

SOCIETIES AND MEETINGS

THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

THE annual general meeting of the American Philosophical Society was held in its historic building on Independence Square, Philadelphia, on April 21, 22 and 23. Members and invited guests to the number of about two hundred were present at the various sessions which began with the scientific program on Thursday morning and ended with the annual dinner on Saturday night. Thirty-eight papers were presented in four sessions, of which eight were in the field of the physical sciences, fifteen in the geological and biological sciences, five in the historical and social sciences and six in the humanities. The general character of the society tends to make the presentation of papers less technical and more generally intelligible than is the case in the more highly specialized societies. Speakers frequently say that they find this feature of the Philosophical Society's meetings a stimulating and clarifying influence, and scholars in many different fields are delighted to learn at first-hand from research students the significant results of their investigations.

Among some of the outstanding astronomical reports given at this meeting should be mentioned the search for trans-Neptunian planets, by V. M. Slipher, of the Lowell Observatory, Flagstaff, Arizona, and a thorough study of the visible features of the planets by his brother, Earl C. Slipher; a Survey of Two Metagalactic Clouds, by Harlow Shapley, of the Harvard Observatory; a continuous motion-picture record of solar phenomena secured with the spectroheliograph, by Robert R. McMath, at the McMath-Hulbert Observatory of the University of Michigan, and the Penrose Memorial Lecture, by S. A. Mitchell, of the McCormick Observatory, of the University of Virginia, on the Eclipse Expedition of 1937.

In physics, Karl K. Darrow, of the Bell Telephone Laboratories, described his important work on the neutral particles, and Arthur J. Dempster, of the University of Chicago, presented the results of his work on the "Isotopic Constitution of the Rare Earth Elements." On recommendation of the research committee and of the council, the society awarded to Professor Dempster the John F. Lewis Prize for 1937 for his outstanding discoveries in mass spectroscopy which were reported at previous meetings of the society and published in its *Proceedings*.

The biological papers were numerous and important and only a few of them can be mentioned specifically. Herbert Fox, of the University of Pennsylvania, presented the results of an extensive research on the occurrence of chronic arthritis in wild mammals; Aleš Hrdlička, of the U. S. National Museum, presented further evidence of the normal growth of the head during adult life; Ralph E. Cleland, of Goucher College, who received the Lewis Prize last year, reported on his newer work on the chromosomes

of the evening primrose, *Onagra*; Gerhard Fankhauser, of Princeton University, discussed a new and valuable way of demonstrating that supernumerary chromosomes occur in certain vertebrates; Edwin G. Conklin reported that by means of low temperatures the vortical movement of the protoplasm in eggs and embryonic cells could be stopped or disorientated while other processes remained normal; Charles R. Stockard discussed the relations of genetic and endocrine factors in instinctive and reflex behavior; Alexis Carrel described the culture of whole organs in the Lindbergh apparatus; E. Newton Harvey, A. E. Loomis and Garret Hobart demonstrated with moving pictures the localization of electric potentials over the human brain, by means of a new form of apparatus; Davenport Hooker described the origin of the grasping movement in the human embryo.

Among the historical and economic papers especial mention should be made of one by Albert T. Volwiler, of Ohio University, upon his study of the hitherto unpublished correspondence and memoranda of President Benjamin Harrison and his Secretary of State, James G. Blaine; one by Edward S. Corwin, of Princeton University, on the relations of Secretary Stanton and President Johnson, and another by William E. Lingelbach, of the University of Pennsylvania, on *Belgian Neutrality vs. Alliances*. S. W. Boggs, geographer of the U. S. State Department, reported upon the map of Latin America as established by treaties, and William H. Hobbs, of the University of Michigan, presented the results of his extensive search of the records of early discoveries of Antarctica, proving that American whalers discovered a portion of that continent, which was named for its discoverer "Palmer's Land," several years before it was seen by any other explorers; John C. Merriam, president of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, described the historical research and preservation of historical remains at St. Augustine, Florida, which is being carried on by the Carnegie Institution.

Several important papers in anthropology, archeology, philology and literary history were given on Saturday morning. Among these should be mentioned: an ethnic map of Australia, showing the locations of some 5,000 tribes, by D. Sutherland Davidson, of the University of Pennsylvania; an account of English antecedents in Virginia architecture, by Thomas T. Waterman, architect of the U. S. Government; a paper on the documentary value of ancient vases, by George H. Chase, of Harvard, and one on archeology and astronomy, by William Bell Dinsmoor, of Columbia University; Franklin Edgerton, of Yale, in a paper on etymology and interpretation maintained that "one must always interpret a word in accordance with its conventional meaning," rather than its etymology; Gilbert Chinard, of Princeton, pointed out the great

influence of classical Greek and Latin histories and orators on the men who shaped American institutions, and in particular Polybius seems to have been drawn upon; J. S. P. Tatlock, of the University of California, pointed out some of the important motives for the writing of the "Historia Regum Britanniae," by Geoffrey of Monmouth.

