

American Association for Adult Education, New York; Mr. Gobind Behari Lal, science editor, Hearst Newspapers, New York; Mr. Thomas R. Henry, staff correspondent, the *Washington Star*, Washington; and Mr. Howard W. Blakeslee, science editor, the Associated Press, New York. It is expected that the contributions of these writers and others will be published in a forthcoming number of *Science*.

It was gratifying to note the interest taken in this symposium by the members of the Association, and to observe the co-operative spirit—indeed, the cordial relationship—that now exists between the scientific men and the representatives of the Press. For it is only within the past few years that science and the Press have come really to understand and to appreciate each other.

The present system of reporting science in the Press of the United States may be said to have had its inception in 1921. In that year, the late Mr. Edward Willis Scripps established the organisation known as 'Science Service', which had as its object making "the greatest use of the press in the way of disseminating the knowledge which is the result of painstaking research carried on by a few hundred, or at least a few thousand, well trained men with great mental capacity". In the same year the Scripps-Howard newspapers appointed Mr. David Dietz as science editor, and Mr. Alva Johnston was selected to write the articles on science for the *New York Times*.

The Boston meeting of the Association in 1922 was reported to the Press by Science Service, Mr. Dietz and Mr. Johnston. For his work in reporting this meeting Mr. Johnston was awarded the Pulitzer prize of one thousand dollars for "the best job of reporting done during the year". The award naturally attracted attention to science writing, and within the next few years several other newspapers, among them the *Washington Star*, the *New York Herald-Tribune* and the *Detroit News*, designated young men of outstanding ability as scientific writers for them.

In 1927 the Associated Press, a co-operative Press association furnishing news to about 1,300 newspapers, appointed two of its ablest young men as science editors, whose duty it was to write science exclusively for the member newspapers. In selecting the men for these positions, Mr. Kent Cooper, the general manager, adopted the principle that the best results in writing science for the Press are to be obtained by men who are, primarily, trained journalists of exceptional ability. This principle has proved to be sound, and has been generally followed by the Press in the United States.

In April 1934 there was organised the National Association of Science Writers, with the membership limited to staff members of newspapers and press associations who devote their major efforts to science. The purpose of this Association is "to foster the dissemination of accurate scientific knowledge by the press of the Nation, in cooperation with scientific organisations and individual scientists". The charter members were twelve in number, representing the Associated Press (2), Science Service (2), the Scripps-Howard Newspapers, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the *Washington Star*, the *New York Times* (2), the Hearst Newspapers, the *New York Herald-Tribune* and the *Detroit News*. One honorary member was elected. Mr. David Dietz, science editor of the Scripps-Howard Newspapers, who is a fellow of the Royal

Astronomical Society and has attended and reported meetings of the British Association, was elected president.

The growth of interest in science on the part of the Press of the United States is well shown by the fact that at the recent Pittsburgh meeting of the Association there were sixteen science writers from other cities, ten of them members of the National Association of Science Writers. At the meeting in Boston in the preceding year there were ten from other cities. At the Boston meeting in 1922 there had been only four.

Appreciation of the excellent work the science writers connected with the daily Press are doing is being shown in many different ways. As examples it may be mentioned that during the past year the commencement oration at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, at Cambridge, Massachusetts, was delivered by Mr. Howard W. Blakeslee, science editor of the Associated Press, and the commencement oration at the Carnegie Institute of Technology, at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was given by Mr. Waldemar Kaempffert, science editor of the *New York Times*. Also, Mr. Thomas R. Henry, science writer for the *Washington Star*, was elected a member of the Washington Academy of Sciences as an appreciation of his work, and shortly thereafter addressed the Academy on the relation between science and the newspapers.

In the United States, the newspapers have now become an important element in the scientific complex of the country. They are by far the most important intermediary between those who are engaged in scientific work and the public at large. As such, they are the most important factor, so far as science is concerned, in what is commonly called adult education. It is a pleasure to be able to state that they appreciate their responsibilities and are doing everything in their power, at no small expense to themselves, for the common good.

University and Educational Intelligence

BIRMINGHAM.—The Huxley Lecture is to be delivered on March 14 at 5.30 p.m. in the medical theatre by Sir Thomas Lewis, who has chosen for his subject "Clinical Science within the University".

CAMBRIDGE.—Prof. Othenio Abel, recently appointed professor of geology and palæontology in the University of Göttingen, will give three lectures on palæobiology and evolution in the Department of Zoology at 5 p.m. on February 11, 13 and 15.

The Faculty Board of Archæology and Anthropology has appointed T. T. Paterson, of Trinity College, and J. R. B. Stewart, of Trinity Hall, to Anthony Wilkin studentships.

LONDON.—The County Borough Council of Croydon is making a grant of £10,000, payable over ten years, towards the erection of new buildings in Bloomsbury, and the Westminster Bank has granted £500 for the same purpose.

OXFORD.—The scientific work of early members of Oriel College was the subject of a public lecture by Dr. Gunther on February 2. The benefactions to the library and list of graduates show that medical studies flourished there at the end of the sixteenth

century, when Thomas Cohan wrote his "Haven of Health", for the welfare of students living in Oxford. Special mention was made of the work of Hariot the mathematician, of Merrett and Dyer among botanists, and finally of Gilbert White and of those Tractarians who attended scientific lectures.

