

along the Msquoketa River, embracing one of the few trout streams left in Iowa, containing also some magnificent old white pine. This park was to have been dedicated on October 1, but owing to unprecedented rains the matter of dedication was postponed. The park was to have been presented by L. H. Pammel on part of the State Board of Conservation and accepted by Governor W. L. Harding. Five-minute talks were also to be given by other members of the board.

A second state park has recently been established in what is known as the horseshoe bend of the Des Moines River near Keosauqua. The board and executive council also authorized the purchase of the largest boulder of the Iowan drift in the Mississippi valley, and three acres of land surrounding the boulder.

The Keosauqua area of 1,123 acres contains a large number of interesting native trees especially oaks and shrubs. Among the birds, some of the rarer species in Iowa are found here, like the drumming pheasant. Bob white is abundant. The board went so far as to get the signatures of all farmers within a mile from the park to preserve this area outside of the park as a wild-life reserve.

The policy of the board will be to keep the lakes and purchase land on the shores for state parks, to establish one or more highways or county parks in many of the counties in the state. The larger parks are to be for the "preservation of places of historic, natural or recreational interest authorizing donations in aid of such purposes and to make an appropriation therefore, provided for aid by municipal corporations and authorizing boards of supervisors to extend county road systems." Many generous gifts have been made. The Brandt sisters of Davenport donated 57 acres in what is known as "Wild Cat Den," containing some rare ferns and interesting from an ecological standpoint. The citizens of Farmington and Van Buren county purchased outright 100 acres containing a lotus (*Nelumbo lutea*) pond of 40 acres.

There have been more than 100 petitions for state parks. Where it is not possible to buy at this time leases are made so that the wild life may be preserved along the

Yellow River in Allamakee county and the Ice Cave near Decorah. The thirty-eighth General Assembly appropriated \$100,000 annually for the creation of these parks, eliminating the fish and game warden so that the recommendations now are direct to the executive council from the State Board of Conservation.

MATTERS OF SCIENTIFIC INTEREST IN CONGRESS¹

Mr. Fess has reintroduced his bill for a national university, which failed of final action in the Sixty-fifth Congress. The present bill is H. R. 9353: "To create a national university at the seat of the Federal Government." The institution, to be known as the "National University of the United States," is to be governed by a board of trustees, consisting of the U. S. Commissioner of Education and twelve appointed members; the acts of the board are subject to approval by an advisory council, consisting of one representative (usually the president of the State University) from each state. No student is to be admitted unless he shall have obtained the degree of master of science or master of arts from an institution of recognized standing. No academic degrees are to be conferred. An initial appropriation of \$500,000 is provided. The bill was referred to the Committee on Education.

A fact of interest to the scientific public is that the "Army reorganization bill" (S. 2715, Mr. Wadsworth; and H. R. 8287, Mr. Kahn) makes no mention of the Chemical Warfare Service. In his letter accompanying the bill, Secretary of War Baker suggests that the Chemical Warfare Service be made a part of the Engineer Corps. The proposal to abolish the Service as a distinct unit, comparable with the Tank Corps, is being vigorously opposed by the Council of the American Chemical Society.

Warnings issued by the Public Health Service in September that a recurrence of the 1918 pandemic of influenza was probable in

¹ From the *Journal* of the Washington Academy of Sciences.

the autumn months of 1919, stirred renewed interest in the various bills and resolutions providing for investigations of that disease, but no final action had been taken at the time of this report, although Mr. Harding's S. J. Res. '76 was reported in the Senate on October 1.

On September 3, Mr. McKellar introduced S. 2920: "To enable the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out investigations of the causes and means of prevention of fires and dust explosions in industrial plants." The bill provides \$100,000 for such investigations. Referred to the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry.

A plan for private development under Federal concessions, of the platinum resources of Alaska is contained in H. R. 8988: "To incorporate the United States Platinum Corporation and to aid in the development of the mineral resources of Alaska, and for other purposes," introduced on September 3 by Mr. O'Connell (by request). The proposed Corporation would have a capital stock not to exceed \$50,000,000; would be exempt from Federal taxation; would be empowered to receive concessions and leases of government-owned platinum sands in Alaska; would pay a royalty of one eighth of its net products; and would furnish \$100,000 for the maintenance of five "U. S. Government Commissioners of Platinum and its Allied Industries," whose duties are not defined in the bill. Referred to the Committee on Public Lands.

No action was taken on the invitation of the French government to send delegates to a meteorological conference in Paris on September 30, and the United States was, therefore, not officially represented.

AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

THE thirty seventh stated meeting of The American Ornithologists' Union will convene in New York City, from November 11 to 13. The headquarters will be at The Belleclaire, Broadway and 77th Street. Owing to the crowded condition of hotels in New York, members intending to be present are urged to make reservations well in advance. Reserva-

tions might also be made at The Pennsylvania, opposite the Pennsylvania Station, 7th Avenue and 33d Street.

The public meetings will be held at the American Museum of Natural History, 77th Street and Central Park, West, from 10 A.M. until 4 P.M. each day. The reading of papers will form a prominent feature of the meetings. All classes of members are earnestly requested to contribute, and to notify the secretary before November 5, as to the titles of their communications, and the length of time required for their presentation, so that a program for each day may be prepared.

As this is the first meeting since the war, interesting reports may be expected from some of the members who served in the military or naval service. In addition to the usual social features there will be opportunities to visit the New York Zoological Park, the Brooklyn Museum, Audubon's home in Audubon Park, and the New York Historical Society, where the original drawings of Audubon's Birds of America are preserved.

Each member is requested to recommend to the secretary the name of at least one new associate for election to the union.

T. S. PALMER,
Secretary

1939 BILTMORE ST., N.W.,
WASHINGTON, D. C.,

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

DR. THEODORE W. RICHARDS, professor of chemistry at Harvard University, and director of the Wolcott Gibbs Memorial Laboratory, has been elected a foreign member of the Royal Society of London.

PROVOST EDGAR F. SMITH, of the University of Pennsylvania, received the degree of doctor of laws from Queen's College at Kingston, Ontario, at the convocation of Canadian universities on October 16.

DR. FEDERICO GIOLITTI, formerly professor of metallurgical chemistry and metallography at Turin has been presented with the Bessemer medal of the British Iron and Steel Institute.

DR. ERIC K. RIDEAL, a graduate of Cambridge University and of the University of