

entire card index may be run through and those cards selected which have been in the files for twelve months. All such individuals receive a special abbreviated questionnaire asking them to fill in blanks which indicate changes in status which have occurred during the previous year. This recircularization procedure is just beginning.

Because of the fact that many of the demands that come to the office of the Roster require the services of young scientists with advanced training, it has been decided this year to add to the lists of the Roster the names of all young men and women who are expected to graduate from colleges and technical schools in 1942, provided they are carrying on major work in physics, mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, geology or any of the engineering fields.

Recently, due to demands from the Office of Production Management, special procedures have been worked out by means of which accredited governmental agents may use the facilities of the Roster in connection with the needs of rapidly developing private defense industry. In this work, as in all other aspects of the operation of the Roster, every effort is made by the staff and by the scientific and technical consultants, who are called together for the purpose, to emphasize the conservation aspects of the work of the Roster. If it were not for the limits imposed upon the office because of the confidential nature of the work which the Roster carries out, it would be possible to give hundreds of examples of individuals who have been allowed to continue in educational work, defense or even non-defense research of an important character as a result of the opera-

tion of the Roster. This means that by using the large lists available in the Roster office, it is possible to suggest alternative names to individuals who are very anxious to call from one defense agency to another some important man. In a similar way, going enterprises in education and public health research, for example, have been safeguarded.

It is clear that the work of preliminary evaluation and of consultation with various defense agencies requires continued and active supervision. The writer of this report is in Washington on an average of only two or three days each week, so the general burden of the development and effective administration of the Roster in all its aspects falls upon Mr. James C. O'Brien, who from the first has been the efficient executive officer of the project. There are slight fluctuations in the number of individuals employed in clerical and other capacities in the Roster office, but the average figure of those employed may be set at 100.

The writer can not resist once again emphasizing the fact that the Roster seems to have so many implications for peace-time as well as war-time economy that it is our profound hope that this new and effective agency for dealing with America's highly trained citizens may not be thought of wholly in war terms, although at the present time almost all its activities are specifically of a defense character. It seems quite clear to those who are working with the Roster that in time of peace as well as in war a great central list of this sort will be advantageous to the country as a whole and especially advantageous to the scientists and specialized workers who are listed on the Roster.

OBITUARY

ELSIE CLEWS PARSONS

DR. ELSIE CLEWS PARSONS, president of the American Anthropological Association, died on December 19 after an operation, just before she was to preside at the annual meeting of the association.

Dr. Parsons' anthropological work is outstanding both by the quality and the wide extent of her contributions. Her early publications on sociological questions relating to our present civilization were in part influenced by the teachings of Giddings, but reflected at the same time her intense devotion to individual freedom. She was one of the early champions of the rights of women, a vigorous opponent of the recognition of any form of status to which a person is born or assigned, and she lived her life according to her convictions, which demanded social responsibility combined with individual tolerance.

Later on she turned to anthropological studies of a different character, largely prompted by the feeling

that we need an understanding of foreign cultures in order to enable us to evaluate clearly the problems that have to be solved in our own civilization. Her interest was challenged, perhaps accidentally, by observation of the Indians of New Mexico and Arizona. The contrast between their cultural behavior and our own, the influence of cultural forms upon personalities, the ways in which personalities similar to those found in our own civilization respond to the demands of their culture, were problems that challenged her attention. Combined with this was an insatiable demand for ample and reliable factual information for supporting her deductions, which accounts for her prolific writings.

The study of the ceremonials, customs and folk-lore brought home to her the importance of the influence of Spanish civilization upon the American Indian, and with ever-expanding appreciation of the importance of this problem she extended her work over other

Spanish-American countries. One of the most mature results of these studies is her book on Mitla, a Mexican town in which ancient attitudes and Spanish influences are blended in a remarkable way. Her very last investigation, which she had just completed, bears on the same subject as expressed among the Indians of Ecuador.

Her two-volume work, "Pueblo Indian Religion," published in 1939, contains a summary of practically all we know about Pueblo religion and is an indispensable source book for every student of Indian life. Besides the results of her own investigations it contains a critical summary of the vast literature related to this subject.

It is impossible to do justice to all her writings, every one of which shows her painstaking desire for accuracy and furnished new materials for her own studies and for those of others. Her own investigations extended not only over the Pueblos, Mexico and recently also South America, but she also collected among American Negroes in the United States as well as in the Bahamas, Haiti, the Lesser Antilles Islands, among the Portuguese in New England and many Indian tribes of the Plains.

The importance of her work should not be judged alone by the quantity of reliable and carefully digested material but even more so by the uses to which she put the results of her investigations. She was one of those whose scientific insight shapes their life. Conscious through her studies of the far-reaching influence of tradition, she was averse to the ardent spirit that would throw aside the past and rebuild society on theoretical grounds; an enemy of all 'catch phrases that beguile us and skeptical of the beautiful words that promise a better future, but that are not liable to be kept by those who glibly pronounce them, not as she believed on account of their bad faith, but because freedom of the mind and willingness to forego old accustomed prejudice must be attained before we can hope for a better future.

In Elsie Clews Parsons we have lost not only an unusually productive and painstaking scholar but also a woman who used her great opportunities wholeheartedly in furthering the science in which she was interested. She followed the work of the younger students with keen interest, and wherever it was in her power

she helped them unstintingly to carry on their work, both with material means and with sound advice, without expecting any return except opportunity well used. Social science in all parts of the country owes her an unmeasurable gratitude. It is not saying too much to claim that the successful work of the American Folk-Lore Society could not have been done without the energy and time that she put into it.

She was in every way a power for good in our society. She will be sorely missed by all her friends, and her death is a loss to the nation.

FRANZ BOAS

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

DEATHS AND MEMORIALS

DR. HARRY WARD FOOTE, professor of physical chemistry at Yale University, a member of the faculty for the past forty-two years, died on January 14 at the age of sixty-six years.

DR. ALFRED SIMPSON TAYLOR, professor of clinical surgery in the department of neurology of Cornell University Medical College, died on January 16 at the age of seventy-three years.

PAUL GOODWIN REDINGTON, forest supervisor of the U. S. Forest Service, formerly chief of the U. S. Biological Survey, died on January 12. He was sixty-three years old.

CHARLES ANDREW McCUE, dean of the School of Agriculture, formerly professor of horticulture of the University of Delaware, died on January 12 in his sixty-third year.

PROFESSOR ÉMILE PICARD, permanent secretary of the Paris Academy of Sciences and a distinguished mathematician, died on December 12, aged eighty-five years.

THE centenary of the birth of William James was observed at the University of Wisconsin on January 12 and 13 by a meeting at which 600 philosophers and students of philosophy were present. Among the speakers were: Dr. J. Seelye Bixler, of Harvard University; Dr. Boyd H. Bode, of the Ohio State University; Dr. Max Otto, of the University of Wisconsin, and Dr. Dickinson S. Miller, formerly of Columbia University. A paper by Dr. John Dewey, who is spending the winter in Florida, was read.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

ADJUSTMENTS IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AT THE MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

AN official statement has been issued by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology announcing that it does not plan to adopt the extreme "speed-up" plan

which many colleges have adopted as a war emergency measure. The Corporation approved on January 9 a faculty recommendation to this effect. After careful analysis it has been decided that adoption of the "speed-up" plan would weaken rather than strengthen the total contributions of the institute to the war