

THE DEATH OF LADY ALLARDYCE

THE name of Constance Allardyce, wife of Sir William Allardyce, governor of the Bahama Islands, will not go unrecorded in the annals of science. Before appointment to the Bahamas and after eight years of diplomatic service in the Fiji Islands, Sir William Allardyce was governor of the Falkland Islands and it was during their eleven years on this station that Mrs. Allardyce (as she then was) showed her helpful interest in scientific undertakings. The writer gratefully recalls her enthusiastic aid in assembling the fossils of the rich and remarkable Devonian fauna of the islands when there was no one else to help and where there was no notion of what was wanted. Responding to an appeal for aid made to the governor, she took up the search, diligently acquainted herself with what was to be looked for, aroused the curiosity and interest of the people of the nearer and farther islands even to the shepherds scattered over those seventy-five bits of archipelago, established collecting stations here and there among them and so brought together scientific material of great worth. She kept alive this interest during the years of her residence, extended it into other lines and eventually established the Falkland Islands Museum at Stanley, the southernmost museum of the world and probably the most remote scientific outpost of the British Empire. It may be well said that the collections gathered by Mrs. Allardyce are the basis of pretty much all that we know to-day of the ancient life of those islands and her name and services have been permanently interwoven in the geological story of the Falkland Islands.

JOHN M. CLARKE

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

GIFT TO THE MUSEUM OF VERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Two hundred thousand dollars have been given by Miss Annie M. Alexander to the University of California for the permanent support of the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology. Dr. Joseph Grinnell, associate

professor of zoology and director of the museum makes the following statement:

The work of the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology was formally inaugurated on March 23, 1908, when Miss Annie M. Alexander, then of Oakland, upon her own initiative entered into an agreement with the university by which she promised support for a period of seven years. It has now been nearly twelve years since the museum was thus founded by Miss Alexander, and she has continued her support in increasing measure, until now, by her endowment, the continuance of the museum is insured for all time.

The collections of the museum comprise at the present time a total of 70,833 specimens, consisting of 30,519 mammals, 31,347 birds, 1,804 birds' nests and eggs, 7,163 reptiles and amphibians. In addition there are some 17,000 privately owned specimens in the various groups, on deposit here. All of this material is freely available for study by any responsible natural history student, here and elsewhere. A system of loaning is in operation by which series of specimens are sent to any investigator wherever he may be located. The value of the museum's possessions in the way of specimens and facts can not help but increase in direct ratio to the extent in which these are used. The free loaning of material in vogue does away with any grounds for the complaint sometimes made against museums, that they are merely "cold storage" institutions whose aims are only to gather and hoard. A total of 9,713 specimens has been loaned, during the past eleven years, to 128 different institutions or individuals. Investigators in Washington City alone have had sent to them for examination 2,642 of the museum's mammals and birds.

The staff of the museum at the present time consists of Dr. Joseph Grinnell, director; Harry S. Swarth, curator of birds; J. Eugene Law, curator in osteology; Tracy I. Storer, field naturalist; Joseph Dixon, economic mammalogist; Harold C. Bryant, economic ornithologist; Margaret W. Wythe, general assistant, and Richard Hunt, assistant curator of birds.

LOSS OF GEOLOGISTS BY THE NATIONAL SURVEY

In his annual report the director of the United States Geological Survey writes:

The fact that there have been 77 resignations from the scientific force of the United States Geological Survey, Department of the Interior, during the last year—17 per cent. of the force—suggests inadequacy of compensation, and the percentage of resignations in the clerical and non-scientific force was even larger. This statement of course does not include separations to enter military service. The largest inroad upon the Geological Survey efficiency comes from the oil companies; the final result of the pioneer work of the federal geologists in applying geologic methods to the search of oil and gas is that a large proportion of the leading oil geologists the world over are United States Geological Survey graduates. Indeed, the future decline in popularity of the Geological Survey as a recruiting station for oil-company personnel will be due simply to the fact that the experienced oil geologists who remain in the government service are from personal preference immune to outside offers.

The relations between government salaries and outside salaries of geologists has been definitely determined in a compilation of the records of 29 geologists who left government service after receiving an average salary of \$2,271. The average initial salary of these men in private employ was \$5,121, and after about two years of average service this compensation averaged \$7,804, and eight of these geologists receive \$10,000 or more. The disparity is even greater if consideration is given to the large financial returns from investments made by the private geologists in connection with their professional work, a privilege properly denied by statute to the official geologist.

That the value of these men as specialists and consulting geologists is far greater to the country at large than to private corporations is undeniable. Furthermore, it is important to note that most of these geologists had persisted to the limit of endurance with a magnificent spirit based on their love of scientific research and their desire to contribute to the sum of geologic knowledge. Most of them have been forced out of the service by sheer financial necessity. Unless adequate measures are taken to ameliorate the situation, the geologic staff is destined to suffer far greater deterioration of morale and depletion in its ablest, most responsible, most experienced and most valuable members. The Geological Survey is passing into a stage when, with greater need than ever for systematic geologic work in the country, it is ceasing to be attractive to the young men of greatest ability, training and promise. This situation de-

serves prompt and effective remedy, for it threatens most seriously to cripple this branch of the public service.

REDUCED RAILWAY FARES TO MEETINGS OF SCIENTIFIC AND LEARNED SOCIETIES

MR. FREDERIC S. HAZARD, assistant secretary of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and representatives of the American Historical Association and other societies meeting at Cleveland have been in correspondence with the U. S. Railway Administration in regard to reduced fares which have not been granted. In their letter they say:

We respectfully submit that this narrow interpretation of the term "educational" constitutes a discrimination against the learned and scientific societies of the country which is prejudicial not only to their interests but to the general cause of education in America viewed in any comprehensive way.

It is well known that these societies are not in any sense political, commercial or money-making, but are solely scientific and educational. Their membership, especially that part of it which usually attends their meetings, is largely composed of teachers in universities, colleges and the public schools and of men and women engaged in scientific research. To these members the benefit derived from annual contact with their colleagues is of no small importance, and is reflected in their work in the classroom or laboratory. To the public-school teachers the meetings afford almost the only opportunity of coming into close touch with the leading specialists and advanced teachers in their respective fields. It is impossible to overestimate the advantage to the educational system of the country that has come from these annual gatherings of teachers and investigators; from the point of view of content it is certainly as important as is, from the point of view of method and administration the advantage that has been gained from the meetings of the purely pedagogical societies.

But it should be emphasized that the scientific societies have always laid stress upon the pedagogical aspects of their work. They constantly provide in their meetings for special sessions devoted to the teaching of their various disciplines. Some of them have long maintained standing committees on teaching, and have published reports which have been adopted throughout the country as the basis