

Soon after the declaration of hostilities with Germany, the Chief Signal Officer called to the attention of the committee the large amount of material which was coming before the War Department comprising inventions and suggestions relating to aeronautics in warfare, and asked assistance in examining and disposing of such material. Accordingly, this committee, through an appropriate subcommittee appointed for the purpose, has acted as a board of inventions for the government in matters relating to aeronautics, and since the outbreak of hostilities between the United States and Germany it has weekly examined hundreds of suggestions and inventions pertaining to this subject. Several suggestions of value have been received and brought promptly to the attention of the particular government office most directly interested.

In December, 1916, the subject of cooperation with the Post Office Department in the establishment of aerial mail routes was considered, and the same matter in one form or another has been considered from time to time since that date.

In the latter part of 1917 the general subject of civil aerial transport was brought to the attention of the committee and a special subcommittee was appointed to take under consideration the various phases of civil and commercial uses of aeronautics with special reference to the conditions which may be expected to develop at the close of the war.

The committee has made progress during the year in the study and investigation of the following problems: Stability as determined by mathematical investigation, air-speed meters, wing sections, aeronautical engine design, radiator design, air-propeller design and efficiency, forms of airplane, radio telegraphy, noncorrosive materials, flat and cambered surfaces, terminal connections, characteristics of constructive materials, and standardization of specifications for materials.

NEW ENGLAND INTERCOLLEGIATE GEOLOGICAL EXCURSION

THE fifteenth annual geological excursion of the New England colleges and universities was held on Friday, October 12, and Saturday, Oc-

tober 13, under the leadership of Professor J. B. Woodworth, of Harvard University, and Dr. Edward Wigglesworth, of the Boston Society of Natural History. Owing to the unusual conditions universally prevailing this year, the only colleges represented, aside from Harvard, were Mount Holyoke and Williams.

The excursion consisted of a trip to the island of Marthas Vineyard, including on the way a hurried visit to the white cedar "submerged" bog north of Woods Hole, where the question of coastal movements was discussed. On Friday afternoon, automobiles conveyed the party over the outwash glacial plain to the Weyquobsque cliffs, where the succession of the Cretaceous clays and the Miocene and Pleistocene sands and gravels was studied, as well as the rapid work of the waves in cutting back the cliffs. Spits and bars, built by the alongshore currents, were well seen from the uplands.

Saturday morning was spent at the Gay Head cliffs, studying the section of clays, sands, and boulder beds ranging from the Cretaceous to the Pleistocene, complicated by faulting and the crumpling and overthrust folding of the clays and gravels under the overriding ice of the Glacial Period. The afternoon was spent studying the so-called "morainal topography" to the northeast of Gay Head, a topography most of whose features seem to be due, primarily, to erosion during Vineyard interglacial time, deposits of Wisconsin age forming only a thin veneer on the surface of the preexisting land-forms, and carrying with them, in places, many large boulders.

In recording the appreciation of the members of the party of the care taken by the leaders to make every feature of the trip, even including the weather, a great success, the opening words of the announcement sent out before the excursion may well be repeated, "Motto: 'Go (with them) and see!'"

MEDICAL WORK OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI

ON the first of January a new charter went into effect in Cincinnati, which places all of the medical, scientific and nursing work in

the new city hospital under the direction of the University of Cincinnati. The charter provides that the medical director of each department shall be the professor in the corresponding department of the medical college and that the board constituted of these directors shall nominate to the board, through the president, all members of the staff of the hospital, including the superintendent, who shall be the general executive and business manager of the hospital. This superintendent will select all the other employees under the rules of the Civil Service Commission of the city. The charter thus removes the hospital entirely from the sphere of politics, places all the medical, scientific and nursing work under the direction of the medical college, and secures all the facilities of the hospital for the purposes of education and research. The plans for the hospital were made by Dr. Christian R. Holmes, dean of the medical faculty, and the whole building scheme has been worked out to conform to these plans.

The new building of the medical college, situated upon a twelve-acre lot immediately across the street from the hospital, has just been completed and occupied. This gives Cincinnati a complete medical teaching and research plant, costing over \$5,000,000. The medical college is a regular department of the university, which pays all its expenses. The city will continue to pay the general operating expenses of the hospital, such as the heating and lighting, food, engineers, janitors, etc., while the university will pay all the expenses of the medical, surgical, scientific and nursing service. The total expenses to the city of operating the combined medical college and hospital plant will be, not including income on endowments, approximately \$700,000 a year.

The same charter provides for a reorganization of the board of directors of the university, who will now be appointed, one each year, to serve for nine years. The newly elected mayor has just announced the reappointment of the former board, which has managed the affairs of the university so successfully in recent times. Its members are: Judge R. B. Smith, chairman, Mr. O. J. Renner, Dr. D. I. Wolfstein,

Mr. Stanford Brown, Dr. W. R. Griess, Mr. Robert W. Hochstetter, Mr. A. R. Morgan, Mr. Emil Pollak, and Dr. E. O. Strachley. This is the second time that the members of the board have been reappointed, much to the gratification of the friends of the university. For the reappointment of faithful and experienced men gives a stability to the institution and creates a confidence in the administration which is bearing fine fruits in gifts of endowment. The Baldwin estate, amounting to over \$800,000, will be turned over to the university this month.

DESTRUCTION BY FIRE OF SCIENTIFIC LABORATORIES

MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE lost by fire on December 22 Lyman Williston Hall, the oldest of its science laboratories. The building housed the departments of botany, geology, psychology, physiology and zoology. The loss to the college is practically complete and is estimated at more than \$100,000. It includes the museums of botany, zoology and geology, the last especially rich in the dinosaur footprints of the Connecticut Valley and the laboratory equipments and libraries of all the departments mentioned. In several instances members of the faculty lost their entire private collections and working libraries as well as the results of prolonged research work. Plans are already begun for temporary quarters and such material and equipment as can be replaced will be secured as fast as possible, so that even at this season of difficult purchase the college work in the sciences concerned may go on without serious interference. If other institutions or private individuals have duplicate museum material, microscopic slides which they do not need, extra laboratory equipment difficult to procure at this time, or duplicates of out-of-print books, the heads of the various departments will be glad to learn of this in order to arrange for loan or purchase. In particular, those who have sent reprints to Mount Holyoke before may be helpful by repeating their courtesy, if possible, since much time will be needed to replace files of periodicals. Dr. Cornelia M. Clapp, for many years head of the department of zoology and physiology,