

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION

ELMER DAVIS, director of the Office of War Information, and Neil Dalton, director of the Domestic Branch of the Office, have made the following announcement:

The facilities of the Office of War Information, Domestic Branch, have been made available to the newly organized Joint Board on Scientific Information Policy for the handling of information on scientific and technical developments of the Government during the war.

The Joint Board on Scientific Information Policy will be responsible for the organization and release of scientific and allied information for the Office of Scientific Research and Development, the War and Navy Departments and the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics.

The chairman of the board is Dr. John T. Tate, division chief, National Defense Research Committee, Office of Scientific Research and Development. Other members are: Rear Admiral Harold G. Bowen, U.S.N., chief, Office of Research and Inventions, Department of the Navy; Colonel Douglas Parmentier, U.S.A., chief, News Division, Bureau of Public Relations, War Department; Captain Waldo Drake, U.S.N.R., deputy director, Office of War Information, and Dr. George W. Lewis, director of aeronautical research, National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics. John Tait Milliken, chief of the Weekly Press Division, Office of War Information, is executive secretary.

The Joint Board on Scientific Information Policy has been created by concurrent action on the part of the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy and Dr. Vannevar Bush, director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development, with the consent of the chairman of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics and the director of the Office of War Information. Its creation was in accordance with the recommendation of the Joint Committee on Scientific Information Policy, consisting of the Secretaries of War and Navy and the director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development, to study the problem of supplying the general public with authentic and useful information on wartime scientific developments.

The committee said in its report "that a positive information policy is desirable to supplement spot news stories, which probably can never be controlled as to accuracy of content or interpretation of scientific development; that the basic purpose of such a policy is to establish in the minds of the public a proper concept of how scientific development really has taken place; . . . and that the work of carrying out such a policy should be entrusted to a small group

of personnel whose duties shall include determining suitable stories, getting the necessary background of information from the laboratories and operational units concerned, and in general guiding the story to a release point. . . ."

The basic reports of the board will include such fundamental subjects of moment as radar rockets, metallurgy, jet propulsion, aircraft design, and public health, medicine, plastics, etc.

In addition to clearing and issuing basic releases on scientific developments, the board, through its office at the Office of War Information, Domestic Branch, Social Security Building, Washington, D. C., will carry out its directive function of assisting writers and publications through appropriate contacts, clearances and working information. Consideration will be given by the board to the special request of all branches of publishing, professional writers, radio and motion pictures. The existing facilities of the Domestic Branch of the Office of War Information will be provided for this purpose.

THE AMERICAN CONGRESS ON SURVEYING AND MAPPING

THE American Congress on Surveying and Mapping held its fifth annual meeting in Washington, D. C., on June 23. Commander Frank S. Borden, of the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, was elected president; Major Richard T. Evans was named secretary-treasurer, and A. L. Shalowitz was named editor of *Surveying and Mapping*, the quarterly journal of the congress. The meeting included a panel discussion on "Cooperation among the Technical Organizations," in which representatives from the American Society of Civil Engineers, the American Society of Photogrammetry, the American Geophysical Union and the American Congress on Surveying and Mapping participated.

The Congress on Surveying and Mapping was organized in 1941 for the purpose of advancing the sciences of surveying and mapping and to contribute to public education in the use of maps and to encourage the promotion of basic mapping programs.

THE AMERICAN STANDARDS ASSOCIATION

CHANGES in the constitution of the American Standards Association that will enable it to meet more fully the needs of government and industry in the postwar period have been announced by P. G. Agnew, secretary of the association. The national trade, technical and governmental groups that make up the association have ratified these changes, the principal one of which will remove present restrictions limiting the

work of the association "to those fields in which engineering methods apply" so that the organization can in the future handle any standard or standardization project which is in the field of engineering or consumer goods or in any other field which deserves national recognition.

Another change provides for specific mention of the consensus principle in the constitution. This principle—that all groups with an interest in a particular standard have a right to a voice in its development—has always been basic in the association operations. It seemed wise to place additional emphasis upon it by incorporating it in the constitution, thus assuring cooperating bodies that the work will be carried out in accordance with their desires.

