

GENERAL SCIENCE

Scientists Organize to Study Social Aspects of Science

American Association of Scientific Workers, Like British Group, Wants Better Use of Science Research

A NEW kind of scientific society oriented toward economic action is in the making.

It is the American Association of Scientific Workers, born of spontaneous organization efforts in Philadelphia and Cambridge, Mass. Plans are being perfected to multiply these two pioneering sections and to bring into the new association scientists in all parts of the nation.

Bringing scientific workers together to promote an understanding of the relationship between science and social problems is the primary objective of the AASW. It is planned to organize and express opinions on steps to be taken toward the solution of such problems, and to promote all possible action on the conclusions achieved.

The American Association of Scientific Workers parallels closely the Association of Scientific Workers organized in Great Britain in 1918.

Sir F. Gowland Hopkins, Nobelist and world-famous authority on the vitamins, has already given his support to the AASW, speaking as president of the British ASW:

"In these days when science plays so great a part in every field of modern life it is essential for scientific workers to organize, both to protect their own economic and professional status and to work for the better organization and application of science for the benefit of the community. These problems are not confined to one country, and the ASW welcomes the formation of a brother organization in America."

In the original list of sponsors for the AASW are such science leaders as: Dr. Harold C. Urey, Columbia University Nobelist in chemistry, Prof. A. J. Carlson of the University of Chicago; Prof. Robert Chambers of New York University; Dr. A. C. Ivy of Northwestern University; Dr. Leo Loeb of Washington University; Prof. J. R. Oppenheimer of the University of California; Prof. Henry E. Sigerist of Johns Hopkins, and Dr. Edward C. Tolman of the University of California.

Organization is in the hands of Donald Horton of Philadelphia, corresponding secretary, and Dr. Kenneth V. Thimann of Harvard's Biological Laboratories.

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It is politically important that all shall know that all men, except identical twins, are created not equal but unequal, Dr. Riddle declared. It is important, he urged, to have this fact assimilated and well known by the public at large in order that democracies may avoid the unreason and the extremes that may destroy them.

No optimum of future man is thinkable without some selection and control of those permitted to live or of those permitted to reproduce, Dr. Riddle declared. Men may as well make up their minds "that neither magic, tea-leaf reading nor prayer will suffice for checking the physical degeneration of the race."

Praising newspapers that publish scientific news and interpretations, Dr. Riddle nevertheless pointed out that 256 American newspapers carry astrological services to cater to the people's uneducated appetite for myth and magic.

"Men now begin to feel that we are entering a socially-minded age" Dr. Riddle conceded, "but only a few begin to see and say that democracies may obtain more of chaos than of comfort if their peoples are left unacquainted with realities and with the forces of impelling social change.

"Only dictatorships can blacken out the sphere of reason and still avoid chaos. Indeed, the very principle of democracy is already in the midst of a grim and cruel struggle for survival. Yet our educational programs nowhere now support freedom and democracy as civilization itself demands."

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Pupils Kept in Ignorance Of Facts of Life Sciences

SCHOOL boys and girls of America are kept in ignorance of the basic facts of man's origin and destiny through a fundamental lack of freedom of thought in our schools.

This was the serious charge made by Dr. Oscar Riddle of the Carnegie Institution's biology laboratories at Cold Spring Harbor, N. Y., in his presidential address before the National Association of Biology Teachers.

"Our schools turn out a generation of minds dulled to the best of science," said Dr. Riddle, "though that genera-

tion must live in an age shaped by science and though that generation is called upon to make momentous decisions on the complex social adjustments imposed by application of scientific discovery.

"Except perhaps for a little while in ancient and magnificent Greece, no one has yet had opportunity to see a single generation of human beings develop without the repressing influences on free inquiry which religious tradition throws around the basic problems of the life sciences."

MEDICINE

Cancer Less Common Among Women With Large Families

CANCER appears to be slightly less common an occurrence among women who have had many children than among women with few children, Dr. Herbert L. Lombard of the Massachusetts Department of Health told the American Statistical Association.

This greater tendency on the part of women with small families to develop cancer is probably linked with biological inferiority and their relative inability to have large families, Dr. Lombard indicated.

Studying a possible link between cancer and heredity, Dr. Lombard found that the difference in occurrence of the dread disease between individuals whose parents had the disease and those who did not "is so slight as to be almost negligible."

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