

THE AMERICAN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

THE annual business meeting of the American Astronomical Society was held at the Harvard Observatory on June 8. The general meeting was preceded by a dinner meeting of the council at the Harvard Faculty Club.

Owing to restrictions on conventions, the meeting was of local character and no scientific program was attempted. Members cast their ballots for the election of officers by mail. The number of members who attended in person was thirty-nine, of whom seven were members of the council. Only four persons traveled more than a hundred miles, and three of these were councilors.

New officers of the society were elected as follows:

<i>Vice-president,</i>	1945-1947, Alfred H. Joy, Mount Wilson Observatory
<i>Secretary,</i>	1945-1946, Dean B. McLaughlin, University of Michigan
<i>Treasurer,</i>	1945-1946, Keivin Burns, Allegheny Observatory
<i>Councilors,</i>	1945-1948, N. T. Bobrovnikoff, Perkins Observatory A. D. Maxwell, University of Michigan R. M. Petrie, Dominion Astrophysical Observatory

Officers who continue unexpired terms are as follows:

<i>President,</i>	1943-1946, Harlow Shapley, Harvard Observatory
<i>Vice-president,</i>	1944-1946, J. A. Pearce, Dominion Astrophysical Observatory
<i>Councilors,</i>	1943-1946, Harold D. Babcock, Mount Wilson Observatory 1943-1946, Dirk Brouwer, Yale University Observatory 1943-1946, J. J. Nassau, Case School 1944-1947, N. U. Mayall, Lick Observatory 1944-1947, Peter Van de Kamp, Swarthmore 1944-1947, John S. Hall, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
<i>Ex-presidents,</i>	1940-1946, R. G. Aitken, University of California 1943-1949, Joel Stebbins, University of Wisconsin

A nominating committee was elected as follows: Joel Stebbins, *Chairman*; B. J. Bok, Dirk Brouwer. It is the duty of this committee to prepare the list of candidates for the next election of officers, which will take place at the annual business meeting of the society in 1946.

Certain special actions of the council will be announced to the membership at a later date.

DEAN B. McLAUGHLIN,
Secretary

HONORARY DEGREES CONFERRED BY COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

As reported last week in SCIENCE Dr. Edwin Joseph Cohn, of Harvard University, and Dr. Herbert Spencer Gasser, director of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, received the degree of Doctor of Science at the one hundred and ninety-first commencement of Columbia University on June 5. The citations made by Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, president of the university, in conferring the degrees follow:

EDWIN JOSEPH COHN:

Professor of biological chemistry in the Medical School of Harvard University; student at Amherst College who later received the degrees of Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Chicago; then pursued advanced studies in his chosen field of physical chemistry of proteins at Carlsberg Laboratory in Copenhagen and Cambridge University; now engaged in productive research in the physiology and chemical composition of the blood, the results of which have not only greatly increased fundamental scientific knowledge, but have saved many thousands of lives among those wounded in the war.

HERBERT SPENCER GASSER:

Director of Rockefeller Institute; received the degrees of Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts and Doctor of Science from the University of Wisconsin and that of Doctor of Medicine from Johns Hopkins University; since 1935 director of the Rockefeller Institute; awarded in 1944 the Nobel Prize for work in medicine and physiology; outstanding in the organization and conduct of scientific research in his chosen field of physiology of the nervous system; constantly making important contribution to the understanding of the mechanisms of the nerve impulse and its action in the human body.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

WILLIAM FONDILLER, assistant vice-president of the Bell Telephone Laboratories, was awarded on June 5 the University Medal at the commencement exercises of Columbia University in recognition of "his important contribution to the development of the telephone."

THE Eli Lilly and Company Award in Bacteriology and Immunology for 1945 was conferred on May 26 at Austin, Texas, on Dr. Esmond E. Snell, a member of the research staff of the Clayton Biochemical Institute of the University of Texas. The award, which consists of a check for one thousand dollars and a

suitably engraved medal, was presented to Dr. Snell in recognition of his "outstanding contributions to our knowledge of the intimate nutritional requirements of microorganisms." Selection of the recipient of the award is made by committees of the Society of American Bacteriologists, the American Association of Immunologists and the American Society for Experimental Pathology. The Eli Lilly and Company has made an additional grant making possible three more awards, presumably for 1946, 1947 and 1948.

