

The 1959 annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, held in Chicago in December, was as always a huge affair (4,636 paid registrants) and a very complicated one. Besides the general or special affairs set up by the Association itself, there were meetings of its 18 organized sections—which range alphabetically from Agriculture, Anthropology and Astronomy on the one hand to Medicine, Physics and Zoology on the other hand—and of many of the participating societies which had separate sessions.

A report in *Science* [**131** (1960) 510 (Feb. 19)] calls attention to the constantly increasing emphasis on symposia at these meetings in

recent years, with decrease in the numbers of the reading of contributed papers. Apart from the special lectures or addresses, the sessions totaled 137 for symposia, panels and invited papers, against only 32 for contributed papers. This emphasis on symposia was not confined to the AAAS sections, committees and conferences, but also held for the participating societies, as shown by the following figures:

<i>Sessions for</i>	<i>AAAS and its sections, etc.</i>		<i>Participating societies</i>	
	<i>Sessions</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Sessions</i>	<i>Speakers</i>
Symposia, panels, etc.	71	410	66	372
Contributed papers	21	181	11	98

To take but one specific example, the meeting of AAAS Section N, Medical Sciences, was a 4-session interdisciplinary symposium on "Aging—Facts and Theories," co-sponsored by Sections F (Zoology), K (Social Sciences) and Nd (Dentistry), and by the Gerontological Society. There is no indication that any contributed papers were read.

This modern trend toward symposia has been seen in international meetings in recent years, and it affected the planning by the International Leprosy Association of the scientific program of the last leprosy congress, held in Tokyo in 1958. It is to be expected that that feature will be continued and perhaps expanded at future congresses.

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