

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
NORTHWEST SCIENTIFIC ASSOCIATION:

Northwest Science again lifts its head and greets the membership of the Northwest Scientific Association. Unavoidable events in chain-like reactions have brought about this non-appearance. Now that these reactions have been terminated, we hope to be able to send your Journal on time.

The 1948 annual meeting was, generally speaking, one of the most successful meetings our Association has experienced. The registrations numbered more than two hundred, showing a very definite increase over previous years. All sections were well attended, some beyond expectations. The general sessions and business meetings were also well attended, an indication that the membership is taking a more active interest in the Association affairs.

It is the hope of the officers you have chosen to represent you for 1949 that the next meeting will be even bigger and better. We plan to announce the important committees before the next meeting and to publish them in *Northwest Science*, so that if you have some particular problem or suggestion, it can be directed into the proper channels for consideration and action before the meeting. We hope to transact as much business by committees as possible in order to allow more time for the general talks and discussions and also to give ample time for some morning sectional meetings with the idea that night sessions may be eliminated.

From the enthusiasm and interest shown, the Sigma Xi breakfast should be continued and will be planned for the morning of the second day of the meeting.

The annual dinner meeting was discontinued because of the lack of interest as evidenced by the poor attendance. We were approached by many members at our last meeting and asked to resume these dinner meetings. We will, therefore, plan a dinner meeting at the next meeting. This will be the spot for the president's swan song. We also have the assurance of an internationally known person that he will be present at our meeting if he is in the United States at the time. This annual dinner should be anticipated with pleasure.

Your officers hope that the members will send us whatever constructive criticisms they may have to better not only the programs but the general management of these annual meetings. They truly are your programs for enjoyment and gain in knowledge.

Our aim for 1949 is to continue the excellent policies of the past and, if possible, to be of assistance to our fellow scientists. We should like to be of assistance in research problems and to encourage the younger scientists. Our Board of Trustees will earnestly consider each and every project and we hope they will be frequently consulted.

We also encourage our sections to join with allied organizations and hold joint meetings, such as those held by the Sanitariums and American Society of Bacteriologists with our section of bacteriology and public health, as well as the engineers, and the Society of American Foresters. We can help these and other organizations and, by their continued interest, they can help us.

This is your Association and its problems should not be the concern of only your officers. We must be guided by your opinions and suggestions and we will always welcome them. In this way we are sure the Northwest Scientific Association will progress and prosper.

ROBERT F. E. STIER, *President*

SILVER ANNIVERSARY GOALS
of the Northwest Scientific Association

OTIS W. FREEMAN, *Retiring President*

A QUARTER OF A CENTURY has elapsed since the Northwest Scientific Association was founded, and after that lapse of time, it becomes pertinent to survey the past accomplishments of our organization, to consider its goals, and to plan for its greater usefulness in the future.

The Northwest Scientific Association was organized February 24, 1923. The late L. K. Armstrong was chairman of the organization meeting, ably assisted by other men from Spokane, the University of Idaho, the University of Montana, The State College of Washington, other institutions of learning, and governmental and state agencies. The Association was formed to provide a means by which the results of scientific investigations could be presented to others working in similar fields, and to give encouragement to research projects of special importance to the Pacific Northwest.

The first program meeting of the Association was held in April, 1923, and the spring meeting was continued during 1924 and 1925. Commencing with 1926, the annual program meeting has been held at the Davenport Hotel in Spokane for two days between Christmas and New Year's Day.

The Northwest Scientific Association was incorporated May 7, 1928, under the laws of Washington, as a nonprofit organization engaged in research work.

NORTHWEST SCIENCE

Recognizing the desirability of wide dissemination of the results of research presented at the meetings, the Association in 1927 began the publication of a quarterly, *Northwest Science*, which has continued unbroken to the present. Even during the war years, when it was impossible to hold program meetings, the magazine was published and helped materially to hold the organization together. *Northwest Science* contains selected papers and abstracts of papers presented on the program, along with occasional contributions not given at a meeting but which usually describe or apply to situations in the Pacific Northwest and are considered of importance to the membership. Several special numbers of the magazine have appeared, among which were issues devoted to geology, forestry, strategic minerals, lakes of Oregon, and the Armed

to many individuals, and have encouraged the carrying on of scientific investigations in the Pacific Northwest. There is need for a large expansion of funds available for grants to assist scientific research if the Northwest Scientific Association is to attain more completely the expectations of its founders.

A paramount purpose of the Northwest Scientific Association might well be the determination of the most necessary research projects in the Pacific Northwest. This would require an investigation of needs, screening of suggested projects, and final selections of individual research subjects. An over-all planning committee of scientists representing educational institutions, governmental and state agencies, and privately owned research laboratories could survey the whole field and designate particular areas and topics in need of investigation for public benefit. Such a committee might properly be sponsored by the Northwest Scientific Association. At present, our Board of Trustees receives applications for research grants and selects what seem most needed from the list, but there is little or no effort to suggest what lines of research are most needed in the Northwest and to guide qualified applicants into the vital areas.

