

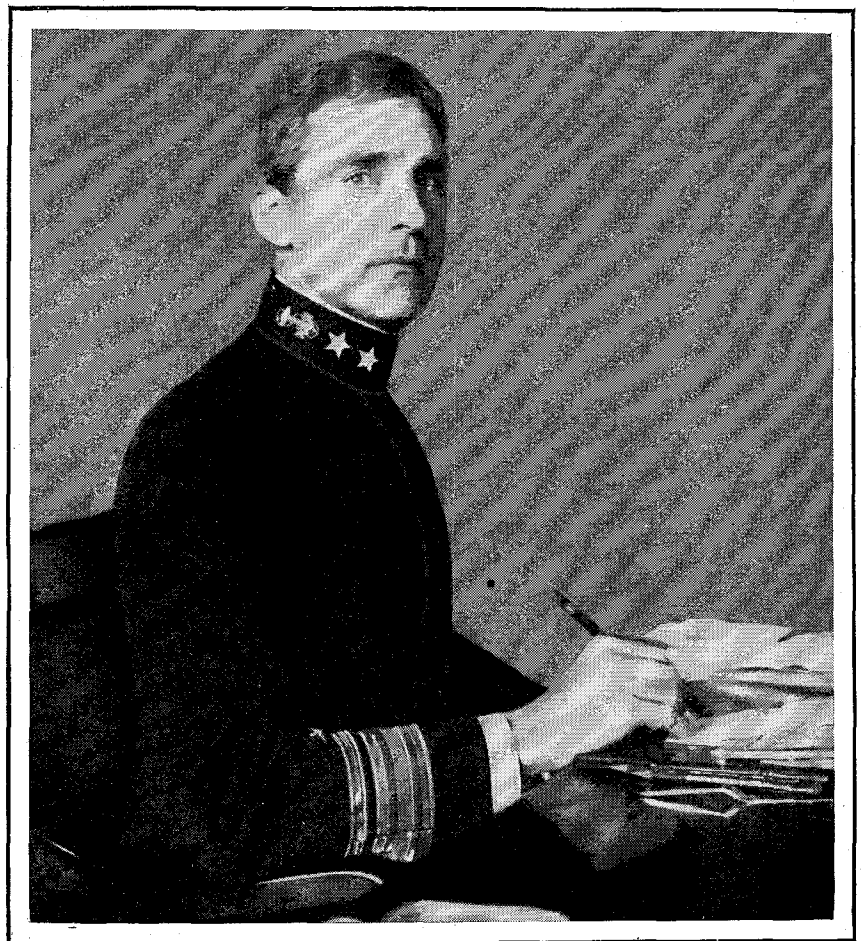
sons they must vote for their own party candidates, would be glad to see Senator Cummins elected. Generally, they would be averse to assuming the responsibility for a Democratic Chairman in a Republican Senate. They therefore would welcome neither the attempt to throw the Democratic vote to the election of the radical Republican, Mr. La Follette, nor the attempt of the radical Republicans to throw their own vote for the election of the Democratic candidate, Mr. Smith. And yet there seems to be no hope that either the radical Republicans or a sufficient number of Democrats will shift their votes sufficiently to elect Mr. Cummins. It is conceivable that, by tacit agreement, the Committee may be enabled to function without a permanent Chairman but with a temporary presiding officer at each session instead.

What makes this deadlock significant of the political situation is the fact that it is occasioned by conflicting views within the Republican party as to railway legislation. Probably the great majority of Republicans and Democrats in Congress see no reason for radically amending the present transportation act; but the interests for which the "progressive" group speaks quite decidedly wish the law changed. High freight rates, on the one hand, are a drain on industry and particularly on agriculture. Government interference, on the other hand, is regarded in many quarters as the cause for much of our transportation difficulties. This deadlock in the Senate is indicative of the difficulty which the whole country is facing in its attempt to understand and solve the problems of the railways in relation to the Government.

A Seaman Operator for American Ships

EFFICIENCY in operation of Government-owned ships is the result which President Coolidge undoubtedly hopes to accomplish in removing the vessels from the control of the United States Shipping Board and placing them, practically, under the individual direction of Admiral Leigh Palmer as President of the Emergency Fleet Corporation. By friends of the Administration the change is spoken of as indicating a nearer approach to harmony in the counsels of the Government than has previously existed at any time since President Harding's plan for a ship subsidy was abandoned.

There is as yet no complete public



International

Admiral Palmer, newly appointed President of the Emergency Fleet Corporation

understanding of what the change means in detail. The announcement was made by Senator Jones, of Washington, originator of the new plan of operation, following a conference with the President. It was a brief statement, dealing only with large facts.

It is indicated clearly enough that operation of the ships will be a one-man function, and that, while Admiral Palmer is nominally responsible to the Shipping Board, he is to have complete liberty of action. The Shipping Board, it is believed, will continue as a Government agency, not for the operation of ships at all, but for the regulation of ocean traffic. The Board will assume toward water transportation, it is understood, much the same position that the Inter-State Commerce Commission occupies with relation to rail transportation. It will regulate rates, not only of Government-owned ships, but of American vessels operated by private companies; but it will have no active connection with the business side of ship operation.

The statement is frankly made by friends of the Administration that President Coolidge has returned to the Wilson plan of vesting authority in a single individual. Bickerings within the Shipping

Board are said to be mainly responsible not only for the recent resignation of Chairman Farley but for failure to put ship operation on a sound basis. It is said that President Harding realized the necessity for centralization of authority and that A. D. Lasker had, in fact, practically unlimited power. This, however, was not a publicly recognized power, and therefore was not cheerfully accepted by the Board itself.