A third change provides for election to the board of directors of three members-at-large. At present all but the members of the board are nominated in rotation by the member-bodies. The additional members-at-large will make it possible to enlist the services of outstanding persons from groups not otherwise represented, thus making the board still more broadly representative.

In making these changes in the constitution of the American Standards Association, the national trade, technical and governmental groups that constitute its basic membership restated their belief that the central force of the standardization movement should continue to spring from the organized industrial, professional and consumer groups with the full cooperation of the governmental agencies concerned.

THE BRITISH GUIANA NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

THE British Guiana Natural History Museum, including laboratory, library, collections, vivarium and aquaria, as well as their expertly mounted and exhibited specimens and habitat groups, was destroyed this spring by a fire originating in an adjacent store. Plans are being made to re-establish this museum, and to make a major expedition into the hinterland of British Guiana (Mount Roraima area) for the replacement of specimens of the flora and fauna. It is hoped to start this expedition in the fall of this year.

The museum is desirous of getting into communication with any party that might be interested in joining the expedition, on the basis of a 50-50 split of all specimens collected. It is also interested in corresponding with any institution prepared to exchange natural history specimens.

The museum is also interested in receiving catalogues of taxidermy supplies and miscellaneous museum equipment—glass for large cases, glass jars, aquaria, collecting apparatus, etc.; and reference books, particularly relating to taxidermy.

Any one having information relative to the recon-

struction of a small first-class museum can address R. S. Singh, preparator, British Guiana Natural History Museum, Georgetown, B. G.

NEWS OF EUROPEAN INVESTIGATORS

DR. FRANZ SCHRADER, of Columbia University, writes that he has heard from Dr. Jean Le Calvez, formerly vice-director of the Marine Laboratory at Banyuls sur Mer. "Le Calvez was taken prisoner by the Germans in 1940, but in 1942 was permitted to go to the Kaiser Wilhelm Institut für Biologie, where he carried on his research in Dr. H. Bauer's department. The institut was shifted to Hechingen in Württemberg in 1943 and was not damaged when the French troops took over the town in April, 1945." Dr. Le Calvez's personal news will, I think, be of interest to many American biologists: "Professor H. Bauer and Dr. J. Straub were both well when the French occupied Hechingen; Professor M. Hartmann was at that time staying on his country place in southern Germany; Dr. K. Patau had remained in Berlin-Dahlem when the institut was shifted, and there had been no recent news of him; Dr. Schartau was killed in an airplane accident; Professor F. von Wettstein died of a pulmonary infection early in 1945; Professor N. W. Timofeeff-Ressovsky was still in Berlin-Buch in March, 1945, but nothing had been heard of him since that time."

Dr. Wm. Randolph Taylor, of the University of Michigan, writes as follows: "Dr. F. Børgesen writes that he is continuing his researches on Mauritius algae at the Botanical Institute, Copenhagen, and has been able to publish some work during the war. Dr. Børgesen is best known for his very important work on the marine algae of the Danish West Indies, but has also made major contributions to our knowledge of the algae of Easter Island, the Faröes Islands, the Canary Islands and India.

"Mme. P. Lemoine, formerly at the Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, writes from La Bezole, Villelongue, Aude, that she spent the period of the war without acute suffering. Mme. Lemoine is a well-known student of coralline algae, especially the massive reef-inhabiting types, and has monographed them for several notable expeditions, for Dr. F. Børgesen's studies on Danish West Indian algae and other important works."

Dr. Curt Stern, of the University of Rochester, writes: "I have some information about European scientists which may be of interest to the readers of SCIENCE. I learned from a letter from Dr. F. Baltzer, professor of zoology at the University of Bern, Switzerland, that Dr. von Frisch, professor of zoology at the University of Munich, is alive. The laboratory in Munich has been destroyed. Also I have received reprints from Professor Dontcho Kostoff, of the Uni-