuing his studies. Professor Barker's papers were characterized by meticulous care and rigid adherence to the criteria of sound work. For many years he was an associate editor of the *Journal of Parasitology*.

For many years Professor Barker served on the faculty of the University of Nebraska, where he devoted his exceptional executive ability to the directing of premedical studies. He was called to Northwestern University in 1926. His career there has been marked by a sound and extensive growth of the influence of the department, both on and off the campus. Always keenly interested in students, his patience in assisting them to solve their problems and his sound advice in shaping their careers have given him an influence over young people that will persist.

In his personal attributes, Professor Barker was genial, sympathetic, but maintained a reserve which commanded the respect of his students. His colleagues at Northwestern University wish by this note to record their sense of loss.

CORRESPONDENT

JOHN J. SCHOONHOVEN

JOHN J. SCHOONHOVEN, fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, instructor in education at New York University, died after a week's illness in New York on June 27. In his passing New York University lost one of its most beloved instructors in the field of science. He conducted courses in bio-chemistry, micro-biology and in physiology in its special application to the problem of physical education. In the summer graduate school on Lake Sebago he taught not only science but courses in general nature study.

He was a lecturer on scientific subjects and a mem-

ber of the Royal Microscopical Society of London. He had done special research in parasitology.

He held membership in many scientific societies and for years was president of the department of zoology of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, of which institution he was a fellow and a member of the council.

He was a scholar and a gentleman in the full meaning of these now old-fashioned terms. He was keen, alert and full of the joy of living. He leaves a large circle of friends who loved and admired him for his sincerity, his charm, his keen sense of humor as well as the wide range of his scholarly interests. Among these are many young men who are already achieving eminence in their respective fields who were inspired and helped by his understanding and vision.

He is survived by his widow, formerly an instructor in the University of Illinois and long associated with the Brooklyn Children's Museum.

S. N. L.

RECENT DEATHS

DR. HENRY SEWALL, emeritus professor of physiology at the School of Medicine of the University of Colorado in Denver, died on July 8, at the age of eighty-one years.

DR. GEORGE C. SHAAD, dean of engineering and architecture at the University of Kansas, died on July 9 at the age of fifty-eight years.

DR. RUFUS B. WEAVER, professor emeritus of anatomy at Hahnemann Medical College, of the faculty of which he had been a member for sixty-one years, died on July 15, at the age of ninety-five years.

DR. WILLIAM JAMES STEWART LOCKYER, astronomer and director of the Norman Lockyer Observatory on Salcombe Hill in Devonshire, England, died on July 17. He was sixty-eight years old.

SIR WILLIAM HEATON HAMER, formerly medical officer of health and school medical officer for the Administrative County of London, died on July 7, at the age of seventy-four years.

DR. A. P. KARPINSKY, geologist and paleontologist, since 1916 president of the Soviet Russia Academy of Sciences, died on July 14, at the age of ninety years.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

A NEW BRITISH SURVEY SHIP

ACCORDING to the London *Times* a non-ferrous survey ship, the *Research*, is being fitted out and will probably start work in the Southern Indian Ocean. The program mapped out for the ship includes investigation of atmospheric electricity, determination of

the earth's magnetism at sea, meteorology, deep-sea sounding by the latest Admiralty pattern deep-water echo-sounding machine and, possibly, marine biology. For these purposes she is to be fitted with a wide range of special instruments which embody the latest results of scientific research.