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(a) Higher counting efficiencies, especially for low energy emitters such as tritium

(b) Greatly improved isotope separation in double-label counting

**HIGHER COUNTING EFFICIENCIES**

Previously, coincidence-type liquid scintillation spectrometers were able to utilize the pulse output from only one of the two photomultiplier tubes—the Analyzer—for pulse height analysis. Pulses from the second photomultiplier tube—the Monitor—served only to provide coincidence signals.

New Tri-Carb Spectrometers incorporate a pair of carefully matched 13-dynode photomultiplier tubes. Pulses from both tubes are used to establish coincidence, and simultaneously they are summed prior to pulse height analysis. This results in an improvement in the signal-to-noise ratio by a factor of two, since random noise pulses do not sum and coincident pulses do. Further, the use of 13-dynode photomultiplier tubes obviates the need for preamplifier circuits which inherently tend to slow down the pulse rise time and which contribute to the noise level. This permits much faster coincidence resolving time and relatively lower discriminator settings. The overall benefit is to provide higher counting efficiencies for low energy isotopes.

**GREATLY IMPROVED ISOTOPE SEPARATION**

A further advantage of pulse summation is the more faithful reproduction of the true spectral shapes of low energy isotopes. The total number of photons emitted for each low energy beta particle is very small. Even with the best light collection and photocathode conversion efficiencies, only one or two photoelectrons are produced in each photomultiplier tube from an average 6 KeV tritium particle. Obviously, with such small numbers, a substantial advantage can be achieved in the statistics of photon collection and photoelectron utilization by doubling the numbers through the full use of both photomultiplier tubes for pulse summation and subsequent pulse height analysis. The more precise spectral curves achieved in new Tri-Carb Spectrometers, as a result of better statistics, provide very greatly improved separation of low energy isotopes such as tritium and carbon-14.

Comparison demonstrating greatly improved isotope separation obtainable with new TRI-CARB Spectrometers by showing percentage of total carbon-14 which appears beyond tritium cut-off. Data is directly comparable in both cases: discriminator levels were set so that only 0.01% tritium remained in the carbon-14.

Pulse summation is just one of many significant new features now available in Packard Tri-Carb Spectrometers. Ask your Packard Sales Engineer for complete details, or write for Bulletin.

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ion bombardment at low temperatures in the electron microscope itself and the structural changes in NaCl wafers held at low temperatures during observation with an electron microscope. Other applications of electron microscopy have been in the fields of analysis, lubrication, structure of glass, and polymer research.

Rapid advances in the electron microscopy of biological specimens in the last few years have been closely related to developments in embedding techniques; the current status was reviewed in a symposium on embedding of cells and tissues with J. Luft as chairman. The requirements and properties of embedding materials for electron microscopy were discussed and evaluated in terms of the most commonly used materials, that is, methacrylates, vestopals, and the epoxy resins. The use of water-soluble embedding media for cytochemical localization was also covered. While the epoxy resins are now probably the most widely used, it was concluded that no one material can render consistently good general embedding. It was suggested that a major factor may be the lack of standardization of the various production lots of the component materials. The biologist must continually adapt the embedding procedures and materials to obtain optimum results.

A very wide variety of biological subjects covered general animal and plant cell morphology, viruses, neoplasms, and protein fibers. Reports covered the structure of viruses and the changes they bring about in various cell types. The methods of negative staining and enzyme digestion were widely employed in elucidating viral structure. Various aspects of normal morphology, experimental pathology, and human biopsy were covered during several talks on electron microscopy of liver.

The wide variety of topics presented in the biological sessions gave the participants a good spectrum of the progress of electron microscopy outside their own specialty.

Abstracts of the papers have been published in the August 1963 issue of the Journal of Applied Physics.