At a meeting of Congregation to be held on February 12, details of the establishment of a museum of the history of science will be presented. It is suggested that the museum shall consist of the collection of scientific instruments and books presented to the University by the late Mr. Lewis Evans in 1924, any additions made to the collection since 1924, and any further additions of objects and books illustrating the history of science, with special reference to scientific work in Oxford, as may be accepted or acquired by the University after the passing of the statute. A committee, consisting of the Vice-Chancellor, the proctors, and six others, would be appointed. The duties of the committee would be to appoint a curator of the museum, to accept or otherwise acquire, outright or on loan, objects and books illustrating the history of science, and to formulate rules for the governing of the museum.

Science News a Century Ago

The Royal Geographical Society

At a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society held on February 9, 1835, an extract was read from the private journal kept by Mr. Oldfield, late surgeon with Mr. Lander, detailing the circumstances which attended the attempt made by the expedition to ascend the Tshadda (Benue), the great eastern confluent of the Quorra (Niger). From these it appeared that the chief difficulty arose from the alarm, and consequent hostility, of the natives, which made it impossible to obtain supplies of provisions. Otherwise the stream, though rapid, running at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ knots, was easily ascended by the steamer, and though navigation of the river was uncertain, the bed of the river being thickly set with small islands and shoals, it was not difficult, and appeared even clearer where the expedition stopped than lower down. The utmost extent reached was 110 miles.

Chesney's Expedition to the Euphrates

A century ago both the British and Indian Governments were taking steps to further the project of shortening the passage to India by means of steam navigation. In connexion with this, Col. Francis Rawdon Chesney (1789-1872) was entrusted with the task of exploring the route via the Euphrates. For this expedition, Laird's of Birkenhead constructed two small iron steamers, the *Euphrates*, 105 ft. long, 50 h.p., and the *Tigris*, 86 ft. long, 20 h.p., which were to be conveyed to Syria and transported in sections across the desert to the banks of the Euphrates. When ready, the steamers were stowed aboard the sailing vessel *George Canning*, which left Liverpool on February 11, 1835, with some of the members of the expedition. Writing of this event, the *Athenæum* said that it was intended that the *George Canning* should call at Cork, from which place she was to be escorted to the River Orontes by H.M. Steam Vessel *Alban*. Some workmen from Laird's accompanied the expedition, which

included also some artillerymen who had been instructed in iron working.

While the main object of the expedition was to survey the Euphrates as far as the Persian Gulf, attention was not to be entirely confined to steam communication, for it would provide opportunity, said the *Athenæum*, "to make the necessary examinations of that celebrated part of the world, where the first human formations may be looked for with confidence". The expedition met with many difficulties and it was not until March 16, 1836, that the steamers began the descent of the river. On the passage down, the *Tigris*, with all her journals and surveys, was lost, and Chesney was nearly drowned. He, however, continued the voyage in the *Euphrates* and on June 19, 1836, reached the Indian Ocean. His account of the expedition was published in 1850.

Matthias Baldwin's Locomotives

No one in America contributed more to the improvement of the locomotive than Matthias Baldwin (1795-1866), who in 1835 transferred his works from Minor Street, Philadelphia, to Broad Street. The Franklin Institute was much interested in his work and on February 12, 1835, the committee on science and the arts of the Institute submitted a report on the locomotives he was then building, in which it found "numerous improvements affecting nearly every part of the machine". The report made special mention of his improvements in the valves, the feed pumps, the reversing gear and the axles and wheels. Mr. Baldwin, it was stated, "has completed several engines; one of them may be seen in operation on the Philadelphia and Trenton Rail-road, and four on the state road to Columbia; all of which, as well as one in use at Charleston, South Carolina, have given entire satisfaction by their performance. . . . The Committee are informed that some of these improvements have been secured to their inventor by patents; and that he richly deserves to reap the benefit of them, will be admitted by any one who is aware of the extensive use and increasing demand for these costly structures."

Lyell and the Geological Society

At the anniversary meeting of the Geological Society held early in February 1835, the Wollaston Medal was awarded to Gideon Mantell (1790-1852), the Lewes surgeon who had made a close study of the chalk formations in Sussex. The meeting was followed by a dinner, of which Lyell, the president of the Society, wrote to Mantell: "The dinner went off famously, more than a hundred present. After the toasts had been given of the King, Royal Family, Geological Society, late president and president, I gave you. I send you a copy of my speech almost word for word as delivered. . . . I assure you I had the feeling of the meeting with me, and in some respects it produced a better effect than if you had been there. It was by far the longest toast given, but I am sure they were not tired. Lord Lansdowne, who was on my left hand, asked all about you. I got him to give Oxford and Buckland. Fitton gave Cambridge, followed by Sedgwick; Sedgwick the Royal Society, answered by Lubbock; Buckland the Linnean; I the Astronomical, answered by Baily; Greenough the Geographical, answered by Murchison. We then drank Burnes who made a good speech."