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The La Jolla Biological Station

The grace and glory of outing does not all belong to the listed commercial resort, as every rover knows. The Biological Institute at La Jolla is of the inner circle of scientific exclusiveness, as must be any institution where serious delving into life-problems is the order of the day. Yet some imp of relativity has come by that way and drawn magic circles of lure around and over it all, blue sky, dancing sea, shining rocks, windy piers and the quaintest, dearest, most picturesque group of cottages clinging to the cliffs. For there are colonies of summer visitors who, having entree, tax the capacity of the settlement.

A scientific institution exists by virtue of certain conditions and those who share the hospitality of Biological station for a season must be measured by those conditions, but they come from everywhere and when they go they carry with them knowledge of unusual privilege in summer living, and an unforgettable picture of one of San Diego county's proudest ornaments. Not only the elect who come with introductions and remain to study in the Institute are benefited. The passing visitor is welcomed to the museum and all but the laboratory confines. More than fifteen thousand were received and guided through the museum last year, and it promises to be twenty thousand, this year.

For the purpose of building up a community interested in fields of science being cultivated at the Institution, special inducements in the way of temporary or permanent homesites will be made to retired educators, physicians and workers in allied professions, and free use of the Institution library and certain other facilities is given to such members of the community.

The attention of professors on leaves of absence is particularly called to this policy.

Two miles beyond the village of La Jolla and about seventeen miles from San Diego on the main traveled road to Los Angeles, is the marine biological station of the University of California, officially termed the Scripps Institution for Biological Research of the Uni-

versity. Although essentially scientific in situation, activities and atmosphere, it yet maintains a close relationship to general human interests and it shows a good deal of evidence of effort in that direction.

The resources of the institution have not been large enough to permit much attention to developments not directly related to its scientific pursuits. Still the library building gives evidence of a lively interest in decorative art and in other cultural possibilities. In the museum room are hung three striking paintings of tropical fishes by Zara Pritchard. The walls of the main entry are decorated with mural paintings by Manson, which are symbolic of origin and development of arts and sciences through intelligent study and use of natural resources. In the midst of these paintings on the west wall is a large model of the official seal of the institution made by the sculptor Eberhardt. In the reading room is a fine large painting of the leading benefactress of the institution, Miss Ellen Scripps.

Opportunities for educational work are not neglected by the institution. Exhibits in the museum are very well arranged for study and they are extensively used by expert and novice alike. They are especially valuable as a means of learning the general character of marine life of this region. For the hurried visitor this value is greatly increased by the services of a lecturer and guide, Mr. C. H. Michael, who is constantly studying his material and the wants of visitors and who is alert to any possibility of using the one to the advantage of the other. That this educational feature is appreciated by the general public is well shown by frequent inquiries for Mr. Michael and by the great increase in number of visitors as compared with a few years ago.

Amongst the most instructive exhibits in the museum are: First, charts, maps and geographic models explaining operation of tides, ocean conditions, the ocean as a geographic feature, and showing the contour of the ocean bottom near San Diego. Second, a series of marine shells of this region which has been recently greatly improved by valuable donations from Dr. Fred Baker and Mr. F. W. Kelsey. Third, a fairly representative series of the more conspicuous marine crustacea. Fourth, a good exhibit of echinoderms and other low forms of animal life. Fifth, an excellent collection of local seaweeds donated by Mrs. M. S. Snyder of La Jolla. These are beautifully mounted and conveniently arranged on swinging panels. Sixth, a large series of fishes variously mounted, mostly in tall museum jars, but partly in boxes so arranged as to show the natural habitat of bottom dwellers such as sting-rays.

The library itself is quite extensive and it also contains a considerable number of rare books of great historical value, mostly in relation to science. The range of subject matter is broad, covering almost all ground usually covered in a library except fiction and other specialized types of literature. Religion, philosophy and anthropology are well represented, although the main bulk of printed matter is technically scientific. The research worker has ample opportunity to enlarge his intellectual horizon by use of books in the library other than those covering his specialty.

The aquarium has both aesthetic and educational values. The living animals moving about give excellent information as to modes of motion and as to many types of behavior. Many of them are exceedingly beautiful and their activities most harmonious.

So, all things considered, a research institution does not necessarily compel the drab, unemotional existence that one might expect.

—W. E. ALLEN.

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