

WIDER USE FOR ACADEMY OF SCIENCE PUBLICATIONS THROUGH IMPROVED DISTRIBUTION

IN these days of crowded scientific journals the question may well be raised whether papers published by State and local academies of science receive adequate and efficient distribution. Most of these academies are time-honored institutions born in the days when natural historians discoursed on any phase of nature that happened to come to their attention. The journals of the societies were originally of broad scope and stressed the natural science of the State or locality rather than any particular field of knowledge. Much the same tradition continues.

Conditions now are vastly different. Increase in human knowledge and improvement in transportation have shifted scientists to association more by subject than by locality. A paleontologist working in New York, for example, now finds a paleontologic discovery in Alabama more vital to him than a botanical problem in his own county. True, constant contact with developments in other sciences is needed, but broad general articles of the sort appearing in *SCIENCE* more nearly fill this need than do the detailed studies commonly published in academy journals or transactions.

Much of the material published by academies and circulated to members is permanently shelved or even discarded because it pertains to fields in which the recipient has no immediate interest. These same articles, however, would be valued highly by workers in other areas who subscribe only to publications of

their local societies. Printing of articles as separates and requiring the subscriber to indicate the publications wanted can avoid some of the waste, but will not always provide sufficiently wide dissemination of knowledge.

Is it not time for groups of academies, particularly those affiliated with the American Association for the Advancement of Science, to develop means of exchanging publications among their various members? Botanists, in a group of four cooperating academies of similar size and neighboring locations, for example, could receive the botany papers of all four societies unless they had definitely given some other preference. Paleontologists could elect geology or zoology options or some prearranged grouping suitable to their needs. As an alternative all members could select articles totaling a predetermined maximum number of page units—highly illustrated papers perhaps being given a higher page unit rating. In this way a greater proportion of academy of science publications would reach the hands of those who would value and use them, and fewer would be lost on unused shelves or filed in the waste basket. Academy memberships would be increased because of the greater return to the members.

For library use, the complete publications of each academy of science could still be bound and shelved together.

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SOCIETIES AND MEETINGS

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

THE twentieth annual meeting of the Southwestern Division of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and of four associated societies was held at Tucson, Arizona, during the week of April 22, 1940. The associated societies were the clearing house for Southwestern Museums, the Southwestern Section of the Mathematical Association of America, the Southwestern Section of the Society of American Foresters and the Society for American Archeology.

Considering the great distances and the small number of educational institutions in this area, with less than four hundred members of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the registration of 176 may be regarded as very good.

Five organizations joined in sponsoring the meeting and served as hosts to the visiting members and guests. They were the University of Arizona, the

Desert Sanatorium of Southern Arizona, United States Coast and Geodetic Survey Magnetic Observatory, United States Southwestern Forest and Range Experiment Station and United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service.

It was the third meeting in Tucson. Southern Arizona, rich in historic background, has much to offer in the fields of interest represented in the division. All sessions were held on the campus in the commodious buildings of the University of Arizona, making it a simple matter to go from one section to another. The very spacious cactus garden on the campus was in its glory at that season and added to the pleasure of the visit to Tucson. Those going to and from Tucson by auto were also given a rare treat while traveling through the extensive desert cactus forests, all in full bloom.

The local arrangements were in charge of a general committee, headed by Dr. E. W. Haury, department of anthropology, University of Arizona, Tucson. The committee, with the aid of various local and governmental agencies, provided visitors with a wealth of