

projection in atlases of physical geography or for statistical purposes and has the advantage over Mollweide's in that its representation of the shape of countries far east and west of the central meridian is not so distorted because meridians and parallels are not so oblique to one another.

By employing the meridian of Greenwich as a central meridian, the continental masses can be mapped where the projection is at its best and the greater distortion transferred to the Pacific Ocean.

#### RETIREMENT OF CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES

THE act providing for the retirement of civil service employees is now effective. It applies to employees who have been in the classified service 15 or more years and who have reached the age of 70 years (65 years in the case of mechanics). Employees eligible for retirement are divided into six classes depending on length of service, and the maximum and minimum annuities in each class are specified by law, being contingent on the average annual basic salary for the last 10 years of service. The classes, maximum rates and annuities are as follows:

- A. Service, 30 years or more; annuity, 60 per cent. of salary; maximum, \$720; minimum, \$360.
- B. Service, 27 years; annuity, 54 per cent. of salary; maximum, \$648; minimum, \$324.
- C. Service, 24 years; annuity, 48 per cent. of salary; maximum, \$576; minimum, \$288.
- D. Service, 21 years; annuity, 42 per cent. of salary; maximum, \$504; minimum, \$252.
- E. Service, 18 years; annuity, 36 per cent. of salary; maximum, \$432; minimum, \$216.
- F. Service, 15 years; annuity, 30 per cent. of salary; maximum, \$360; minimum, \$180.

Employees to whom the retirement provisions of the act apply shall, within 90 days of the passage of the act or within 90 days after reaching the retirement age, be automatically separated from the service. In cases where the responsible administrative officers certify to the Civil Service Commission that employees who have reached the retirement age but by reason of efficiency and willingness to remain may be advantageously continued in the public service, such employees may be retained for successive terms of two years.

Beginning with August 1, 1920, there will be withheld each month  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the basic salary of each employee in the classified service.

#### THE MEYER MEMORIAL MEDAL<sup>1</sup>

FRANK N. MEYER was an agricultural explorer in the Office of Foreign Seed and Plant Introduction, Bureau of Plant Industry, U. S. Department of Agriculture. For thirteen years he searched through China, Turkestan and other parts of Asia, for plants which might be valued additions to American agriculture and horticulture. When he lost his life on the Yangtze River in 1918,<sup>1</sup> he left a bequest of a thousand dollars to the staff of the Washington Office. The individuals of the Office have put the bequest into a permanent tribute to his memory, in the shape of a medal, designed by Theodore Spicer-Simson, which is to be awarded for distinctive service in plant introduction. The awards are to be made by the Council of the American Genetic Association.

The first award was made on May 3, 1920, when the medal was presented to Mr. Barbour Lathrop. Dr. David Fairchild, in behalf of the Council, presented the medal. Mr. Lathrop had a large part in the founding of the Office of Foreign Seed and Plant Introduction, and has been intimately connected with it since. He and Dr. Fairchild comprised one of the first exploration expeditions, and visited the West Indies, South America, Europe, Egypt, India, Ceylon and the East Indies. Many introductions now growing in this country were secured on this and subsequent trips which Mr. Lathrop conducted and financed. The first seed of the Egyptian cotton, the culture of which now amounts to \$20,000,000 a year in Arizona, was brought in by them. The tropical mangos, now an industry in Florida; the Persian Gulf dates, peculiarly successful in the Imperial Valley; Sumatra wrapper tobacco, now famous in Connecticut; the first large collection of Japanese flowering cherries; Rhodes grass, which has been called the timothy of the

<sup>1</sup> From the *Proceedings* of the Washington Academy of Sciences.

South; and varieties of soy beans and the oriental timber and edible bamboos of Japan, which are now represented by groves in various parts of the south, were also secured.

#### HONORARY DEGREES AT YALE UNIVERSITY

At the recent commencement of Yale University the degree of doctor of science was conferred on Dr. H. P. Armsby and the degree of master of arts on Dr. William Darrach, Professor H. E. Hawkes and Mr. E. W. Nelson. In conferring these degrees President Hadley said:

**HENRY PRENTISS ARMSBY:** A graduate of the Sheffield Scientific School in 1874, specializing in chemistry; doctor of philosophy at Yale, 1879; for several years he was associated with that admirable institution, the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station. He has been a teacher in various universities; he is a leading authority on animal nutrition at Pennsylvania State College. He is now director of the Institute of Animal Nutrition at Pennsylvania State College. After the signing of the armistice, he was chosen to go abroad in the commission concerned with food problems in Europe. His career has been a multitudinous blessing.

**WILLIAM DARRACH:** Was graduated from Yale College in 1897; member of Phi Beta Kappa; took the degree of M.A. and M.D. at Columbia; is now dean of the medical faculty at the College of Physicians and Surgeons. He was attached to Base Hospital No. 2, with commission as captain, and sailed for France in May, 1917; was advanced to the rank of colonel in 1919, and became senior consultant in surgery at headquarters. His publications in scientific research are important. He is a surgeon, a scholar, a teacher and a patriot.

**HERBERT EDWIN HAWKES:** B.A., Yale, 1896; Ph.D., 1900; like many of his classmates, Dr. Hawkes became a member of the Yale faculty, and taught mathematics for twelve years. In 1910 he was called to Columbia as professor; he was such a conspicuous success in administration that he was made dean of the college. He is the author of books in his chosen field, but his chief distinction is a worker of miracles—he has made hundreds of young men love mathematics. Perhaps they would not love mathematics so much if they did not love him even more. A living force in education.

**EDWARD WILLIAM NELSON:** A distinguished naturalist and one of the first ornithologists in the

world. He has been on scientific expeditions in the Arctic and Torrid Zones, and is at home everywhere. He was in Alaska in 1877, with the expedition in search of the Jeanette in 1881, and has spent many years of scientific conquest in Mexico. He has published authoritative monographs on the birds of Bering Sea and on the squirrels of Central America. He is chief of the Biological Survey in the U. S. Department of Agriculture. During the war, he was constantly employed, and he discovered the best method of ridding the trenches of undesirable visitors; thus making the study of natural history contributory to social science. He leaves for Alaska to-day.

The degree of doctor of laws was conferred on Sir Auckland Campbell Geddes, member of British Parliament, formerly professor of anatomy, British ambassador to the United States.

#### SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

THE Albert medal of the Royal Society of Arts has been awarded to Dr. A. A. Michelson, professor of physics in the University of Chicago.

**DR. EDGAR F. SMITH,** retiring provost of the University of Pennsylvania, after conferring degrees and giving the commencement address, received from Dr. William Pepper, dean of the medical school, the doctorate of medicine, conferred at the special request of the faculty of the school of medicine.

**HARVARD UNIVERSITY** has conferred its doctorate of science on Dr. W. W. Keen, of Philadelphia, and Dr. H. M. Biggs, of New York.

THE doctorate of science has been conferred by Tufts College on Dr. Arthur B. Lamb, professor of chemistry at Harvard University.

THE degree of master of science was conferred on Major Edward Hall Bowie, forecaster, U. S. Weather Bureau, at the commencement of St. John's College.

THE semi-centennial celebration of Iowa State College was held in connection with commencement in June this year, having been delayed nearly two years on account of the war. Four hundred and thirty-five degrees were awarded. No honorary degrees had been given in recent years. Thirteen were conferred