PROFESSOR RICHARD STEVENS BURINGTON, of the Case School of Applied Science, director and organizer of a research analysis group in the Research and Development Division of the Bureau of Ordnance, has received the Meritorious Civilian Service Award of the U. S. Navy. His work is in the field of mathematical and physical analysis, and in research connected with ordnance problems. The citation, presented by Admiral G. F. Hussey, chief of the Bureau of Ordnance, reads: "For meritorious civilian services to the U. S. Navy. As a contract employee attached to the Underwater Ordnance Section of the Research and Development Division, he has constantly and consistently concerned himself with aspects of the anti-submarine program which are considerably in excess of his required duties and has at the same time developed unique methods and procedures for evaluation of anti-submarine weapons, the net result of which has been to provide this Bureau and the Commander-in-chief, U. S. Fleet, with information and analyses which have resulted in savings of material, time and manpower that would otherwise have been expended in pursuit of less valuable experimental and development programs."

WILLIAM ILER BEACH, chief plastic engineer of the North American Aviation, Inc., at Inglewood, Calif., has been presented with the fourth annual John Wesley Hyatt Award, carrying with it a gold medal and \$1,000, in recognition of his work in "designing plastic airplane parts that saved weight and manufacturing time in fighting planes." The John Wesley Hyatt Award was established in 1941 by the Hercules Powder Company to honor the founder of the plastics industry, who invented celluloid in 1867.

IN anticipation of his retirement on September 1, 1945, Dr. Percy E. Raymond, professor of invertebrate paleontology at Harvard University, was tendered a dinner on June 7 by sixty-four of his colleagues, former students and friends. Professor Carl D. Dunbar, of Yale University, gave the principal address on "Raymond—the Paleontologist." A book of letters written by ninety-four colleagues and former students and a pewter tankard were presented to Professor Raymond. Also, in recognition of his emi-

nence in the field of collecting, Charles H. Watkins spoke on his services to the Pewter Club of America.

THE honorary doctorate of science of Alfred University was conferred at the commencement exercises on Dr. Heinrich Ries, professor emeritus of geology at Columbia University, "in recognition of a lifetime of devotion service in writing, teaching and organization and research in the twin fields of ceramics and geology."

NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY conferred on June 3 on Professor C. L. Dawes the honorary degree of doctor of engineering. The citation by Dr. Carl Stephens Ell, president of the university, was as follows: "Because, as a prominent electrical engineer, your work has been characterized by much significant research and scholarly production and also by a high degree of efficiency as a consulting engineer and because of your contribution to the development of high standards of engineering education through the United States, the Board of Trustees have authorized me to confer upon you the honorary degree of Doctor of Engineering."

DR. EDWARD A. MILNE, Rouse Ball professor of astronomy at the University of Oxford, who was awarded the Catherine Wolfe Bruce Gold Medal of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific for the year 1945 in recognition of "distinguished services to astronomy," was formally presented with the medal at a meeting of the Royal Astronomical Society in London on May 11. The presentation ceremony was conducted by Sir H. Spencer Jones, F.R.S., Astronomer Royal.

DR. VICTOR F. CULLEN, superintendent of the Maryland State Sanatorium, has been elected president for 1946 of the National Tuberculosis Association. He will succeed Dr. Will Ross, of Milwaukee, who assumed office on June 8.

THE Institute of Food Technologists has elected Dr. F. W. Tanner, head of the department of bacteriology of the University of Illinois, president, and Dr. Victor Conquest, director of research and development, Armour and Company, Chicago, vice-president.

THE retirement is announced at the Medical School of the University of Wisconsin of Dr. Charles H. Bunting, professor of pathology, and of Dr. Joseph S. Evans, professor of medicine.

DR. CHARLES J. MOORE, since 1921 professor of chemistry at Hunter College, New York City, will retire in September.