Mr. Farley, despite his resignation and the appointment of another man to operate the Government ships, is given a large measure of credit for the change of policy. Several months ago he made public announcement of a plan to form subsidiary companies to operate the ships. This plan was abandoned only because Attorney-General Daugherty gave the opinion that it was inconsistent with the present law. The Emergency Fleet Corporation under the new arrangement, it is said, will do exactly what Mr. Farley had expected of the proposed subsidiary companies.

Aside from the benefits to be derived from centralization of authority, it is claimed that the new plan is advantageous in that the Emergency Fleet Corporation will be free from the political

influences that have always hovered over the Shipping Board.

Public men in Washington not so friendly to the Administration as those already referred to express the belief that there should have been a more thorough house-cleaning. Representative Davis, of Tennessee, who at the last session of Congress proposed a one-man plan similar to the one now adopted coupled with complete abolition of the Shipping Board, asserts that persons are retained in important positions who have definite connections with foreign shipping interests and who would be glad to see American shipping destroyed. He says, however, that the President's act is a step in the right direction, that the President is genuinely interested in saving American shipping, and that criticism of the plan could not be justified without fuller understanding of details.

Admiral Palmer, who will assume complete charge of operating the Government-owned ships, was formerly chief of the Bureau of Navigation of the Navy, with the rank of Rear-Admiral. Recently he has been the representative of the Shipping Board in Brazil.

The Yearly Advance of Science

AT the seventy-fifth annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, held during the holidays in Cincinnati, a number of notable scientific discoveries were made public.

This large association of learned men, corresponding in a sense to the British Royal Society, includes among its twelve thousand members practically all of the great leaders in the several branches of American science, such as physics, chemistry, biology, geology, astronomy, anthropology, etc. Thus the various scientific announcements made at its annual meetings make up a record of the advances brought about by the best American scientific research of the previous year.

The keynote of the recent meeting was given by the President of the Association, Dr. J. P. McMurrich, Professor of Anatomy at the University of Toronto, who defended the doctrine of evolution. Dr. McMurrich denied that this doctrine has been shaken by science, as has been asserted by its opponents. We have learned far more about evolution, especially about its causes, than Darwin ever dreamed of; but this newer knowledge

does not stand as a denial of the doctrine, but only of some of the causes and methods of evolution as believed in by Darwin.

Some of the Advances Announced at Cincinnati

DR. D. C. Chamberlain, of the University of Chicago, dean of American geologists, recounted the immense changes brought about in our concept of the universe during his lifetime. "During the last seventy-five years," said he, "the world has changed from a bundle of matter to a bundle of energy." The modern electronic theory regards matter and the atom as a sort of stored or latent form of energy.

It is thought by Dr. N. E. McIndoo, of the Bureau of Entomology, that the long-hoped-for solution of the problem of controlling the costly cotton-boll weevil lies close at hand. Experiments recently made indicate that this destructive beetle is enabled to locate cotton fields over distances of several miles by a highly acute sense of smell. Therefore it is hoped that some essence may be extracted from the cotton plant which will act as a scent to allure the weevils into traps before they have reached the cotton fields.

The ductless glands continue to be the subject of a great amount of research. Dr. Oscar Riddle, of the research staff of the Carnegie Station for Experimental Evolution, has apparently proved that the thymus gland, close to the heart, is "the mother of the race." This gland, which atrophies after adolescence, is a rudiment of an active gland which controlled the formation of essential parts of the egg in the egg-laying animals which, millions of years ago, were ancestral to man and other animals.

The new mercury vapor boiler was described by Mr. E. L. Robinson, of the General Electric Company. This invention is doubtless destined in some measure to replace the steam boiler. It uses mercury, which vaporizes at a temperature of about 800 degrees Fahrenheit under comparatively low pressures, in combination with water. The thermal efficiency of this new method of generating power is so much greater than that made possible by the use of water vapor in the usual manner that it is claimed that 52 per cent of the fuel will be saved.

Dr. D. T. MacDougal, of the Carnegie Institution, has made progress in the

effort to get energy from the atmosphere, and the work is being continued. He is trying to find out how plants get carbon from the air with the help of sunlight, so that man may meet the coal scarcity due within a few centuries. A solution of this problem would probably include a method of getting human food from the atmosphere.

Coupled with this effort to get energy from the air is the attack on the problem of the wireless transmission of power, which has been made with small but successful results by Dr. W. R. Whitney, Director of the Research Laboratories of the General Electric Company. Before the Association for the Advancement of Science at its meeting Dr. Whitney succeeded in transmitting enough power to light an ordinary electric light bulb over a space of about one foot.

University Theaters

WITH its announcement of a new repertory of plays available for public presentation throughout the State, the University Theater at the State University of Iowa takes its place in a comparatively new movement that is rapidly gaining ground in various colleges and universities in this country. In the Middle West, particularly, the increased cost of maintaining "road shows" has led to a dearth of professional entertainment. And an effort to supply this lack has been partly responsible for the development of companies of student players available for a limited number of bookings in cities and towns within easy reach of the university theaters. The repertories of these student companies are usually made up of the best classic and modern drama and often include a number of plays written by the students themselves.

Notable among these university organizations is the Little Country Theater of the North Dakota Agricultural College, which, under the direction of Professor Alfred G. Argold, has become a neighborhood center for distinctive entertainment and has been making brief tours for several years. Staging and costumes as well as some of the plays are the work of the students. Professor Frederick Koch, of the University of North Carolina, who received his early training at this Dakota theater, has achieved remarkable success with his Carolina Playmakers, especially in the writing of original folk-lore plays which represent a