



LETTERS

to the EDITOR

University of Wisconsin; vice-president, Professor Edwin Schreiber, State Teachers College; secretary-treasurer, Professor W. P. Clark, State Teachers College; representative, Professor R. R. Palmer, Beloit College. The next annual meeting will be held at Lawrence College, Appleton.

The Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Section of the American Physical Society was held at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, April 9-10. A record number of 442 persons registered for the meeting. The following officers were elected for the coming year: chairman, E. S. Barr; vice-chairman, Philip Rudnick; secretary, Eric Rodgers; treasurer, H. F. Henry; member of executive committee, C. K. Beck.

New Publication

A compilation of the energy levels of the elements as derived from observations of atomic spectra is planned by the National Bureau of Standards. The data will be published in pamphlet form and will cover all information accumulated in the past fifteen years plus any previously available material. The first section of this work, a circular covering hydrogen through fluorine, is now available.

The first American book on this subject, "Atomic Energy States," by R. F. Bacher and S. Goudsmit, published in 1932, contained the atomic energy levels of 231 spectra of 69 elements. Today this number exceeds 460, representing 82 elements, and the number of known energy levels is greater by a factor of four or five. The project is under the direction of Dr. W. F. Meggers, who is contacting all active workers in the field to obtain unpublished work on spectrum analysis for inclusion in the publications.

Miscellany

The United States Atomic Energy Commission has announced that it will make available up to \$3,000,000 for physical research and \$1,000,000 for medical and biological research for a one-year joint program with the Office of Naval Research.

Announcement is made of the formation of the Jacobs Instrument Company, Bethesda, Maryland, which will undertake research, development, and small-scale production of electronic-optical-mechanical devices.

Availability of five new accessories for use in spectrographic analysis was announced by the Bausch & Lomb Optical Company. These include a densitometer, a spectrum plate projector, a safety arc and spark stand, an electrode shaper, and a briquetting press, all of which may be used with any spectrograph, regardless of make or design.

Dr. William Wilson

Dr. William Wilson, former assistant vice-president of the Bell Telephone Laboratories, died on May 6, 1948, at his home in Raleigh, North Carolina, at the age of 61. He had been professor of physics at the University of North Carolina since 1946.

Sirs:

The first issue of Physics Today arrived this morning. I wondered whether the cover illustration was intended to indicate that much of the information to be published had heretofore been kept 'under the hat.'

CLARENCE W. METCALF
Engineered Advertising

Boston, Mass.

Not what has been under that hat! It was identified on the table of contents page as belonging to J. R. Oppenheimer.

Sirs:

... Stephen White's "A Newsmen Looks at Physicists" hits the nail right on the head and I sincerely wish that every scientist could have the opportunity to read it.

STANLEY R. MARCH
Carnegie Institute of Technology

Pittsburgh, Penn.

Almost all comments on White's article were highly laudatory, but one physicist could not refrain from retorting that, while he was sure the great majority of physicists would prefer not to teach reporters better style, "we wish they would go somewhere and learn it."

Sirs:

Congratulations on Vol. 1 No. 1 of Physics Today. I found it very good reading, and enjoyed especially the "Journal Notes." I should expect that physicists generally would like it and that it might build up quite a good outside circulation.

OLIVER E. BUCKLEY
Bell Telephone Laboratories

New York City

Sirs:

... I was pleased to find that most of the articles were reasonably intelligible, even to me, a nonphysicist, and that some of them were positively fascinating.

HARRY A. BULLIS
General Mills, Inc.

Minneapolis, Minn.

Sirs:

I like the "Notes from Abroad" very much, and hope that it will be possible for you to broaden the coverage of this department in future issues. . . . I hope you will be able to explain for us in some future issue the details of "the disappearance of E. Majorana." . . .

LOUIS N. RIDENOUR
The Graduate College
University of Illinois

Urbana, Ill.

The grim reference Dean Ridenour quotes is from the May Notes on Italy by Dr. Amaldi, who may be able to supply further details.

Sirs:

I . . . would like to comment on one undesirable feature which seriously mars an otherwise excellent makeup. This defect is the abominable practice . . . of starting an article in the first few pages and continuing it at the back.

L. F. CURTISS
National Bureau of Standards

Washington, D. C.

The criticism is as helpful as the compliments are gratifying. Steps have already been taken to improve make-up along the lines suggested by our readers but, unfortunately, production difficulties make jumps a necessary evil for the time being.