DR. PAUL F. GAEHR, professor of physics at Wells College, is retiring after having served for thirty-

four years. He will be succeeded by Mrs. Charlotte Houtermanns.

At the Ohio State University, members of the faculty having reached the university retirement age are Professor Charles C. Morris, since 1908 a member of the department of mathematics; Professor Charles Scott Berry, since 1930 director of the Bureau of Special and Adult Education, and Professor Oscar Erf, since 1907 a member of the staff in animal husbandry and agricultural extension. Those exercising the privilege of voluntary retirement include Professor William M. Barrows, since 1909 a member of the department of zoology; Dean Arthur J. Klein, since 1937 dean of the College of Education, and Professor Raymond J. Seymour, since 1904 a member of the department of physiology.

DR. ROLF C. SYVERTSEN, professor of anatomy at Dartmouth College, has been appointed dean of the School of Medicine, effective on July 1. Dr. Syvertsen, who has for many years been secretary of the school, succeeds Dr. John P. Bowler, who has resigned but who will continue as a member of the medical faculty as professor of surgery.

RESEARCH professors at the University of Missouri have been appointed as follows: Leonard M. Blumenthal, mathematics; Douglas R. Hansen, fine arts; Walter D. Keller, geology; Jacob Levitt, botany, and Lloyd E. Thomas, biochemistry. They will devote full time to research projects which have been approved by the University Research Council. Remuneration for the summer session will be on the same financial basis as for full-time teaching during the summer session. It is stated that this experiment in encouraging research at the university is intended to free members of the faculty from the necessity of teaching during the summer session and to make it possible for them to give undivided attention to research work. Some of them have not been on the faculty long enough to be eligible for sabbatical leave or for other reasons are not able to take advantage of this opportunity for research. These summer appointments, it is hoped, will accomplish much the same results although for a more limited period of time.

DR. LOREN C. EISELEY, professor and head of the department of sociology of Oberlin College, has been appointed visiting professor in the department of anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania during the summer session beginning on July 1. He will offer courses in primitive art, ethnology, race and culture.

F. J. REITHEL, formerly instructor in biochemistry at the School of Medicine of St. Louis University, has become associated with the Kerckhoff Laboratories of the California Institute of Technology, Pasadena.

DR. JAMES OLMSTED, professor of physiology at the University of California at Berkeley, has been appointed Hideyo Noguchi Visiting Lecturer at the Institute of the History of Medicine at the Johns Hopkins University. The subject of the lectures, to be given next spring, will be "The Life and Work of Brown-Sequard."

MAJOR F. W. SHOTTEN has been appointed Sorby professor of zoology at the University of Sheffield to succeed Professor William George Fearnside, F.R.S., who has retired after serving since 1913.

DR. W. J. HAMILTON, professor of anatomy at the University of London, has been appointed Regius professor of anatomy at the University of Glasgow.

DR. JOSEPH C. BEQUAERT has been appointed head curator of recent insects at the Museum of Comparative Zoology of Harvard College.

DR. SIDNEY ROBERTS and Dr. Clara M. Szego, formerly instructors in the department of physiology of the Medical School of the University of Minnesota, and Dr. Min-Chueh Chang, of the University of Cambridge, have joined, as associate members, the staff of the Worcester Foundation for Experimental Biology.

CHARLES G. DANFORTH has resigned as instructor in zoology and biology at the Michigan State College to become executive biologist with the General Biological Supply House of Chicago.

DR. EDMUND VINCENT COWDRY, director of research at the Barnard Free Skin and Cancer Hospital, St. Louis, Mo., and professor of anatomy at Washington University, delivered on May 24 the first annual Charles Sumner Lecture of the Medico-Chirurgical Society of the District of Columbia. He spoke on "The Present Status of the Problem of Cancer."

DR. HOWARD T. KARSNER, professor of pathology and director of the Institute of Pathology of the School of Medicine of Western Reserve University, made an address before the Los Angeles Academy of Medicine on May 11 entitled "Tumors of the Endocrine Glands."

THE seventh annual conference of the New England Association of Chemistry Teachers of the Massachusetts State College, Amherst, will be held from August 9 to 13.

