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The Physical Society

IN Great Britain the cause of physics is furthered by the Physical Society, membership of which is open to anyone interested in physics and its development. The Physical Society was founded in 1873 by a group of physicists wishing to discuss their various problems together, and from this small beginning it has grown to a present membership of about 2000.

The activities fall into three main groups, its publications, its meeting, and its Annual Exhibition. The two main publications of the Society are the *Proceedings of the Physical Society*, which is published monthly, and the *Reports on Progress in Physics*, which is published annually. In the *Proceedings* are published papers describing original research in all branches of physics—nuclear physics, magnetism, semi-conductors, acoustics, and optics—by workers in universities, research associations, and research laboratories of large firms. The *Reports on Progress in Physics* contain about nine or ten articles by specialists describing the recent progress and present position in various fields in such a way that they can be read with interest and profit by the non-specialist.

These publications are available for sale in the general market and are also available to Members of the Society at greatly reduced rates. The Society has also a Reprint Service whereby members of the Society and subscribers to the *Proceedings* can purchase reprints of individual articles published in the *Proceedings*.

The Physical Society holds from three to six one or two day Conferences annually in various parts of the

British Isles. These usually center around a university or research establishment where work in a certain field is in progress and opportunity is afforded for other workers in the same field to meet together to discuss problems, both theoretical and experimental.

The Society also sponsors the activities of specialist groups in color, optics, low temperature physics, and acoustics. These groups have a central core of interest in physics but extend their activities into other fields, for instance, the Acoustics Group is interested in architectural acoustics, the Color Group in the physiological aspects of color, and so on. These groups hold their own meetings, mainly in London, and often cooperate very successfully with sister societies whose interests meet theirs from another direction.

The third major activity of the Physical Society is its Annual Exhibition of Scientific Instruments and Apparatus at which a number of British firms and research organizations are invited to show instruments of use to the physicist which they have recently developed or are still in the process of developing. Visitors come to this Exhibition from all parts of the world and find the handbook published in connection with it of great value, not only when inspecting the exhibits but also to have upon their shelves as a work of reference giving a comprehensive survey of new developments in British scientific instrument work.

The Physical Society is anxious to increase its contacts with other parts of the world, and in particular with the United States of America, and welcomes this opportunity to describe its activities.

A. C. STICKLAND

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