

might strengthen the party loyalty of a wavering area by planning development of low-grade ore deposits, planting an experimental crop or starting a Federal school.

(3) The bill ought to satisfy the political element interested in suppressing private enterprise and substituting government by administrators who "serve at the pleasure of the President." Not the least contribution to scientific achievement through the centuries has been made by statesmen who have planned and fostered political freedom. Only in a free society can the cooperations and initiatives flourish which generate the unplanned and unforeseeable major advances of science. The bill gives the new office power "To make, amend, and rescind appropriate rules and regulations to carry out the purposes of this Act and all the powers and duties vested in the Office, which rules and regulations shall have the force and effect of law." Since one of the declared purposes is "to promote the full and speedy introduction of the most advanced and effective techniques . . ." and another is "to assemble, coordinate, and develop for use, in the public interest, all scientific and technical data and facilities . . .," there is here a clear avenue for governmental interference with every detail of laboratory, classroom and shop. The assertion of Dr. K. A. C. Elliott and Dr. Harry Grundfest<sup>2</sup> that the bill should not be attacked on the ground of "regimentation" and their comparison of the powerful new office with such limited agencies as the Public Health Service seem naive.

But destructive criticism of this bill is not enough. Science and expertness generally are affected with a public interest. If scientists as individuals persist in ignoring the social responsibilities of science, there evidently is serious risk that objectionable political measures will be improvised. In universities and scientific organizations the innocently selfish leadership of specialists must be supplemented by leadership aware of the world.

JOHN Q. STEWART

PRINCETON, N. J.

### STARS IN "AMERICAN MEN OF SCIENCE"

THE note on stars for American men of science by Dr. S. O. Mast appearing in *SCIENCE* for May 21, 1943, was read with interest.

The suggestion by Dr. Mast that we ask for a vote on the stars in "American Men of Science" by those concerned is a good one. This has already been done. All those who are included in the sixth edition of the directory were asked whether the stars should be included, and a majority voted for their continuation. A minority of those who replied suggested various ways by which the method might be revised. Accordingly, the

American Association for the Advancement of Science was asked to appoint, and appointed, a committee, to take up the question, but owing to the war emergency this committee has not been able to meet. In order that there may be continuity it has been decided to use the same method as in previous editions. When the eighth edition comes up for editorial consideration it is hoped that this committee may be able to function, and that the editor be advised as to the best method to carry out the voting.

Much discussion has appeared in *SCIENCE* and in earlier editions of the directory in regard to the stars. It has been pointed out that there are advantages and disadvantages; but up to the present time, the advantages have appeared to overshadow the disadvantages.

Election to the National Academy of Sciences takes care of rather a small group of scientific workers and the stars in "American Men of Science" make possible a wider recognition of leaders in science in their respective fields.

JAKUES CATTELL,

*Editor, American Men of Science*

### AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN A DEMOCRACY

IN *SCIENCE* of February 19 under the title "What Price Glory" Professor Warren T. Vaughan of Richmond, Virginia, discusses in an entertaining way the unequal quality and length of many of the sketches which make up that indispensable volume, "Who's Who in America," while in the current *SCIENCE* (May 21) under the caption "Class Distinction Among American Men of Science" the method of starrng 1,000 leading scientists by a sort of popular vote as done in the past five editions of "American Men of Science" is ridiculed by Professor S. O. Mast, of Johns Hopkins University.

Albeit these criticisms have their value as a part of current notation and opinion, yet they need not be taken over-seriously. The compilation of these volumes is a severe task; they are gotten out hurriedly. The publishers must and in a way may fairly depend on the *en masse* result. Both the participants and subscribers find that the final result is effective, meeting the many thousand ever-varying individual uses and needs. All is like the majestic flow of some great river, the Mississippi, for instance, as I remember it when long since doing river and harbor work below St. Louis. "Mark twain"! Certainly we see that those who have reached great distinction may well show a most becoming modesty and shorten their sketches, the main facts of their lives and their achievements being well known to all. Then too, there are facts of importance not easily brought into the average sketch. All of us work forward towards some greater objective and goal, and it must often prove difficult to set forth

<sup>2</sup> *SCIENCE*, April 23, 1943, p. 376.