

On the break-up of the conference everyone felt that he was carrying away many new techniques, little tricks of the trade and valuable 'know-hows', for there was a very frank exchange of knowledge, even from those who represented large commercial organisations, and who might have been forgiven for hesitating to release trade secrets. There were, in fact, no such hesitations, either from the commercial or government representatives who attended, and, indeed, the liaison between the industrial and academic research workers was all that could be desired.

S. TOLANSKY

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PHYSICAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL MEETING

AT the annual general meeting of the Physical Society, held at the Royal Institution on May 6, the reports of the Council and Treasurer and the accounts and balance sheet for 1948 were presented and adopted, and the officers and Council for 1949-50 were elected as follows: *President*, Prof. S. Chapman; *Re-Presidents* who have filled the office of president, Prof. C. H. Lees, Sir Frank Smith, Sir Owen Richardson, Dr. W. H. Eccles, Prof. A. O. Rankine, Mr. T. Smith, Dr. Allan Ferguson, Sir Charles Darwin, Prof. E. N. da C. Andrade, Prof. D. Brunt, Prof. G. I. Finch; *Vice-Presidents*, Dr. W. D. Wright, Dr. W. Jevons, Mr. C. H. Collie, Prof. R. Peierls; *Honorary Secretaries*, Mr. C. G. Wynne, Dr. H. H. Hopkins; *Honorary Foreign Secretary*, Prof. E. N. da C. Andrade; *Honorary Treasurer*, Dr. H. Shaw; *Honorary Librarian*, Dr. R. W. B. Pearse; *Members of Council*, Dr. D. Roaf, Dr. A. C. G. Menzies, Dr. F. C. Toy, Mr. J. H. Awbery, Prof. L. F. Bates, Dr. R. C. Evans, Prof. L. C. Martin, Dr. C. E. Wynn-Williams, Dr. A. G. Quarrell, Dr. A. B. Wood, Prof. Willis Jackson, Prof. H. S. W. Massey.

The officers for 1949-50 of the four Groups of the Society are as follows: *Colour Group*: Chairman, Dr. W. S. Stiles; *Honorary Secretary*, Mr. R. G. Horner. *Optical Group*: Chairman, Prof. L. C. Martin; *Honorary Secretary*, Mr. G. S. Speak. *Low Temperature Group*: Chairman, Prof. F. E. Simon; *Honorary Secretary*, Dr. G. G. Haselden. *Acoustics Group*: Chairman, Mr. H. L. Kirke; *Honorary Secretaries*, Mr. W. H. Allen and Mr. A. T. Pickles.

During 1948, which the Council report states was a satisfactory year for the Society, there was a net increase in the membership of some six per cent, making the total at the end of the year only a few short of two thousand. Despite the increase in the fellows' annual subscription from two to three guineas, there were very few resignations and lapses. The financial position, though somewhat improved, still gives cause for anxiety.

In addition to the ordinary science meetings, a two-day summer meeting devoted to microwave spectroscopy was held at the Clarendon Laboratory, Oxford, and a full-day meeting at the Research Department of Metropolitan-Vickers Electrical Co., Ltd., Manchester, on surface structure and electrical properties of semiconductors. Prof. E. O. Lawrence was elected an honorary fellow in May, and Prof. R. W. Wood, one of the honorary fellows of the Society, lectured at one of the science meetings on the spontaneous deformation of crystals. The thirty-second Guthrie Lecture was delivered by Sir George

Thomson, who spoke on the growth of crystals, and Profs. S. Tolansky and Y. Rocard were the recipients of the fourth (1948) Charles Vernon Boys Prize, and the third (1948) Holweck Prize of the Physical Society and Holweck Medal of the Société Française de Physique, respectively.

The thirty-second exhibition of scientific instruments and apparatus, held in April, had an attendance of about 9,400 visitors, and was again a great success. The four subject-Groups of the Society, the Colour, Optical, Low Temperature, and Acoustics Groups, have all been active during the year, and brief details of their composition and meetings are listed in the annual report.

In addition to the *Proceedings*, the publications of the Society during the year included: vol. 11 (1946-47) of *Reports on Progress in Physics*; and special reports such as the "Report on Colour Terminology", the "Strength of Solids", a report of the 1947 Bristol Conference, and "Emission Spectra of the Night Sky and Auroræ". In order to cope with the increased number of papers suitable for publication in the *Proceedings*, and to expedite publication, it was decided that from January 1949 the *Proceedings* should appear monthly in two sections, section *A* covering atomic and sub-atomic physics, including such subjects as crystal structure, quantum mechanics and spectra, and section *B* macroscopic physics, including such subjects as acoustics, optical design and radio. A new feature, introduced in 1948 and now appearing regularly in the *Proceedings*, is "Letters to the Editor", a section similar to that of the same name appearing in *Nature*.

It is to be hoped that the sales of the special reports will improve, so that the decision of the Council to curtail the production of these reports will be rescinded.

S. WEINTROUB

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THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
REPORT FOR 1947-48

THE report of the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution for the year ended June 30, 1948*, again emphasizes the handicap placed on the work of the Institution by shortage of staff and of adequate buildings. Additions to the collections of the National Museum during the year numbered 507,000, and field parties from the Museum visited Arnhem Land in Australia, the antarctic continent, the Bikini area in the Pacific, the Persian Gulf, Colombia, Panama, and other parts of the world. The Department of Biology has been divided into those of Zoology and Botany, and the Division of Aeronautics has become the nucleus of the National Air Museum.

The director of the Bureau of American Ethnology conducted archaeological excavations in western Panama in co-operation with the National Geographic Society, discovering a new, very early culture, while the associate director of the Bureau was occupied mainly with the river basin surveys. Surveys made in eighteen States and thirty-eight reservoir areas have led to 250 sites being recommended for excavation to recover archaeological material which might be lost through the construction of dams and river valley reservoirs. An autonomous unit of the

* Report of the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution and Financial Report of the Executive Committee of the Board of Regents for the Year ended June 30, 1948. (Publication 3952.) Pp. ix+158. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1948.) 55 cents.