

study of the mechanization of industry in relation to migration has been made by the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Foundation. This project will be begun on July 1, under the auspices of the Bureau of Economic Research and in particular charge of Dr. Wesley C. Mitchell and Dr. Jerome Davis.

Prof. Edmund E. Day, of the University of Michigan, was elected treasurer of the Council, and fiscal organization and methods were outlined. Gifts of \$20,500 have already been made for the work of the Council, and other funds amounting to as much more are in immediate prospect. A gift of \$2,500 for general administration purposes has been received.

The Council appointed a committee to outline a plan for obtaining fellowships for post-doctorate work in the social sciences. Of this committee Professor A. B. Hall is chairman, and the other members are Professors John R. Commons and W. F. Ogburn.

The officers of the Council are: chairman, Professor Charles E. Merriam, University of Chicago; secretary, Professor Horace Secrist, Northwestern University; treasurer, Professor Edmund E. Day, University of Michigan.

Suggestions for the development of the work of the Council are invited by its members. The Council also stands ready to advise regarding any especially significant or large-scale project in the field of social research. The next meeting of the Council will be held in November.

Social Science Abstracts. Research in social science is hampered by the lack of indexes of abstracts of periodical literature. At the present time our research workers are far more handicapped than chemists or physicists, because scientists in these latter subjects have resort to such publications as "Chemical Abstracts" and "Science Abstracts," wherein are found, systematically indexed, careful abstracts covering the whole field. A research worker in these sciences can do his preliminary reading with convenience and expedition. In contrast, the social scientist who wants to exhaust the periodical literature on his subject cannot depend on the existing abstracts published in social science journals, however excellent these may be as individual pieces of work, since the existing abstracts do not fully cover the field. Consequently, he must supplement them by considerable reading from original articles and run the risk of missing something really important.

In view of this situation the present statement has been prepared by the committee on social science abstracts of the Social Science Research Council. It is hoped that members of the social science societies, as well as any other interested persons, will study this statement, in order that they may be prepared to make suggestions to the chairmen of the committee at any time, and particularly to be prepared to take action on one of the alternative plans presented at the annual meetings of the social science societies next December.

At the present time the *American Political Science Review* and the *Journal of the American Statistical Association* do not print systematic abstracts of their literature. The *American Economic Review* has for some years printed brief abstracts. The *American Journal of Sociology* has since July, 1921, printed in each of its issues several pages of carefully classified abstracts. The original system of classification was enlarged in March, 1922, and since this time has comprised ten main headings and forty-eight subheadings. Since the abstract plan of the *American Journal of Sociology* is more complete than that of any of the other social science journals, the main headings are presented herewith, with the suggestion that the reader examine the complete classification with its subordinate headings, as it is found in Volume 19, pages 373-374, of the *American Journal of Sociology*. The existing classification is not final, nor have the methods of abstracting been yet perfected, but the scheme is serviceable. The main headings are as follows:

I. Personality: the Individual and the Person; II. The Family; III. Peoples and Cultural Groups; IV. Conflict and Accommodation Groups; V. Communities and Territorial Groups; VI. Social Institutions; VII. Social Science and the Social Process; VIII. Social Pathology: Personal and Social Disorganization; IX. Methods of Investigation; and X. General Sociology and Methodology of the Social Sciences.

The following alternative plans for improving the existing abstracts of social science are suggested for consideration by members of the social science societies. It is assumed that only articles containing the results of original research will be abstracted.

1. Independent and separate publication in bulletin form.

- a. Abstract service to be maintained jointly by membership dues from the social science societies, and published as a separate monthly bulletin. (The principles of editorial organization described under (2), c, below are understood to apply to this plan), or

- b. Abstract service to be maintained jointly by social science societies, with the cost of administration and publication met in whole or in part by a subsidy or grant of funds from some national foundation interested in social research. (The principles of editorial organization described under (2), c, below are understood to apply to this plan.)
 - c. Advantages of these plans
 - (a) The whole field of social science would be covered with approximate completeness so that cross-referencing would make accessible valuable leads from related fields—on which so much progress depends.
 - (b) Duplication in abstracting would be avoided, such as would exist if every journal abstracted independently for its own clientele.
 - (c) One large strong abstract journal could secure by exchange or purchase more current serial literature than could independent journals, and this would save duplicate subscriptions.
2. Abstract services of the social science journals continued as at present, but—
- a. Present services enlarged to cover the field more intensively and comprehensively.
 - b. Methodology of abstracting systematized by acceptance of some mutually agreeable plan such as:
 - c. Acceptance of guidance over abstracting to be exerted by some central editorial body representative of the whole field.
 - (a) which formulates a methodology of abstracting to be generally used.
 - (b) to conform to some objective system of classification of subjects.
 - (c) cross-referencing.
 - (d) to avoid unnecessary duplication in printing.
 - (e) editing and abstracting paid.
 - d. Disadvantages of this plan as compared with (1) above.
 - (a) danger of duplication of abstracts of the same article in several journals. This is now a real difficulty in the abstracts of biological sciences.
 - (b) The field would be incompletely covered and cross-referencing incomplete.
 - (c) Current files of serial literature would not be as complete and there would be inevitable duplication of subscription costs.
3. Enlargement of the present abstract services and creation of new services in existing social science journals where needed
- a. Organization
 - (a) editor-in-chief, four associate editors, one for each science, but unpaid.
 - (b) abstracting paid for by the page.

- b. Agreement on a common basis of classification of abstracts, each journal publishing in full all the abstracts relating to the field of its science and printing merely the scheme of classification of each of the other sciences, with a note referring the reader to these journals for full abstracts.
- c. The disadvantages of this plan are all the faults of plan (2), but in greater degree.

It will be observed that the last plan is the least ambitious of the three, and perhaps in the present stage of development of the social sciences the most practicable. This last plan would leave to each of the journals the details of its own abstracting, since only a loose type of common editorial organization would exist. On the other hand, the plan has such serious objections that it could be at best but a temporary makeshift.

The cost of the alternative plans would vary and it is probable that the third plan would be the least expensive. In this connection, it may be of interest to note that the abstract editor of the *American Journal of Sociology* now prints galley-sheets of the abstracts of each issue. These may be had by all subscribers for \$1.00 a year. The subscriber then cuts up the galleys and pastes the separate abstracts on filing cards. The cost of chemical abstracts which is published according to plan (1), *a*, is \$6.80, per subscriber, with a subscribing membership of 13,000. The combined membership of the four social science associations is about 7,000.

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Members of the Social Science Abstract Committee.