

Association Affairs

Centennial Meeting Plans

Membership drive: Commencing on January 6, invitations have been sent from the office of the administrative secretary to a list of nominees submitted to this office by associate members of the Centennial Membership Committee. As of January 29, over 1,000 of the 16,000 scientists invited to join the AAAS had become new members. Unfortunately, a large number of invitations to members of educational institutions could not be mailed for lack of a specific departmental address on the nomination forms.

Meeting plans: The Centennial Policy Committee, at a meeting on January 24-25, drew up a general outline of the September meeting arrangements. As presently planned, the morning sessions on September 14, 15, and 16 will consist of 5 concurrent technical symposia to commence at 9:30 A.M. and close not later than 12:30 P.M. The mid-day program, as announced previously (*Science*, December 5, 1947, p. 535), will be free of meetings to permit a series of afternoon activities to be determined by the local committee. The evening sessions will include three concurrent symposia of a semipopular nature which will commence at 8:30 P.M.

The topics for the morning sessions have been chosen deliberately in order that the subjects may be integrated about a central theme of interest to various scientific disciplines. The three speakers on each symposium will be limited to 30 minutes for presentation of their papers. In addition to the speakers, one to three discussants will be assigned to each session, each to follow a designated speaker. A maximum of 10 minutes will be devoted to these discussions. In order to permit audience participation, those in attendance may submit written questions for the speakers to answer toward the close of the session. If enough interest is evidenced by the questions, the sessions may run beyond 12:30 P.M., but not beyond 1:00, in order to permit general participation in the afternoon activities.

Titles of the morning symposia tentatively proposed were: "Problems of the Ocean," "World's Natural Resources," "The Upper Atmosphere," "Human Individuality," "Sources of Energy," "Food," "World Health Problems," "Early Man," "Genes and Cytoplasm," "Science Education and Interpretation," "Gerontology," "Waves and Their Uses," "Nucleonics," "Solid States," and "High Polymers." Some of

the suggestions for evening lectures were: "Populations," "Weather Control," "Medical Research," "Human Frontiers," "The World of Isotopes," "Giant Machines for Research," "Bird Migration," "Conservation of Soil," "Wood and Its Uses," "Mechanical Brains," "Housing," and "One World of Physics."

It is the consensus of the Policy Committee that the Centennial Meeting should include as speakers individuals who are most actively engaged in expanding the horizons of science.

Section on Astronomy (D)

The Section on Astronomy met on the afternoon of Friday, December 26, on the forenoon of Saturday, December 27, and jointly with Section E (Geology) on the afternoon of Saturday, December 27. The joint meeting was a symposium on "Origin of the Earth."

The papers presented may be grouped as follows: address of the retiring vice-president, miscellaneous papers, meteors and meteorites, and on the origin of the earth. They will be summarized in that order, rather than in order of presentation.

Address of the retiring vice-president. G. Van Biesbroeck reported that his work on the eclipse of May 20, 1947, gave for the Einstein deflection 2''00, a value some 15% larger than the calculated. This is in good agreement with earlier observations, but all observed results are somewhat uncertain.

Miscellaneous papers. C. H. Smiley reported that photometric measures of light reflected from clouds had given, for two eclipses, good results for times of contacts. Astronomers can obtain these times even if a cloud covers the sun.

C. C. Wylie commented on the hysteria produced by unexplained reports of strange objects in the sky. Meteor workers have usually been able to obtain, at little expense, the facts back of these reports. A nation-wide and year-round "Patrol," organized by meteor workers to investigate such reports, was therefore recommended.

It was proposed by D. H. Menzel and W. W. Salisbury that cosmic rays are produced by solar radiation of very long wave length (200-2,000,000 miles), which accelerates interplanetary ions.

O. C. Collins recommended that a navigator obtain a "fix" by observing two stars at the same altitude, or at the same azimuth.