THE Society of American Bacteriologists will hold its forty-first general meeting at New Haven on December 28, 29 and 30, under the presidency of Professor Arthur T. Henrici, of the University of Minnesota. The occasion will mark the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the society at New Haven on December 29. Professor C.-E. A. Winslow, a charter member, will review "The First Forty Years" of the society's development at the annual banquet, at which the living charter members will be introduced by the toastmaster, Dr. Karl F. Meyer, and presented with testimonials. The annual presentation of the Eli Lilly and Company Research Award in Bacteriology and Immunology will be made at this time. The scitific program will emphasize bacterial chemotherapy, immunity, filterable viruses and fermentation. Other sessions will consider bacterial physiology, dissociation, taxonomy and various aspects of agricultural and industrial microbiology. Round-table discussions will be held on the History of Bacteriology, Bacterial Chemotherapy, the Teaching of Bacteriology and Fermentation.

THE Emergency Executive Committee of the International Congress of Mathematicians has decided definitely to postpone until some more favorable date the congress which was to have been held in Cambridge in September, 1940. Notice to that effect is being sent to the invited speakers and to others interested.

INDEFINITE postponement of the eighteenth session of the International Geological Congress fixed for July 31 to August 8, 1940, in London has been announced. An invitation from the Geological Society of London for the eighteenth session to meet in Great Britain during 1940 had been accepted by the bureau of the seventeenth congress in Moscow in August, 1937. The last previous meeting of the congress in Great Britain was held in 1888, and geologists throughout America had been formulating plans to attend. At date of taking action to postpone the meeting the officers of the congress had anticipated an attendance of the order of fifteen hundred. The prospective program for the congress had included a wide range of subjects of international interest and importance. Sixteen excursions before and after the session had been arranged to conduct visiting geologists throughout England, Scotland and Wales. Twenty-two individual geological and mining societies and societies concerned with related sciences had supported the Geological Society of London in organizing the session.

FERENCE VON TOMPA, president of the International Congress of Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences, announces that the third session of the congress, which was to have been held in Budapest during the summer of 1940, has been postponed pending the establishment of peace in Europe. The American members of the permanent council of the congress are: A. L. Kroeber, University of California; George Grant MacCurdy, Yale University; Harriett M. Allyn, Mount Holyoke College, and Carl E. Guthe, University of Michigan.

THE American League against Epilepsy, composed of physicians, has sponsored an organization called the "Laymen's League against Epilepsy," formed for the purpose of educating the public concerning the various aspects of epilepsy and for stimulating contributions towards research. Officers elected at the first annual meeting on December 4 are as follows: *President,* Mrs. Francis B. Riggs; *Vice-presidents,* Clinton H. Crane and Dr. William G. Lennox; *Secretary-Treasurer,* Mrs. Mary L. Fleming. *Medical sponsors,* Dr. Stanley Cobb, Dr. Irvine McQuarrie, Dr. Adolf Meyer, Dr. Wilder Penfield, Dr. Tracy Putnam and Dr. William Kerr. The office of the society is at the Harvard Medical School, Boston.

DISCUSSION

NON-TECHNICAL BOOKS ON SCIENCE

Two years ago the American Association for the Advancement of Science began the publication of those symposia presented at its meetings that are judged to be "so comprehensive and of such high order of merit that it can not afford not to publish them." Six of these symposia have been published—"Tuberculosis and Leprosy," "Syphilis," "Applications of Surface Chemistry in Biology," "Recent Advances in Chemical Physics," "Mental Health" and "The Migration and Conservation of Salmon." Two more—"Problems of Lake Biology" and "The Gonococcus and Gonococcal Infection"—are about to appear from the press. The manuscripts of two additional symposia—"The Cell and Protoplasm" and "Blood, Heart and Circulation"—will soon be ready for the printer.

Experience has already proved that in publishing distinguished symposia the association is making an important contribution to the progress of science. For one thing, it is exercising its function as a synthesizing agency. For another, it is making available important scientific material which, at least in the field of public health, is having a profound influence on the country. The inauguration of the publishing of these symposia constitutes the beginning of a new period in the history of the association.

