bership is now about 50,000. Chapters elect 3,200 members and associates annually from faculties, graduate and undergraduate bodies. Sigma Xi promotes research through grants, national lectureships and publications. It publishes the quarterly, *The American Scientist*.

ISAIAH BOWMAN, PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

THE newly elected president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science has had such important contacts with so many branches of the natural and the social sciences that any biographical sketch or introduction seems quite unnecessary. I shall, therefore, confine my remarks to a few comments which may give a more intimate picture of the character and personality of our new president.

In the depths of the early depression, the National Research Council felt the need of a strong guiding hand to steer it through financial shoals and at the same time to increase its usefulness in this time of urgent need. After careful survey of possibilities, it elected Isaiah Bowman to this post in 1933. The council immediately took on a new lease of vigorous life. At about the same time, the Federal Government was faced with the necessity of drastic curtailment of expenses, including those of its scientific bureaus. How, in spite of this, could the effectiveness of these bureaus be maintained and, if possible, increased? To this end the Science Advisory Board was invented by Isaiah Bowman and appointed by President Roosevelt. The only reason why Bowman was vice-chairman rather than chairman of this board was his own modesty in not wanting to take the headship of an organization which he himself had promoted. Though there was disappointment in failure to secure action on some of this board's important recommendations, approximately two thirds of its recommendations were put into effect and even its failures left a useful background of education of many governmental officials.

Again in this difficult period, the Johns Hopkins University sought a new head. Here again financial problems were insistent and discouraging. Furthermore, a long period of temporary administration had accumulated an unusually large number of problems to await solution by the new administration. Several years of painstaking search resulted in Isaiah Bowman's selection as the new president.

Now, in the midst of our greatest war, when travel restrictions even curtail or prevent its annual meetings, and when new problems and difficulties are encountered on every hand, the American Association for the Advancement of Science elects Isaiah Bowman to be its president.

One's first reaction to this recital might well be: "What a bear he is for punishment!" To this I subscribe, with the comment that, like the early Christian martyrs, he suffers in a good cause. Unlike them, he seems to survive. Unlike them also, he seems to enjoy it. The real answer is not that he likes punishment, but that he is ever eager to throw his tremendous energies and abilities into any importantly constructive job which needs to be done as a public service, especially when this job involves the better utilization of science and the scientific method. He reacts quickly and vigorously, and always constructively, to a challenge.

Professionally, Isaiah Bowman is a geographer, but not in the limited sense of the little girl's definition of geography as "the study that tells us what's where." It is more in the sense of that verse in the Princeton Faculty song which runs: "He tells us how the world was made, and where the Lord the sidewalks laid." Isaiah Bowman's geography includes, in a vital way, the whole gamut of natural and social science—everything in fact which affects man's life on this planet; meteorology, climatology, oceanography, transportation, engineering, soil science, anthropology, geology, biology, political economy and many other specialized fields are, to him, aspects of the great science of man's life in his environment. It is hard to conceive of any other scientific background which would so well fit a man to head a great, diverse scientific body like the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

I recall Bowman's description of his experiences as member of both the National Research Council and the Social Science Research Council. He described the meetings of the latter council as full of interest, brilliant wit and repartee by members with rich backgrounds of cultural interest. The discussions wandered far and wide from the subject at issue and the actual business transacted was slim, but the meetings were thoroughly enjoyable. In the National Research Council, on the contrary, there were no frills; business was transacted in one, two, three order with cold efficiency, and the meeting adjourned. Bowman found satisfactions, and also some defects, in both performances.

The twenty most important years of Isaiah Bowman's career as a professional geographer were 1915 to 1935 while he was director of the American Geographical Society of New York, though before this, while on the faculty of Yale University, he headed productive research expeditions in Peru and the Central Andes generally.