DR. S. R. BRUESCH, assistant professor of anatomy at the College of Medicine of the University of Tennessee, has leave of absence to work with Dr. Curt P. Richter at the Psychobiological Laboratory of the Phipps Psychiatric Institute of the Johns Hopkins Hospital. Dr. James O. Brown, associate professor of anatomy and acting head of the department of

anatomy of the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania, will be visiting associate professor of anatomy at the University of Tennessee College of Medicine for the summer quarter.

THE French Press and Information Service reports that for the first time since 1940 weather forecasts are being broadcast in France. As of April 1, a network of ninety-seven observatories of the French National Bureau of Meteorology have resumed activity, while the main office in Paris has inaugurated a train-

ing program for technicians and is planning an efficient system of weather information for postwar intercontinental airlines. In 1940 the staff of the Meteorological Bureau fled to the unoccupied zone, hoping to save their instruments and apparatus from the Germans. Although two observation boats were seized and dismantled, the members of the staff salvaged enough equipment to enable its weathermen to collect and furnish data to the Resistance. In November, 1942, when the Germans occupied the whole of France, they again managed to escape with their instruments.

DISCUSSION

WORLD STANDARD AND UNIT FOR PENICILLIN

IN the inter-war period the permanent commission on biological standardization of the health organization of the League of Nations established a series of biological standards which have been widely adopted for international use. Over thirty in number, the series includes standards for antitoxins, vitamins, arsphenamines, insulin, pituitary extract and the sex hormones. It is universally acknowledged that, by their adoption and use, system and order has been introduced where chaos might easily have ensued, and that the common interests of research worker, large-scale manufacturer, administrator, physician and—most of all—patient have been safeguarded and advanced by this action taken by the commission on behalf of them all.

The rapid development of penicillin, discovered by the British professors Fleming and Florey, whether in regard to production, standardization or clinical application, raised to a position of supreme importance and urgency the necessity of establishing a common standard, and of defining a unit in terms of that standard, and so providing the means of expressing the potency of penicillin preparations in a uniform and generally accepted system of unit notation, in whatever country penicillin may be prepared and used.

All past experience has shown that, given this common standard and unit for a drug or medicament, the results of research, clinical application, production and assay, wherever these are obtained, become easily and readily comparable.

With the outbreak of World War II and consequent cessation of the normal activities of the permanent commission on biological standardization, it seemed at first as if a decision as to the adoption of a uniform standard and unit would either have to be deferred or made by representatives of Britain and the United States alone, as it was difficult for representatives of other countries to meet and confer; and, moreover,

it was only in these countries that the opportunity for extensive studies on the production, standardization and clinical application of penicillin had been provided on any considerable scale. Fortunately, it was found possible to enlist the help of Dr. R. Gautier, officer in charge of the health service of the League of Nations, with the result that a conference was held at the apartments of the Royal Society, in London, in October, 1944, under the auspices of the League's permanent standards commission, and attended by delegates from the United States, France, Canada, Australia and Britain, as well as by a number of technical observers from these countries and from South Africa and India.

Thus, although it was not possible, partly through difficulties of travel and transportation created by the war, and partly through the short notice at which the conference had to be held, to secure the attendance of representatives of many other important countries, yet this conference was as international as the circumstances of the time permitted; and there is no doubt that the decisions reached will secure world-wide recognition and adoption.

The conference was presided over by Sir Henry Dale, president of the Royal Society, who has been a member of the permanent standards commission since its inception; and Sir Percival Hartley, director of the Medical Research Council's department of biological standards and custodian, on behalf of the League of Nations, of the international standards established by its permanent standards commission, was scientific secretary of the conference.

This body of representatives from different countries had to review the evidence submitted with a view to making decisions and reaching agreement regarding the establishment of an international standard and unit for penicillin. The conference recommended that a quantity of pure penicillin sodium salt, provided for the purpose by manufacturers in the United States and Britain, be adopted as international standard; and that it be kept, under conditions ensuring its safety and permanence, at the National Institute for Med-