The association is now entering on a new undertak-

ing that promises to be equally important in a different field. It has entered into a contract with Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., for the publication of a series of non-technical books on science to be known as American Association for the Advancement of Science Series. The books of this series will be on important subjects of wide public interest and will be written by competent and distinguished authorities. They will be for the intelligent general public—every scientist is an amateur except in his own field—for, in the final analysis, science and all the other avenues of progress depend upon society as a whole. Consequently, from the narrow view of the defense of science the association is justified in entering on this new undertaking.

There are, however, broader considerations, for it would not profit science even though it were worshipped if civilization should die. Science is no longer regarded as something quite apart from the strong currents of life. It is, on the contrary, the principal force that is hurrying mankind forward, whether toward a precipice or into serene waters of a finer and nobler civilization is not yet generally accepted as certain. Although theologians and philosophers and politicians are often despairing of civilization, scientists are haunted by no such misgivings. They have as a background the long history of the evolution of life on the earth. They know of the slow rise of man, with his many ups and downs, from the level of the lower animals. They are well aware of his physical, mental and moral imperfections and the ease with which he can stumble. Yet on the whole they regard his prospects with steady eyes, for they are developing methods of learning the realities of the inorganic and the organic worlds, and are confident that the continued pursuit of these realities and the organizing of both individual lives and society in harmony with them will lead inevitably to a better future.

There are no complexities in the arrangement the association has made for the publication of this series of non-technical books on science. Any person planning to write such a book may offer it to the association as one of its series. If it is accepted by the committee appointed to represent the association, and if the publishers approve of the book, the author will make a direct contract with the publishers for its publication under the usual terms and royalties for such works. The publishers assume all the financial risks.

Upon the appearance of a book of this series from the press, the association will buy from the publisher from time to time, at a substantial discount, as many copies as it may require and will offer them to its members at a substantial discount from the publisher's retail price. The publisher will also sell the book through the usual channels. The association will advertise each book published under this contract in both SCIENCE and *The Scientific Monthly*. And in all advertisements of each of these books the publisher will state that it is one of the American Association for the Advancement of Science Series.

All that remains is to secure manuscripts that have the desired qualities—soundness, timeliness, importance and literary excellence. It is expected that only a few books will be published each year, at least at first. The development of the plan will be guided by experience, as in the publication of the symposia. If the books in this new series are kept on a correspondingly high plane of excellence, they will set the general pattern for non-technical science and exert in time a profound influence on science and society. Inquiries respecting the project are invited.

F. R. MOULTON,
Permanent Secretary

THE LARGE MAMMALS OF THE GREAT PLAINS

IT is cogent to ask if the larger game animals of the Great Plains are not rapidly undergoing domestication. One who makes a brief study of the Great Plains big game reserves is likely to be impressed that the bison and antelope are rapidly being domesticated in all of them, due to (1) winter feeding on hay, and (2) various schemes for regulating breeding and care of young in close quarters.

The reserves are at the same time overgrazed to a considerable degree. One of the largest of these, at Wainwright, Alberta, is very badly overgrazed (1939). Here the smaller animals are, accordingly, deprived of shelter and are wanting or deficient as to numbers. Some of them, such as the badger, small vertebrates and various invertebrates, are threatened with extirpation.

This brings us to the consideration of the size of area necessary to prevent domestication of these animals and their associates. Taking the minimum daily range from home and normal wandering of a community of plains animals, for example, in Nebraska, 1,250,000 acres is found to be near the minimum. Men with large experience regard 1,000,000 acres as the ideal area at which to aim in the case of plains animals. Animals which roam the national forests and connected national parks have very much larger areas available. Boerker's list of national forests as of 1917 shows more than half of them with 800,000 acres of actual Forest Service-owned land. The Kaibab Forest contained 1,072,375 acres, giving ample range to the deer, the Kaibab squirrel, etc.; probably not over one fourth of the area is grazed by cattle, leaving 800,000 acres for the wild animals, recreation, etc.

Future generations have a right to see these animals