I refer the reader to "Who's Who in America" or to "American Men of Science" for the details of some dozen honorary degrees, some six medals (four specified as golden!) from learned societies of five nations, and membership in more national and international scientific bodies than I could count twice with the

same answer. Of particular note is his membership on such important commissions as those attached to the Peace Conference in Paris; the Red River Boundary Dispute; the Permanent International Commission, China and the United States. His publications are many and significant; their scope is suggested by such titles as Forest Physiography; The Andes of Southern Peru; The New World—Problems in Political Geography; Desert Trails of Atacama; The Mohammedan World; The Pioneer Fringe; Design for Scholarship; and so forth, plus a very large number of articles in scientific journals.

Amid all these activities and accomplishments, I suspect that, in the rare times when he can think his own thoughts about his own secret desires, these thoughts often turn to the little island on Lake Wentworth in New Hampshire where the Bowman family have had their summer camp in true woods-lover's style. Here the talented and attractive family, Isaiah and Cora Bowman and their two sons and a daughter, have come especially close to each other and to the renewing strength of Mother Nature. Here, too, a small rustic isolated shack used as a study has been the scene of high-pressure writing as well as of reading and contemplation. Perhaps the newly elected president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science may have the privilege of writing his presidential address in this safe retreat, if gas and tires hold out.

Those who have been associated with Isaiah Bowman on various assignments are unanimous, I believe, in feeling that they could ask for no better team-mate. In this spirit he is welcomed by old and new associates as he undertakes the new term of leadership of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

KARL T. COMPTON

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

DR. IRVING LANGMUIR, associate director of the General Electric Research Laboratory, Schenectady, has been elected to honorary membership in the Institute of Metals, London. There are two honorary members of the institute—Professor C. A. F. Benedicks, director of the Metallographic Institute, Stockholm, and Dr. A. M. Portevin, who was professor of metallurgy in the Central School of Arts and Manufactures in Paris before the German occupation. Among past honorary members, now dead, were Sir William Crookes, Sir J. J. Thomson, Lord Rutherford, Professor G. Tammann and Sir William Bragg.

THE University of California at Berkeley has conferred an honorary degree on Dr. Samuel J. Holmes, professor of zoology, emeritus.

THE University of Santo Domingo has conferred an honorary degree on Dr. Hugh S. Cumming, director of sanitation of the Pan American Union.

A FRANKLIN MEDAL of the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, was presented at the annual medal day ceremonies at the institute on April 1, to Dr. George Washington Pierce, Rumford professor of physics, later Gordon McKay professor of communication engineering at Harvard University, "in recognition of his outstanding inventions, his theoretical and experimental contributions in the field of electric communication and his inspiring influence as a great teacher." The medal was also awarded to Dr. Harold Clayton Urey, professor of chemistry at Columbia University, in recognition of "his discovery of an isotope of hydrogen of mass 2, which has resulted in the opening of new fields of knowledge."

Chemical and Engineering News announces that Raymond R. Ridgway, associate director of research at the Norton Company, Niagara Falls, has been selected Jacob F. Schoellkopf Medalist for 1943. This medal is awarded annually by the Western New York Section of the American Chemical Society "for distinguished research or chemical achievements by chemists of the Niagara Frontier." The medal will be presented at the May meeting of the section at which time Mr. Ridgway will give the medalist's address.

THE Hillebrand Prize of the Chemical Society of Washington for 1942 was presented on March 11 to Dr. John Frank Schairer, of the Geophysical Laboratory of the Carnegie Institution of Washington. The award is made in recognition of his work on the phase relations in multi-component silicate systems and in particular for his work on the four-component system $CaO—FeO—Al_2O_3—SiO_2$. This award is named for William Francis Hillebrand, formerly chief chemist of the National Bureau of Standards.

THE Electrochemical Society has awarded the Young Author Prize for 1942 to Dr. Sidney Speil, associate non-metals engineer of the Government Electrotechnical Laboratory at Norris, Tenn. Accompanying a cash prize is a certificate for scientific and technical books to the amount of $50. This book prize was established a year ago by Francis Mills Turner, of New York.

DR. A. L. TATUM, professor of pharmacology at the Medical School of the University of Wisconsin, is the recipient of the Charles Mickle Fellowship for 1942 of the University of Toronto in recognition of his work in the study of cocaine poisoning and its treatment, morphine addiction, the use of picrotoxin as