

## Editorial Comment

### LOCAL AFFILIATES VS. THE NATIONAL

Out of its swaddling clothes in six months is the meteoric rise of the National Association of Biology Teachers. During this brief time machinery has been perfected where by the association is regulated by a constitution and by-laws and an executive board. The official organ "*The American Biology Teacher*" is on a high plane of journalistic achievement capable of challenging its readers with the latest developments in the field of biology.

The next step of the association is to perfect a group of virile affiliated chapters. Several local biology groups have been functioning for years. Others have organized in very recent months due to the stimulus of the organization of the national, a few more are contemplated for the near future or with slight encouragement could be conveniently organized.

According to the constitution and by-laws of the national, local chapters may affiliate with the parent organization. At the Richmond, Virginia meeting in December twelve local chapters petitioned the executive board for such affiliation. This group of petitions was granted. There is also provision for the voting and collection of national dues by the locals. Chapters requesting this service are also helping to unite the local and national in stronger ties.

There are several ways the national can lend assistance to the locals. First, the officers of the national association are always willing to give freely of their time and effort to take part in their activities or appearing on their programs, and

making suggestions if they are asked for the information.

Second, help may be secured in formulating a constitution and by-laws for the chapter. Third, aid for local membership drives can be secured thru the national by writing Miss Lucy Orenstein for plans of procedure. These plans are workable because they are the result of her efforts in securing New York memberships. Her suggestions no doubt will be of value to the chapter group. Fourth, Dr. Miller is ready to aid in securing any new prospective members in your area that have not already been contacted, and has funds available for the purpose. This service is free of charge. All the local needs to do is to mail him a list of the new prospective members and they will be circularized through his office.

There are numerous ways in which the locals can help themselves to attaining a prominent place in the educational system of their area. First they can be of service to the individual teachers and second they can aid the teachers as a group.

Service to the teachers as individuals includes the distribution of free literature or that obtained at a nominal fee, and cultures of living materials as daphne, protozoa and the like. This distribution to be made at the regular meetings. They can also aid the individual teacher by having practical well planned field trips in the area staffed by an enthusiastic field trip faculty.

Services to the teachers as a group take the form of a constructive study groups. This provided the problem selected is not too large, direct in its application, and of sufficient merit to be worthy of investi-

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gation. Perhaps the writing of syllabi or the study and classification of the local fauna or flora would be a worthwhile and interesting problem for investigation.

Possibly there are certain local conditions that need to be studied or investigated. Just because you are a minority group is no reason for not studying local problems. Chicago is a good example. There was a misinterpretation of biology certificates as issued by the Board of Education for teachers. A delegation of members was selected, the proper authorities were approached and the situation clarified.

There is no limit to the service the local group can render its members as individuals or as a group. But the local should be well organized to start with. It should have a sufficient staff of officers including a president, assistants, record-

ing secretary, and corresponding secretary (to contact other groups and the national), and treasurer. Two important committees should be maintained including a membership committee, and a program committee as well as others as the need may arise. Between meetings the executive board should plan how the organization may be improved. Active constructive programs should be presented and sufficiently advertised well in advance of the meeting date. A calendar should be prepared if several events are to be held during the year.

In conclusion the local affiliated chapters need the strength of the national; and the national needs the support of the local chapters. Both should work together. The several problems of the local groups are problems of the national. The latter stands ready to aid in any capacity that is needed.

M. C. LICHTENWALTER

## BOOKS

GILBERT, MARGARET SHEA. *Biography of the Unborn*. Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins Co., 1938. 132 p. \$1.75.

This book that won a one thousand dollar award is a logical account of an interesting yet unknown time in every one's life. It tells the story of the development of the human infant from fertilization to birth. The story is easily read. The nine months of life before birth is described chronologically. It describes the embryonic development, fetal life and birth. A chapter on twins, variations and malformations is included.

Students of biology will profit by supplementing the textbook and laboratory course in embryology with this account of a very dramatic event in every life.

Biology teachers will note the number

of times lower life is referred to. This is a significant idea when teaching the classification of plants and animals.

The story is dignified and delicately yet truthfully told. It will appeal to and fascinate the most sensitive reader. The average reader and especially the prospective parent curious about this unknown and unremembered period of his life, will find this book accurate and reliable for this undiscussed subject. Clear diagrams, a glossary, and a lack of an abundance of technical terms attract the layman to the book.

—EFFIE M. HIBBS

HUNTINGTON, ELLSWORTH. *Tomorrow's Children*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1935. 139 p. \$1.75.

It may well be said that America's