If the Northwest Scientific Association should adopt the ambitious plan to become a coordinator of research in the Northwest, there would be need of vastly more funds to allocate in grants than are available at present. To secure such funds would require (1) selling the idea to philanthropically minded men and business firms in order that the Association could function efficiently as a planner of research for the area, and (2) that the results from the projects would be such that contributions could be considered an investment which would assist the progress of science and the development of the Pacific Northwest. The publication of the results of research and the dissemination of this information would require an expansion in size of *Northwest Science* and the issuing of special bulletins. In part, this could be cared for by normal increase in membership, but there would also be needed a special publication fund which could finance occasional bulletins in which would appear some of the results from research projects. This would be another worthy item for which publicly minded men might be solicited for funds.

RESEARCH GOALS

Every live organization must have goals which it seeks to achieve. Foremost among the goals of the Northwest Scientific Association must be encouragement of research.

Services educational programs during the war. In addition to its subscription list, *Northwest Science* is exchanged with nearly 200 institutions and agencies. The exchange library is maintained at The State College of Washington. A year ago the Association arranged with The State College of Washington Press to publish *Northwest Science*. Unfortunately the legality of the contract was questioned and only after aggravating delay was a satisfactory solution forthcoming. Increase in cost of printing added a further complication.

MEMBERSHIP

There are two classes of membership in our Association. Individual members total over 300 and pay \$2.00 annual dues. In addition, there are 12 institutional members paying \$10.00 or \$25.00 annually depending on enrollment. This support from the colleges and universities has been valuable in maintaining the work of the Association. It is hoped that additional colleges will take out institutional memberships soon. The field of Association activities primarily covers the states of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington.

Many academies of science sponsor a junior academy. This is an untouched field so far as the Northwest Scientific Association is concerned, and your president hopes that some idealists will undertake to manage this important contribution to scientific advance. Our academy also might do much to stimulate or help to promote better science teaching at all school levels. Practical assistance to worthy science majors might be given by cooperation with the colleges and universities in the awarding of scholarships, and perhaps raising funds for an annual scholarship of our own Association.

RESEARCH SUPPORT

Support for research under the auspices of the Northwest Scientific Association has come mainly from gifts and donations. The American Association for the Advancement of Science donates an amount determined by the number of Association members who also have joined the parent organization. Some money is donated by individuals as their contribution to research. Nearly fifteen years ago there was started the Howard Flint Fund in honor of a former president of our Association, the income from which was to be used as an award or grant in the field of forestry. The fund now amounts to nearly \$1500. Grants-in-aid for research have been of a modest size and are commonly limited to members of the Association, but nevertheless have been of assistance

Scientists enjoy recognition for attainment by their fellows as do men in every field of activity. In the future, it might be well if an annual award, to be presented at the annual meeting, were made for the outstanding contribution to science or if this is considered too difficult to judge, the award might be given for that scientific research considered of most value toward the advancement of knowledge and the development of the Pacific Northwest made during the recipient's residence in the region. Perhaps a committee could consider the feasibility of this suggestion.

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

Another goal that seems desirable concerns possible improvement in the programs offered at the meetings of the Northwest Scientific Association. A desirable feature for a general session seems to be a symposium dealing with some general topic which would cut across division lines and thereby include various fields of science. Several successful symposia have been held, including those on fisheries, on climatic cycles, on Northwest resources, on regional planning in the Northwest, and on forest conservation. Commendable symposia have also been held at intervals in most of the sections. For example, the geology-geography section has held several symposia, including: physiographic subdivisions of the Columbia intermountain province, glaciation in the Pacific Northwest, and the character and nomenclature of certain formations. This year the topic is the Columbia basalts. Sometimes papers presented at a symposium have appeared in the same number of *Northwest Science*, which seems an excellent practice. There should always be room on a section program for miscellaneous papers, and the appearance of graduate students should be encouraged. At least one session of each section, however, might be devoted to a special topic, with most of the participants being assigned titles. The results from this generally have been good, especially in increased interest and attendance. For a symposium to be genuinely useful, adequate time should be allowed for discussion. This helps to digest the factual material presented and is likely to lead to the formulation of conclusions agreeable to the group.

There are several things to avoid in research and in papers presented before the Association. Sometimes it is necessary in research projects for the administrators to give assignments to their underlings. Teamwork has often resulted in valuable contributions to science. Assignments to qualified personnel are frequently productive of results, but it is also desirable, wherever feasible, that

the individual who initiated the idea of a given project should work on it and be permitted the privilege of reporting the results of the work. Again, occasional papers presented at our meetings deal with facts without the drawing of significant conclusions, and it seems proper to observe that the authors of such papers are making small contributions to scientific knowledge. Another type of paper to be avoided is a rehashing from the literature which begins and ends nowhere. Fortunately, few such have been offered by members of our Association. Finally, the contributor should avoid abstruse language. The ambition of every scientist should be to write and speak on technical subjects so clearly that the non-specialist can understand and enjoy the paper.

Every effort should be made to make reasonably sure that a paper is based on scientifically sound data, but there is a real danger in waiting so long to make certain that the conclusions are correct, that a paper may be no longer a contribution to knowledge when it appears. It is better to issue a tentative report and accept the criticism of co-workers in the field as an aid to improvement than not to publish at all from fear of criticism. The informal section meetings of the Northwest Scientific Association are an excellent forum for discussion and criticism of original ideas.

GOALS

To summarize: Among the immediate goals of the Northwest Scientific Association are increase in membership, added support from institutions, public contributions for research grants and awards, expansion of *Northwest Science* and the issuing of occasional bulletins, the improvement of our annual programs, and, foremost of all, the encouragement of scientific research in every possible way.