At the executive session of the society on Friday morning, the following officers were elected for the ensuing year:

President: Roland S. Morris.

Vice-presidents: Edwin G. Conklin, Robert A. Millikan, Cyrus Adler.

Secretaries: John A. Miller, William E. Lingelbach.

Curator: Albert P. Brubaker.

Treasurer: Fidelity-Philadelphia Trust Company.

Executive Officer: Edwin G. Conklin.

And the following were elected councilors to serve until 1941:

William F. Albright, Arthur L. Day, Frank A. Fetter, Harold C. Urey.

Twenty-five residents of the United States were elected as resident members and five foreign members were elected, *viz.*:

Members

Class I—Mathematical and Physical Sciences

Resident

Carl D. Anderson, Pasadena, Calif.
William David Coolidge, Schenectady, N. Y.
Frederick Gardner Cottrell, Washington, D. C.
Frank Baldwin Jewett, Brantwood, N. J.
Frederick George Keyes, Cambridge, Mass.
John von Neumann, Princeton, N. J.

Foreign

Paul Adrien Maurice Dirac, Cambridge, England.

Class II—Geological and Biological Sciences

Resident

Karl Spencer Lashley, Cambridge, Mass.
John Howard Northrop, Princeton, N. J.
Francis Bertody Sumner, La Jolla, Calif.
David Hilt Tennent, Bryn Mawr, Pa.
Donald Dexter Van Slyke, New York, N. Y.
George Hoyt Whipple, Rochester, N. Y.

Foreign

Edgar Douglas Adrian, Cambridge, England.
Archibald Vivian Hill, London, England.

Class III—Social Sciences

Resident

James Truslow Adams, New York, N. Y.
Nicholas Murray Butler, New York, N. Y.
Edward Hopkinson, Jr., Philadelphia, Pa.
Charles Howard McIlwain, Belmont, Mass.
Harold Glenn Moulton, Washington, D. C.
Oliver Mitchell Wentworth Sprague, Boston, Mass.
Joseph Henry Willits, Philadelphia, Pa.

Foreign

Charles Rist, Versailles, France.

Harold William Vazelle Temperley, Cambridge, England.

Class IV—Humanities

Resident

Campbell Bonner, Ann Arbor, Mich.
C. F. Tucker Brooke, New Haven, Conn.
Frederick Paul Keppel, Montrose, N. Y.
Henry Carrington Lancaster, Baltimore, Md.
Benjamin Dean Meritt, Princeton, N. J.
Charles Rufus Morey, Princeton, N. J.

The social features of the general meetings of the American Philosophical Society are especially pleasant. As in previous years, out-of-town members and speakers at the sessions were guests of the society at the Benjamin Franklin Hotel, which is only four squares distant from the hall and luncheon was served in the hall each day of the meeting. On Thursday evening the council of the society was entertained at the hospitable home of Mr. and Mrs. J. Bertram Lippincott. Following dinner the annual meeting of the council was held. On Friday evening a special dinner for the guests of the society at the Benjamin Franklin Hotel was served before the Penrose Memorial Lecture. Following the lecture there was a general reception. On Saturday evening the annual dinner of the society was held in the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel and some two hundred members and invited guests were present. After dinner addresses were given by Professor George H. Parker, of Harvard; Hu Shih, the distinguished Chinese philosopher, and Professor J. S. P. Tatlock, of the University of California.

On Saturday afternoon the members and their guests were taken on an excursion up through the beautiful Wissahickon Valley to the country residence of Mr. John Story Jenks, where they were shown the notably beautiful plantings, trees, shrubs and flowers. They were then taken to the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania which is in the immediate vicinity and where there are collected a very representative assemblage of all the trees and shrubs that will grow in this climate. This feature of the annual meeting was an unusual one and was highly appreciated by all who took part in it.

These social features of the general meetings of the American Philosophical Society are notable and in some respects unique. The society has always been known for its hospitality and for the spirit of comradeship among scholars in all fields of learning. The sessions in the historic hall of the society on Independence Square are held amid memorials of the founders of the Republic and the great scholars of this and other lands and in an atmosphere of dignity and charm that is unexcelled in this country.

DR. E. G. CONKLIN