

suggestions for basic alterations should be supported by well-thought-out proposals and should be subjected to prolonged and public discussion, as in the pages of the official journal. Until great interest and able leadership become evident in favor of a change, the conference felt that our organization should be left without fundamental alteration.

The minutes of the New York session of the secretaries' conference are to be mailed to the conference members in the near future, and members will be asked to make and to consider suggestions for the work of the conference during 1929 and for the program of its Des Moines session next December.

#### THE NEW YORK SESSION OF THE ACADEMY CONFERENCE

THE academy conference acts as a special committee of the American Association, on the relations between the affiliated academies of science and between them and the association. The association is anxious to aid the academies in every way and especially to facilitate their representing the aims and purposes of the association in their respective regions. The facilities of the permanent secretary's office are at the disposal of the academy conference in the carrying on of its work. The conference consists of the representatives of the affiliated academies in the association council and three members named by the executive committee to represent the association as a whole in the deliberations of the conference. The conference has a secretary, elected at its annual session at the time of the annual meeting of the association. He conducts correspondence with the members throughout the year and formulates therefrom a program for discussion at the next conference session. The work of the organization was well started in 1928, by William H. Alexander and Howard E. Enders, conference chairman and secretary for that year, and an interesting session, at which great enthusiasm was shown, was held at New York, following the first council session on Thursday afternoon, December 27. The session was followed by the annual complimentary academy dinner, to which conference members were invited by the association, and that dinner proved to be a very profitable and enjoyable feature of the New York meeting.

Dr. D. W. Morehouse, representing the Iowa Academy of Science, was elected secretary of the academy conference for 1929, and Dr. Howard E. Enders, representing the Indiana Academy of Science, who had been conference secretary for 1928, is chairman of the conference for 1929. These elections were subsequently approved by the council of the association.

Since the business of the academy conference deals with matters specially interesting to the academy representatives and since this conference is but newly organized, it will not be necessary in this place to

report in detail on its work, and the permanent secretary wishes only to record the fact that the conference is now actively functioning and that it appears to have before it a very useful future. This report of progress may be added to at a later time, as the work of the conference takes definite form. It is expected that its work will shortly become of great interest not only to all academy members but to the general membership of the association as well.

#### THE PRESIDENT ELECT

ROBERT ANDREWS MILLIKAN, distinguished president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science for 1929, is of New England stock, of Scotch and English descent. His father, Rev. Silas Franklin Millikan, who was a graduate of Oberlin College, preached for forty years in Congregational churches of Illinois, Iowa and Kansas. His mother, Mary Jane Andrews, was also a graduate of Oberlin College and she had been dean of women in Olivet College, Michigan. President Millikan received the A.B. degree from Oberlin College in 1891 and taught elementary physics there during the following two years. He received the Ph.D. degree in physics at Columbia University in 1895 and spent the next year studying physics in the universities of Berlin and Göttingen. Assistant in physics at the University of Chicago in 1896-97, he passed rapidly forward and attained a professorship in 1910, a position which he held for eleven years. Since 1921 he has been director of the Norman Bridge Laboratory of Physics, of the California Institute of Technology, at Pasadena.

It is interesting to note that Millikan's special interest in physics, the science that owes so much to his many brilliant and successful research contributions as well as to his eminently clear and inspirational teaching and writing, does not appear to have dated from his college days. In his undergraduate period at Oberlin College he was most absorbed in Greek and mathematics and he limited himself to a single one-semester course in physics. His deep and lasting interest in his chosen science developed in connection with his teaching of the subject after his graduation. As an undergraduate he took prominent part in many student activities; he was an athlete of some local success, he was president of his class in the sophomore year, editor-in-chief of the college annual in his junior year, acted as student gymnasium director during his junior and senior years and made the speech on behalf of his class at the time of his graduation. He is still an enthusiastic tennis player.

For a third of a century Dr. Millikan has been actively and indefatigably engaged in physical research, chiefly in the fields of electricity, optics and molecular physics. The following brief summary of some of our new president's best-known investigations,

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