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ACADEMIES OF SCIENCE AND THE COOPERATIVE SPIRIT IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH¹

By Dr. C. A. BROWNE

U. S. BUREAU OF CHEMISTRY AND SOILS

IN coming to you on this occasion as a representative of the United States Department of Agriculture and as a delegate of the American Association for the Advancement of Science I wish to convey the best wishes of both of these great scientific organizations for the success of the project which you are now inaugurating—the establishment of the Florida Academy of Sciences.

An academy of sciences has been defined as a society or corporate body which has for its object the cultivation and promotion of the whole general field of science, with no other motive than that of the pure love for scientific pursuits. The earliest prototype of such an organization was the celebrated Museum of Alexandria founded by the first of the Ptolemies in the

third century, B.C., in which the most learned astronomers, geometers, mathematicians, geographers, mechanics and devotees of the various natural sciences in the ancient Greek world gathered for consultation, study and instruction. The great benefit derived from the Museum of Alexandria is evident from the important discoveries which were made by the Greek scientists of this institution during the many centuries of its existence.

The various European academies of science which sprang into existence in the seventeenth century had a purpose very similar to that of the Alexandrian museum. Like their ancient prototype, these modern scientific academies brought together eminent specialists from different fields and thus fostered a cooperative spirit in their search for new knowledge.

It is a truism to affirm that the cooperation of scien-

¹ Inaugural address before the Florida Academy of Sciences, Gainesville, Florida, May 8, 1936.

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