

Dr. H. F. Osborn Head of American Association

Additional reports of the Nashville meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, by Watson Davis and Frank Thone, are given here and elsewhere in this issue.

Prof. Henry Fairfield Osborn, president of the American Museum of Natural History, will head the American Association for the Advancement of Science for the coming year.

Prof. Osborn is one of the foremost leaders in vertebrate paleontology in the country. The outstanding position occupied by the American Museum's collection in this branch of science is largely the result of his efforts. The museum halls illustrating the evolution of the mammals and the genealogy of man are famous for their fossil exhibits and mural paintings of the life of early man.

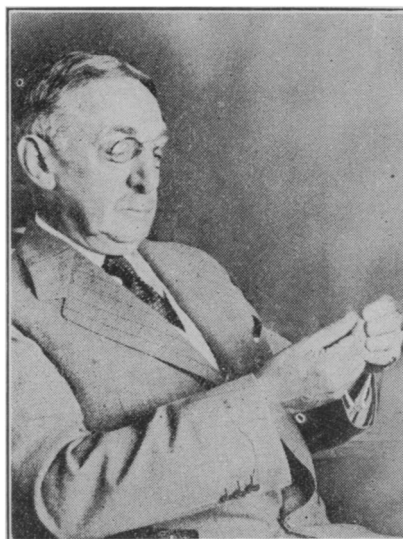
Prof. Osborn has served on the faculties of both Princeton and Columbia but for the last two decades he has been affiliated with the museum and been prominent in the promotion of expeditions into the unknown regions of the interior of Asia that have produced such fossil finds as the widely discussed dinosaur eggs. His own special interest is elephants and mammoths.

A member of the National Academy, he has been the recipient of many honors and medals both here and abroad. He is the author of numerous books and scientific papers, among which the best known to the public are "Men of the Old Stone Age," "From the Greeks to Darwin," and "The Earth Speaks to Bryan."

Thirty-four years ago, when Prof. Osborn read his first paper before the American Association, he was much discouraged by the apparent indifference of his audience. It turned out, however, that among his hearers was the brilliant paleontologist, Waldemar Kowalevsky, who was sufficiently impressed to seek out young Osborn some time after the meeting and assure him of his interest.

"This anecdote," said Prof. Osborn, "illustrates one of the chief advantages of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and of its foster parent, the British Association for the Advancement of Science founded several years earlier, namely, the bringing together of scientists, young and old, from all parts of the world."

On being asked about the program



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of the American Association for 1928, Prof. Osborn said that he had had no opportunity of consulting his colleagues, including the newly elected vice-presidents of the various sections which cover the whole scale of science from higher mathematics and astronomy to the remotest applications of science in sociology, economics and agriculture.

"In general," he stated, "the problem before the association is always twofold, namely, enlightenment of the mass of people and encouragement of the few and advanced specialists in various fields of research.

"In America in recent years this disseminating process has been greatly accelerated by the cooperation of the entire American press. The press is to be congratulated on its honest endeavor to exclude sensationalism and to present abstruse scientific truths so far as possible in the language of the man of the street.

"It is premature," he continued, "even to attempt to forecast what will be the prevailing trend of addresses in various fields of science in the American Association meeting in 1928, but it is safe to assume that vice-presidents of various sections, like Professor Guyer of Wisconsin, Professor Warren of Princeton, Professor Leverett of the U. S. Geological Survey and University of Wisconsin, will present latest aspects of their respective researches in experimental zoology, experimental psychology, glaciology of the northern centennial masses. Amer-

ican scientists lean rather toward presentation of recent discoveries than historical or retrospective treatment chosen in many British association discourses. The location of the coming eightieth meeting of the American Association in New York City will doubtless color some of the addresses which naturally take a trend that may be illustrated by excursions to local centers of geologic, biologic or economic interest."

Prof. Osborn outlined his intention of avoiding scientific controversy of all kinds, stating that controversial spirit arouses emotions and prejudices which prevent clear dispassionate scientific consideration. The subject of his presidential discourse in 1928 will be one of general interest, he declared, but will not be one fanning the flames of past controversies, either in science, religion or philosophy.

To assist Prof. Osborn as president, vice-presidents of the various sections were elected, all of them authorities in their respective fields. Dr. K. C. Archibald, of Brown University, was elected for Section A (mathematics); Dr. P. W. Bridgman of Harvard, Section B (physics); Dr. C. E. K. Mees of the Eastman Kodak Laboratory, Section C (chemistry); Dr. J. S. Plaskett of the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory, Canada, Section D (astronomy); Dr. Frank Leverett, University of Michigan, Section E (geology and geography); Dr. M. F. Guyer, University of Wisconsin, Section F (zoology); Dr. C. E. Allen, University of Wisconsin, Section G (botany); Dr. Fay-Cooper Cole, University of Chicago, Section H (anthropology); Dr. H. C. Warren, Princeton, Section I (psychology); Dr. R. L. Sackett, Penna. State College, Section M (engineering); Dr. A. J. Goldfarb, College of City of New York, Section N (medicine); Dr. C. A. Mooers, University of Tennessee, Section O (agriculture), and Dr. Truman L. Kelley, Stanford University, Section Q (education).

Dr. Arthur H. Compton, of the University of Chicago, was elected to the association's council, along with Austin H. Clark, of the Smithsonian Institution. Dr. John Johnston, chemist of New York, and Dr. David R. Curtis, of Northwestern University, were elected to the executive committee.

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