F. W. C. Boswell
Department of Physics, University of Waterloo, WaterloO, Ontario, Canada

G. D. Pappas
Department of Anatomy, College of Physicians and Surgeons, of Columbia University, New York 32

British Association for the Advancement of Science

The 125th annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science was held in Aberdeen, England, 28 August–4 September 1963. As usual, the sessions were directed chiefly to the informed public, and consisted primarily of series of reports by outstanding British scientists on current developments in scientific affairs which might have popular interest. In the traditional manner there were many splendid receptions by the University, with confering of honorary degrees, and with special dinners, lunches and receptions by civic groups.

At the opening session, Sir Eric Ashby delivered the presidential address; his subject was “Investment in man.” Honorary degrees were conferred upon Sir George Allen, secretary of the British Association; Sir Charles Morris, vice-chancellor of the University of Leeds; and J. M. Robertson, Gardiner professor of chemistry at the University of Glasgow.

Featured were the presidential addresses in the various sections. For the section on physics and mathematics, J. S. Forrest considered the problems of “High voltage insulation.” J. M. Robertson discussed “A physical approach to chemical structure” for the section on chemistry. F. F. Darling, for the section on zoology, outlined “The unity of ecology,” and for the section on medicine, J. McMichael reported on “The contribution of clinical medicine to physiology.” For the section on geography, H. C. Darby discussed British National Parks, and for the section on agriculture, Martin Jones analyzed food supplies for man and beast. The section on psychology heard a discussion from O. L. Zangwill on “Cerebral localization of psychological function.”

A significant part of the Aberdeen meeting, which extended through 4 half-day sessions and was appealing both to the public and to specialists, was a symposium on land use in the Scottish uplands. In these sessions, the British Association emphasized two of its important functions: (i) it allowed for public presentation of contributions of scientists to the solution of an urgent practical problem in the management of natural resources; and (ii) it demonstrated the value of a broadly based scientific approach to a major topical question by bringing together geographers, botanists, zoologists, agricultrists, economists, and other repre-
sentatives of various scientific disciplines. Another interesting topical symposium dealt with the effects of radiation on humans and animals.

The Lister lecture was delivered by T. P. Morris on “Science and morals in the treatment of deviant behaviour.” J. N. Murrell gave the Kelvin lecture on color and chemical constitution, while the Darwin lecture was presented by L. Wolpert on “Growing in a definite shape.” A special program was arranged for young people. This included the York lecture by Sir Raymond Priestly on “Antarctic exploration yesterday and today,” public forums, and a science fair. A feature of the meeting was a series of special scientific films and various visual presentations of scientific developments.

Representatives from the American Association for the Advancement of Science, who extended greetings to the British Association on its 125th birthday, were President and Mrs. Alan T. Waterman, Mr. and Mrs. Edward E. Sherburne, Jr., and the undersigned. Sherburne is AAAS Director of Studies on the Public Understanding of Science. I extended belated thanks to the British Association for having given the first grant-in-aid, of which I can find record, in 1840 to James Blake (1851–93) who later became California’s first great scientist. The grant, amounting to about $300 a year for 5 years, was offered to help Blake in his studies on biological action of inorganic compounds. From his research he was able to induce what we call the Periodic Table.

CHANCEY D. LEAKE
University of California Medical Center, San Francisco

Forthcoming Events

November

18-20. Engineering in Medicine and Biology, 16th annual conf. and exhibit, Baltimore, Md. (H. Gilmer, 933 Ridge Ave., Pittsburgh 12, Pa.)


18-22. Plastics, 10th natl. exposition, Chicago, Ill. (J. Paluszek, G. M. Basford Co., 60 E. 42 St., New York 17)

19-21 American Physical Soc., Norman Okla. (K. K. Darrow, 538 W. 120th St., New York 27)

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The purpose of the volume is primarily to focus attention on the growing problems of international usages and goals in terms of the different systems employed, as contrasted to those of our own national operations tied to established practices. The purpose of this volume is to alert the technologists on the general confused situation, the clammers, the needs, and the proposals to ameliorate the confusion.

CONTENTS

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Practices and Problems in Technology
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Volume No. 57

SYSTEMS OF UNITS—NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS

Editor: Carl F. Kayan
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Presented by 33 American and European authors at the Washington meeting, AAAS, December 1958
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