retary. Dr. Fred E. Wright of the Carnegie Institution, of Washington, former vice-president, became home secretary. Dr. W. B. Cannon of Harvard Medical School was re-elected to the Council of the Academy, and Dr. Roger Adams of the University of Illinois was chosen as his associate on the Council.

One Foreign Associate was elected by the Academy: Dr. Peter Debye, experimental physicist of the University of Leipzig, Germany.

New members were elected as follows: Henry Bryant Bigelow, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Mass., oceanography; Edwin Broun Fred, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis., bacteriology; Edwin Crawford Kemble, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., physics; Adolph Knopf, Yale University, New Haven, Conn., geology; Robert Harry Lowie, University of California, Berkeley, Calif., anthropology; Joseph Haines Moore, Lick Observatory, Mt. Hamilton, Calif., astronomy; Robert Lee Moore, Austin, Texas, mathematics; Hermann Joseph Muller, University of Texas, Austin, Texas, genetics; George Linius Streeter, Department of Embryology, Carnegie Institution, Baltimore, Md., embryology; Margaret Floy Washburn, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N. Y., psychology.

Science News Letter, May 9, 1931

ZOOLOGY

Python Likes New Home; Lays Clutch of Eggs

ONE OF the big pythons in the U. S. Zoological Park recently celebrated her transfer to the more comfortable and homelike quarters of the new reptile house there by laying a clutch of twenty eggs.

The picture on the cover of this issue of the SCIENCE NEWS LETTER shows her exercising the serpentine version of maternal care: most of the time, as a matter of fact, the eggs are kept quite invisible beneath her coils. The eggs, like many reptile eggs, have tough, parchment-like shells rather than the hard limy coverings characteristic of bird eggs.

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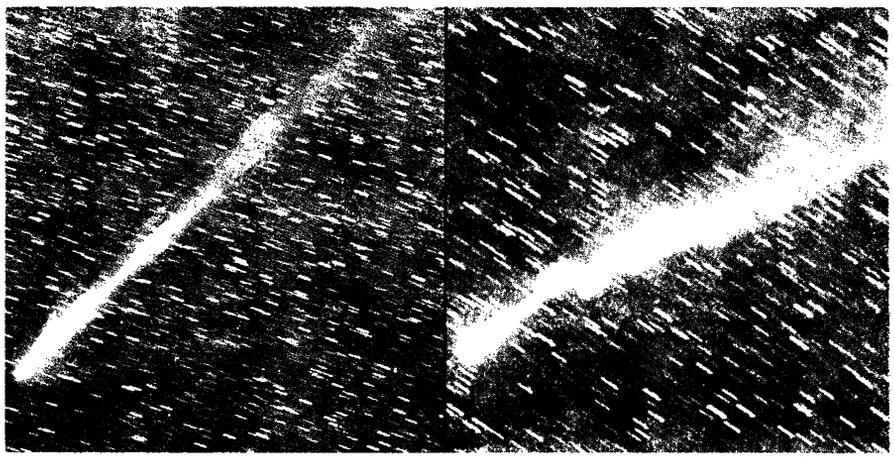
The cost of accidents in the United States is in the end paid by the ultimate consumer, and amounts to $20 a year for each person in the country, declares the president of the National Safety Council.



HOW A COMET BREAKS UP

The comet 1908c on successive days, October 14 and 15, showed this mysterious and rapid change in its appearance through the ten-inch telescope of the Yerkes Observatory. Now for the first time an explanation has been given. In agreement with Maris' new theory, a great magnetic storm occurred on the earth at the same time.. Surges of ultraviolet light from the sun are believed to cause both effects.

ASTROPHYSICS

Pressure of Sunlight Strong Enough to Break Comet in Two

GREAT outbursts of ultraviolet light from the sun may press so hard on the tail of a comet as to break it in two. This is the theory presented in Washington before the American Geophysical Union by Dr. H. B. Maris of the U. S. Naval Research Laboratory.

The curious fact that sunlight can cause such huge pressures as this is at the basis of Dr. Maris' new theory of the irregular variations of brightness observed in comets. During periods when many sunspots are visible, the ultraviolet light streaming out from the sun may increase as much as a thousand times.

The atmosphere of a comet is transparent to visible light but strongly absorbs ultraviolet light which, because of this absorption, exerts a pressure on it. The effect on the comet is to create a strong wind in its atmosphere moving away from the sun. Thus that part of a comet that feels the pressure most may get a violent jolt when a new whirlpool appears in the sun.

Magnetic storms, those great fluctuations of the earth's magnetic forces, often accompany or anticipate the unusual changes in comet activity. Since the magnetic effects are known to be due to the ultraviolet surges associated with bright spots on the sun, this forms additional support for the new theory of comet behavior.

Comet activity shows itself by changes in the brightness of the atmosphere of the comet, similar to those observed on the earth during a display of the aurora or northern lights. The aurora is caused by increased ultraviolet light from the sun, said Dr. Maris. It occurs at the same times as the magnetic storms.

Dr. Maris studied records of the great comets of last century. He found that the splitting of a comet was accompanied or preceded in nearly every case by a great magnetic disturbance on the earth.

The great comet of 1882 met a tremendous solar disturbance at the time of its approach to the sun. Dr. Maris believes that this was the cause of its subsequent disruption.

Science News Letter, May 9, 1931

PHOTOGRAPHY-MEDICINE

New Camera Photographs Disease in Ear

THE INTERIOR of the human ear can now be photographed with a new camera developed by Dr. Richard Millar, director of the photography division of the Methodist Hospital of Indianapolis.

The ear camera is hailed by the medical world as a distinct step forward in the treatment of ear diseases. For the