

permanent record of its indebtedness to the community and its citizens.

### THE SECRETARIES CONFERENCE

(From report by Ernest Carroll Faust, secretary)

The Secretaries Conference was held December 29, 1940, following a complimentary dinner by the A. A. S. to the secretaries of the sections and affiliated societies. Otis W. Caldwell presided over a symposium discussion on "Organized Science and Democracy," which was divided into four topics: "In What Ways Has Organized Science Helped Democracy," by Leonard Carmichael; "In What Ways Has Organized Science Hindered the Development of Democracy," by Harlan T. Stetson; "Practical Steps to Improve the Contributions of Science and Democracy," by F. R. Moulton, and "Problems in the Development of an Effective Program Furthering Democracy, with Special Reference to the A. A. S. Sections and Society Programs," by H. H. Remmers.

Dr. Carmichael pointed out that organized science, as exemplified in the National Scientific Roster, is not only of great value to democracy in the national crisis, but will be of value in formulating new concepts of democracy along scientific lines. The faults of organized science, according to Dr. Stetson, are overspecialization, lack of cooperation between scientists and misuse of scientific discoveries. Dr. Moulton stated the chief functions of science and particularly of the American Association are to keep clear minds in a complex, disturbed world and provide an example of cooperation and integration. The main problems in developing an effective program for science, as brought out by Dr. Remmers, are the development of sound scientific methods in studying the "human sciences" that deal with man in his relation to science and society and the formulation of a clear definition of democracy as a prerequisite to scientific study of recognized social ills. An important function of the association is to acquire new knowledge in the social sciences and to disseminate scientifically validated knowledge as widely as possible. These talks were followed with active discussion by the secretaries continuing until 11 P.M. Attendance, 34.

### THE ACADEMY CONFERENCE

(From report by S. W. Bilsing, secretary)

The Academy Conference held its 14th annual session December 27, 1940. Representatives of 19 of the academies of science affiliated with the A. A. S. and several members of the Executive Committee of the association, as well as a number of visitors from various academies of science, attended the conference.

Two formal papers were presented, the first by P. D. Strausbaugh, of the West Virginia Academy, on "Methods of Bringing the Academy into Closer Rela-

tionships with Other Organizations," and the second by W. F. Rudd, of the Virginia Academy, on "Long Range Planning for the State Academies of Science." In addition to the formal papers, informal discussions were held on a variety of subjects of importance, such as junior academies of science, the formation of collegiate sections in the academies, the status of junior academy memberships in the A. A. S. and the research grants given by the A. A. S. to the academies.

At the close of the session J. C. Gilman (Iowa Academy), chairman of the Academy Conference during the past year, introduced the incoming chairman, P. D. Strausbaugh (West Virginia Academy). V. Earl Light (Pennsylvania Academy) was elected secretary for the next quadrennium, and S. W. Bilsing (Texas Academy) was elected vice-chairman for the coming year. Attendance, 28.

### GENERAL SESSIONS

Rarely has a meeting of the association had so many distinguished speakers for its general sessions as the one at Philadelphia. These sessions provide opportunities for scientists to turn aside for a time from their various specialties while they listen to surveys and syntheses of broad fields of science, often in relation to the problems of civilization. Since they are open to the general public they provide opportunities also for intelligent persons having widely different interests to become acquainted through authoritative sources with recent conclusions and implications of science.

The feature of the first general session was the address, on Friday evening, Dec. 27, of Dr. Walter B. Cannon, George Higginson professor of physiology in Harvard Medical School and the retiring president of the association. Dr. Cannon's distinguished address, the title of which is "The Body Physiologic and the Body Politic," was published in the Jan. 3, 1941, issue of SCIENCE. In the course of it Dr. Cannon discussed a number of important analogies between the functions and the interdependencies of the myriads of organs and units of the human body and the functions and the interdependencies of the constituents of human society. With great clarity he described various ways in which the human body has acquired what he calls "the wisdom of the body" during the long period of its evolution and of its constant adjustment to its environment. He then explained, with many an apt illustration and comparison, that the acquiring of corresponding wisdom in the body politic is the only sure road toward an ideal social order. He repeated a digest of his address over the national network of the Columbia Broadcasting System.

On Sunday evening, Dec. 29, Walter Lippmann, distinguished editor, author and columnist, delivered

# Science

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*Science* **93** (2406), 122.  
DOI: 10.1126/science.93.2406.122-a

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