

# Putting Science Together

THE annual meeting of the Association has the reputation of being the biggest scientific show on earth. In respect to size this is not so, but from several other standpoints the AAAS may as well modestly admit it. No other scientific event brings the accomplishments of scientific research so forcibly to public attention, thanks to thorough and brilliant coverage by the science writers of the country. No other meeting brings so many experts in diverse fields together to explore the fertile areas in which disciplines meet and overlap. In no other convention do so many organizations cooperate in the exploitation of collective experience. The phrase that captured popular fancy in the Association's Arden House statement of policy—"to put science back together again"—is merely a description of what has been going on in a quiet way for several years.

The annual meeting overshadows other AAAS-sponsored meetings, but the others may appropriately be mentioned in an issue of SCIENCE devoted to the St. Louis convention. It will be evident that the Association gets around, not only in this country, but abroad, for in 1952 it has been officially represented at meetings in every continent except Asia.

In May the Southwestern Division met with the Colorado-Wyoming Academy of Science at Boulder, Colorado, and 457 scientists in the Rocky Mountains, Great Plains, and Intermountain states assembled to discuss regional, but by no means provincial, contributions to the advancement of science (SCIENCE, **116**, 135 [1952]). In June the Pacific Division played host to 17 affiliated and associated organizations at Corvallis, Oregon (SCIENCE, **116**, 407 [1952]), and 1095 scientists, mostly from Western states and Canadian provinces, demonstrated a vigorous interest in, and prosecution of, scientific and technological research. From mid-June to early September, approximately 2000 specialists gathered in a succession of weekly Gordon Research Conferences at Colby Junior College, New London, New Hampshire, and at the New Hampton School, New Hampton, New Hampshire, to consider the new discoveries and new techniques in chemical and related fields. In September, the Association's sections on Engineering (M) and Geology (E) met with the Industrial Minerals Division, American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers, at the Centennial of Engineering in Chicago to consider the raw materials survey of the Chicago region, structural materials, and the recovery of ground water for industrial use. Also in September, at McKinley National Park, the Alaska Division sponsored the Third Alaskan Science Conference, bringing together more than 200 specialists who are systematizing and solving scientific problems indigenous to our northern territory.

The Association also has five active branches that carry on its work within restricted areas. The organization of the Alaska Division is unique in that it consists of three branches—Cook Inlet, Arctic, and Southeastern—each organized around a center or nucleus of scientific activity. Within the continental United States branches have not been regarded as an essential element in AAAS structure because of the work of state academies of science; yet the Lancaster (Pa.) Branch functions in a state with an active academy, bringing science and scientists to a community audience numbering 500–800. Only one other branch is currently active—Springfield (Mass.), which is operating in a section where state academies are scarce.

The Association has been officially represented at scores of other meetings and ceremonies. On some of these occasions the AAAS representative was an active participant—for example, Detlev W. Bronk gave the exchange lecture at the Belfast meeting of the BAAS in September. Enough has been said to indicate that the Association exerts a continent-wide influence in its meeting activities. From all indications this influence is destined to spread and to give American science and scientific thinking some integration and direction.

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SCIENCE, founded in 1880, is published each Friday by the American Association for the Advancement of Science at the Business Press, 10 McGovern Ave., Lancaster, Pa. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Lancaster, Pa., January 13, 1948, under the Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at the special rate postage provided for in the Act of February 28, 1925, embodied in Paragraph (d-2) Section 34.40 P. L. & R. of 1948.

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Annual subscriptions, $7.50; single copies, $.25; foreign postage, outside the Pan-American Union, $1.00; Canadian postage, $.50. Special rates to members of the AAAS.

The AAAS also publishes THE SCIENTIFIC MONTHLY. Subscription and advertising rates on request.

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