SOCIETIES AND MEETINGS

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOUTHWESTERN DIVISION OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

THE Southwestern Division of the American Association for the Advancement of Science held its nineteenth annual meeting on May 2, 3, 4 and 5, in the extreme southeastern portion of its territory at Alpine, Texas, and the McDonald Observatory on Mt. Locke, forty miles from Alpine. Dates for the meetings were a week later than usual in order to make them coincide with the dedication of the new observatory. Inspection of the observatory, on May 2, and the dedication exercises, on May 5, were the unusual and distinctive features of the program. The attendance of the visiting astronomers who came to Alpine for the dedication ceremonies greatly enriched the meetings of the division. The delivery of the tenth John Wesley Powell Lecture by Professor Arthur H. Compton, on the topic "Physics Views the Future," was an outstanding event. The presidential address delivered by Dr. E. F. Carpenter, on the topic "The Revolt Against Thought," featured another evening of the sessions.

The attendance at the meetings was very good, particularly of those members who live in West Texas. The host institution, the Sul Ross State Teachers College, provided every facility possible for the comfort and entertainment of the visitors as well as presentation of the scientific features of the meetings. The exhibits at the museum of the West Texas Historical Society deserve special mention. In the business sessions the division voted to meet next year at Tucson, Arizona, with the University of Arizona, the Desert Laboratory and the Southwestern Forest and Range Experiment Station serving as host organizations. The meeting place for 1941 will be Lubbock, Texas, and for 1942, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

Officers of the division for the coming year, including those newly elected at the sessions, are as follows: *President,* J. R. Eyer, New Mexico State College, and *Vice-President,* C. V. Newsom, University of New Mexico. Dr. Emil Haury, University of Arizona, was elected as *Secretary-Treasurer* for the customary indefinite term of office. Members of the executive committee are as follows: E. F. Carpenter, University of Arizona, and S. B. Talmage, New Mexico School of Mines, who will serve until 1942; F. W. Sparks, Texas Technological College, and F. E. E. Germann, University of Colorado, who will serve until 1941; D. S. Robbins, State College, New Mexico, who will serve until 1940.

Section officers are as follows: Biological Section—*Chairman,* D. M. Crooks, University of Arizona, and *Secretary,* A. L. Hershey, New Mexico State College. Mathematics Section—*Chairman,* J. W. Branson, New Mexico State College; *Vice-Chairman,* E. J. Purcell, University of Arizona; *Secretary,* H. D. Larson, University of New Mexico. Social Science Section—*Chairman,* Emil Haury, University of Arizona; *Secretary,* Gordon C. Baldwin, University of Arizona. Physical Sciences Section—*Chairman,* C. W. Botkin, New Mexico State College; *Secretary,* O. B. Muench, New Mexico Normal University.

VEON C. KIECH,
Secretary

A SYMPOSIUM ON METRIC GEOMETRY

IN ordinary analytic geometry each point of the space is characterized by coordinates (each point of an n-dimensional space by n coordinates), and the distance between any two points is a certain function of their coordinates. At the beginning of this century this concept of space was remarkably generalized by Fréchet. He did not make any assumption concerning the nature of points. Points are simply elements of some set, not necessarily defined by coordinates or in any other particular way. Fréchet merely assumed that with each pair of points a number, called the distance between the two points, is associated. This concept was introduced in order to unite several classical theories into one general theory, an aim similar to that of E. H. Moore's general analysis. Since their introduction much has been learned of the topology of Fréchet's metric spaces, *i.e.,* of their properties of density, connectivity, etc. But only during the last ten years has a systematic theory of the metric properties of these general spaces been developd, *e.g.,* of their convexity properties, their geodesics, etc. Recently L. M. Blumenthal summarized this theory in a book, "Distance Geometry," published in the University of Missouri Studies (Vol. XIII, No. 2).

This metric geometry was the subject of the third annual mathematical symposium held on April 12 and 13 at the University of Notre Dame. In the first meeting on April 12, Dr. L. M. Blumenthal, of the University of Missouri, spoke about the characterization of pseudo-spherical sets with application to determinant theory. A set is called pseudo-spherical if it can not be isometrically imbedded into the sphere though its subsets can. A set which can not be imbedded into the plane, though each subset can, consists of exactly five points, as it can be shown, and is called a pseudo-plane quintuple. Dr. P. M. Pepper, of the University of Notre Dame, presented some recent re-