fessor Rusby, in such a way as to result in his getting a *per diem* compensation greater than this obviously inadequate one, for the days that he gave up to the work. Now, nobody would have complained if Mr. Wickersham had informed the President that this is a violation of the law. Nobody would have found fault with him if he had expressed his opinion that such violation was a serious matter. But when he went outside his province as a lawyer and told the President that in his judgment this disregard of a peculiar regulation, in so small a matter, and without the slightest trace or suspicion or hint of bad motive, was sufficient reason for approving a recommendation calling for the resignation of a faithful public servant, filling with exceptional zeal and devotion an office of unusual importance, he invited just such criticism as he has been subjected to in the past few days.

In deprecation of such criticism, the curious point is now put forward that Mr. Wickersham's report was not intended to be made public, but was designed solely for the President's private information and guidance. This may be a good point for Mr. Taft himself to fall back upon, but it is difficult to see how it can do anything for Mr. Wickersham. If the report was one for the President's private ear, the President might, to be sure, throw it into the waste-paper basket; but that can not have been the purpose for which it was originally destined. So far as in him lay, Mr. Wickersham backed up the personnel board's recommendation; and it is impossible to see wherein there is any less demerit in the advice to do an act of injustice because the advice was given in secret. To most minds, we fancy, that is an aggravation of such an offence, not an extenuation. And it is impossible not to recall the fact that in the unhappy muddle over the Lawler memorandum in the Ballinger case, in which Mr. Wickersham bore a conspicuous part, a bungling policy of secrecy was responsible for the worst of the trouble.

There is another analogy between the present affair and that of the Ballinger-Cunningham-Pinchot difficulty which the President will do well to bear in mind. In this case, as in that, there are two aspects which the subject presents; in this case, as in that, everything depends upon maintaining a sense of proportion as between these aspects. There is the narrow view of the mere lawyer and the mere disciplinarian; there is the broad view of the man responsible for large and difficult affairs. It is not necessary to ignore the requirements of law or even the exactions of red tape in order to do justice to the larger things. But it is one thing to insist that even the most zealous and well-intentioned of officers must obey the law; it is quite another thing to permit the enemies that such officers are constantly making to seize upon little errors, or technicalities, or violations even of official etiquette, as a means of getting them out of the way. Such work as that of fighting land thieves or food adulterators demands enthusiastic zeal and inexhaustible energy; if you are going to make the situation impossible for a man who has these qualities unless he combines with them an immaculate record upon every technical point, you might as well surrender at once to the land-grabbers and the adulterators. And it is because the plain people understand this that they insist upon any such affair as the Ballinger case or the Wiley case being uncovered from top to bottom. Any attempt to confine it within narrow or technical bounds is sure to fail.—New York *Evening Post.*

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

Contributions to Medical Science. By Howard Taylor Ricketts. Chicago, University of Chicago Press. 1911. Pp. ix + 497. $5.33.

The committee of the Chicago Pathological Society which was intrusted with the office of preparing a suitable memorial of Howard Taylor Ricketts have issued a memorial volume containing many of the chief original studies of this remarkable investigator.

The volume opens with a brief and dignified statement by Hektoen of the main events of Dr. Ricketts's career, ending in his untimely death in Mexico City from the deadly Mexican typhus, the disease whose secrets he

was pursuing. Then follows the well-known and now classical study by Ricketts on "Oidiomycosis of the Skin," and an important contribution by Benjamin F. Davis on "The Immunological Reactions of Oidiomycosis in the Guinea Pig," a work which grew out of and is partly based upon the observations of Ricketts. One is then reminded, by several articles, that Ricketts made important contributions in the field of immunity, in studies on lymphotoxic and neurotoxic sera, and on tetanus.

The main portion of the volume consists of the remarkable series of papers on Rocky Mountain fever, in which is found the history of the various steps which led to the unravelling of the mysteries of this disease. Some unfinished studies relating to the mode of transmission of the disease were taken up by Davis, Petersen, Moore and Maver, and their reports follow. LeCount contributes, with many illustrations, a report on the pathological anatomy of the disease based on the material collected in six autopsies performed by Ricketts. Finally come the preliminary reports of Ricketts and his colleague Wilder of their studies on Mexican typhus, in which they were able to show that the disease is communicable to monkeys, that it is transmitted by an insect, *Pediculus vestamenti,* and finally that it is probably caused by a bacillus which they succeeded in isolating from the blood of typhus patients and from the insects.

The volume appears to us noteworthy in several aspects. The scientific value of its contents, dealing with pioneer research in three important fields and practically covering the entire scope of essential knowledge in two of them, renders the work one of high scientific distinction and fully justifies its existence. The committee may be congratulated in perceiving what a rare opportunity existed of perpetuating the memory of a brief career by the simple record of its own activities.

These collected studies stand as a model of orderly and effective research guided by a keen imagination and scientific enthusiasm. The volume is a unique testimonial to the genius and energy of one of the most productive of American pathologists.

J. E.

The Geology of Building Stones. By J. ALLEN HOWE. London, Edward Arnold. 1910. Small octavo, pp. viii + 455.

This work, as stated in the editor's preface, is the fourth volume of a series of works treating of economic geology, the compilation being made mainly with a view to the requirements of students of architecture.

The volume contains, in a condensed form, a large amount of information gathered from sources easily recognizable, though foot-notes are lacking and credits given mainly for trifling statements of fact rather than ideas.

The work begins with an introductory chapter which includes a table of strata arranged after the English system. This is followed in order by chapters on the minerals of building stones; igneous rocks; sandstones and grits; limestones (including marble); slates and other fissile rocks. Pages 333–411 inclusive are devoted to discussions of the decay and the testing of building stones. In the reviewer's opinion too much stress is laid upon the latter subject and too little upon the first. No amount of testing by methods now known can compare in value to a study of the conduct of the stone in the quarry bed or in old buildings. Incidentally the statement on page 398, that the present writer made certain corrosion tests, is an error. Credit should be given to Professor J. A. Dodge, of Minneapolis, Minn.[1]

Naturally the descriptive portion of the work is devoted largely to English materials, but American and other foreign localities are not wholly overlooked.

As might perhaps be anticipated from the title, the various classes of sedimentary rocks are discussed with reference to their geological horizons. How far such an arrangement of the subject is desirable has always been a question in the reviewer's mind. Unless it

[1] See "Stones for Building and Decoration," third edition, p. 458.