

Scientists are always interested in standards of measurement and time. Decimal coinage was advocated within the Society by H. Skey in 1909. The Society has recommended the maintenance or institution of time-ball services, the setting up of radio time signals on Laby's motion in 1914, and a change in New Zealand mean time (1916). G. V. Hudson had advocated a form of daylight saving in 1895. It was then greeted with ridicule, but daylight saving was adopted for a time 30 years later.

To commemorate the passing of the controversial Summertime Act in 1927, a fund had been raised by shilling subscriptions, and in 1929 Sir Thomas Sidey offered this fund to the New Zealand Institute to support an award "for the promotion and encouragement of scientific research in the study of light visible and invisible and other solar radiations in relation to human welfare" with provision to extend the field to radiations of every kind. The Sidey Medal and Prize were established in 1930 and have been awarded eight times.

The E. R. Cooper Memorial Medal and Prize were established in 1957 by the Dominion Physical Laboratory, in memory of a distinguished war-time director. They are awarded biennially for original research in physics and engineering. The Cockayne Memorial Fund has been used to sustain publications in botany, and more recently has supported a Cockayne Memorial Lecture.

RESEARCH GRANTS

Very modest grants in aid of research in biology and geology are available from the income of the Hutton Fund. The Mappin Trust also supports grants for botany. The cheque that founded the Mappin Fund was originally written by Sir Frank Mappin, of Auckland, for a different purpose, in an untold chapter in the early history of the D.S.I.R. The Benson Fund, established under the will of a past President, is available for cost of publishing illustrations in the *Transactions*. Recently, in response to a widely felt need to encourage archaeological and other studies connected with Maori history and culture, the Skinner Fund was established jointly by the Polynesian Society, New Zealand Archaeological Association and the Royal Society, and named in honour of our senior New Zealand ethnologist, Dr H. D. Skinner, of Otago.

The Society's Trust and Special Funds have an annual income of about £1,000 for the promotion of science in special ways. This is small enough, but there are also important gaps in the coverage—for instance, just to take one example, the Society has no fund to assist visits by scientists from overseas, although this is a paramount need for a scientific community as isolated as New Zealand's.

CARTER OBSERVATORY

Charles Rooking Carter, who in 1851 presented the first recorded scientific paper to a New Zealand learned society, died in 1896, and he left the residue of his estate to the New Zealand Institute as "the nucleus of a fund for the erection in or near Wellington of an astronomical observatory fitted with telescope and other instruments". The fund, about £2,240, was invested and allowed to accumulate despite many attempts to get it spent before it could carry out Carter's wishes.

In 1937 representations were made to Government about the use of the fund, stimulated, according to the President of the time, Bishop Williams, by a foolish rumour that the Royal Society's Council proposed to interpret the expression "near Wellington" to allow the observatory to be erected in Central Otago. Subsequent deliberations led to a Carter Observatory Act, and the observatory