

The purpose for which the naval oil lands were set aside was to provide reserves for the future. In order to do this in the best manner the oil should be, wherever possible, retained in the ground. Where this is not possible, however, it should be retained in tankage above ground.

This oil is an important part of the national insurance. At the present rate of production there is estimated to be but twenty years' of oil supply within the limits of the United States. When this is exhausted we will be dependent upon foreign sources for our supply. In time of war such supply will certainly be jeopardized and possibly cut off. Unless the navy has conserved in this country sufficient oil wherewith to fight a war, our national security is seriously endangered.

The general board of the navy, which has made a careful study of the problem of national defense, has recommended a presidential commission to give more careful study of the fuel question. In view of present conditions I have decided to appoint this commission now. This commission will have the same access to data and information contained with the governmental departments as was granted to the United States Coal Commission (H. R. 12,377) Sixty-seventh Congress. The commission will have as its mission the general study of this problem, but specifically it will review the situation in each one of the navy's reserves and endeavor to ascertain whether it will be possible, by assignment of additional public lands, transfers, trades, purchases or otherwise, to create larger or better protected reserves than those existing at present. This not only pertains to the United States proper, but, in addition, to such oil lands as might exist in Alaska.

It is also announced that President Coolidge, by executive order, has created in Mery County, Utah, the first helium reserve in the United States. It is designated as helium reserve No. 1 and consists of 7,100 acres of land in which the greater part of the mineral title is vested in the United States. The reserve is withdrawn from all forms of settlement, location, sale or entry.

Several prospecting permits on the area were issued three years ago and an oil company drilled to a depth of between 3,000 and 4,000 feet. No oil was found, but a helium bearing gas was encountered, which, under the terms of the general leasing law, is reserved to the United States. The extent and value of the deposits of helium are not definitely known, and the lands are still subject to various prospecting permits, but to conserve the helium for government needs, Secretary Work recommended to the President that a reserve be established.

#### BLACKWATER FEVER IN RHODESIA

ACCORDING to the *British Medical Journal* letters from Dr. J. Gordon Thomson, director of protozoology, London School of Tropical Medicine, who is at present in Rhodesia investigating blackwater fever,

report that he has examined for spirochaetes the blood of six patients suffering from this disease. He adopted the method of triple centrifugalization of the blood used by Blanchard and Lefrou (1922), but so far has been unable to confirm their results or to demonstrate spirochaetes of any description. Examination of specimens with dark ground illumination, however, showed numerous fine threads or filaments, varying in length and thickness and possibly derived from the blood platelets, which simulated spirochaetes very closely indeed. Dr. Thomson has also attempted to make cultures—chiefly on Noguchi's medium—of any spirochaete which might be present, but his results have been negative. Inoculation of guinea-pigs has also failed to produce evidence of the existence of a spirochaete. Again, he makes mention of the fact that relapsing fever is fairly common among the native population, and that acute infective jaundice undoubtedly occurs, so it is quite possible that either of these diseases might be superimposed on an attack of malaria or blackwater fever. So far as he has gone Dr. Thomson is inclined to the view that blackwater fever is a manifestation of chronic malaria, and is due to some obscure haemolytic phenomenon caused by repeated attacks of malignant tertian malaria. In the parts of Rhodesia where malaria does not exist there is no blackwater fever, and, conversely, in the areas where malaria is prevalent blackwater fever is common.

#### BOTANICAL EXPEDITION TO SOUTH AMERICA

PROFESSOR G. S. BRYAN, of the department of botany of the University of Wisconsin, and Francis Macbride, of the Field Museum of Chicago, have returned from an expedition to South America made under the auspices of the Field Museum, bringing with them 6,000 specimens. Professor Bryan collected algae, fungi, lichens, liverwort, mosses, ferns and their allies, and Mr. Macbride collected specimens of flowering plants. Half of Professor Bryan's collection has been given to the Field Museum, and half of it will be placed in the botanical museum of the University of Wisconsin. The expedition, which sailed from New York last February, went *via* the Panama Canal, down the west coast of South America to Callao. From Callao, Professor Bryan and Mr. Macbride went to Lima, then by train over the western mountains to Cerro de Pasco, which is 14,200 feet above sea level. With a pack train they went over the mountains, 75 miles further into the interior, and established a base camp. They made three separate trips from there into the interior, near the headwaters of the Amazon River, which is practically a wilderness with only a few small native settlements. These

trips took about five months. A number of specimens were collected under great difficulty. The safe preservation and packing of the samples was a serious problem.

### SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

WE regret to record the death at the age of eighty-two years of Dr. Thomas Corwin Mendenhall, the distinguished physicist, formerly professor in the Imperial University of Japan and in the Ohio State University, superintendent of the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey and president of the Rose Polytechnic Institute and the Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Dr. Mendenhall was president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1889.

THE Victoria Medal of the Royal Geographical Society of Great Britain has been awarded to Dr. John F. Hayford, head of the college of engineering of Northwestern University, for notable achievement in establishing the theory of isostasy.

DR. WILLIAM HALLOCK PARK, for thirty years director of the Bureau of Laboratories of the Health Department of New York City, has been elected a foreign member of the Paris Academy of Medicine.

MEMBERS of the Stanford chapter of Sigma Xi were hosts at a dinner on March 14, held in recognition of the fact that Stanford University has had five members of its faculty presidents of national scientific societies in one year. Guests of honor at the dinner and the societies concerned were the following: Dr. Ray Lyman Wilbur, American Medical Association and Association of American Medical Colleges; Dr. Edward Curtis Franklin, American Chemical Society; Professor Harris Joseph Ryan, American Institute of Electrical Engineers; Dr. Lewis Madison Terman, American Psychological Association, and Dr. Bailey Willis, Seismological Society of America. Dr. David Starr Jordan, chancellor emeritus of the university, presided as toastmaster at the dinner. More than 200 were present.

At the annual meeting of the Geological Society of London on February 15, Dr. J. W. Evans was elected president. The vice-presidents elected are Dr. C. W. Andrews, Dr. J. S. Flett, Professor A. C. Seward and Professor W. W. Watts.

PROFESSOR W. C. M'INTOSH has been elected president and Sir David Prain a vice-president of the Ray Society, London.

In recognition of his services to the organization, the New England Association of Chemistry Teachers has presented Dr. Lyman C. Newall, head of the department of chemistry at the Boston University

College of Liberal Arts, with a copy of resolutions just adopted at its twenty-fifth anniversary meeting held in Malden. The resolutions acknowledge the work which Dr. Newell has done for the society and express the thanks of the organization.

DR. REGINALD DUDFIELD has been elected president of the Harveian Society, London.

At the annual meeting of the British National Union of Scientific Workers, Professor G. H. Hardy, Oxford, was elected president, and Dr. J. W. Evans, president of the research council of the union.

DR. CLAYTON H. SHARP, technical director of the Electrical Testing Laboratories, New York, has been elected president of the United States National Committee of the International Electrotechnical Commission at the committee meeting held on March 12, succeeding Dr. C. O. Mailloux, resigned.

DU PU BARRETT, of the Forest School of the Georgia College of Agriculture, has been appointed state extension forester, in charge of logging and utilization.

EIGHT sub-committees of the research committee of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers are at work on different problems. These committees, with their chairmen, are designated thus: (1) Reviews and compendia of work already done, J. B. Whitehead; (2) nature of dielectric absorption, J. B. Whitehead; (3) phase difference in dielectrics, Delafield Du Bois; (4) electric strength, William A. Del Mar; (5) dielectric constant, T. S. Taylor; (6) resistivity, H. L. Curtis; (7) flashover voltage, F. W. Peek, Jr.; (8) theories, Vladimir Karapetoff.

PROFESSOR GEORGE KLINGENBERG, head of the Technical High School in Berlin and director of the General Electric Company in Germany, arrived in New York on March 23 to make a study of American power transmission methods.

DR. CHARLES SCHUCHERT, of Yale University, who has been spending some time at Tucson, Arizona, where he has been lecturing on historical geology at the University of Arizona, has started a leisurely return journey to New Haven. Dr. Schuchert plans to return to the University of Arizona next winter and deliver a series of special lectures on stratigraphic paleontology.

THE Sigma Xi club, of Southern California, held a special meeting at the City Club, Los Angeles, on March 17, in honor of Professor and Mrs. J. H. Comstock, of Cornell University, who were visiting in Southern California. Dinner was served at six-thirty, after which the members enjoyed an informal talk on "Some notes on the early history of entomology in this country," by Professor Comstock, and on "The