

gations will be conducted primarily for the benefit of the public. It is the plan to report the results in appropriate periodicals as the various phases of the studies are concluded.

THE Royal Aeronautical Society has recently received the following letter from Mr. Harry F. Guggenheim, president of the Daniel Guggenheim Fund for the Promotion of Aeronautics, Inc.: "It affords me great pleasure to advise you that the Daniel Guggenheim Fund for the Promotion of Aeronautics, Inc., has approved a grant of \$5,000 to the Royal Aeronautical Society to enable it more easily to continue its splendid contributions to the aeronautical science of the world. It is the hope of the fund that this grant may stimulate the growth and strength of the Society to such a point that within a short while financial assistance from without will be unnecessary."

TEMPORARY reservation of a tract of public land in Nevada containing Lovelock Cave has been authorized by an executive order issued by the U. S. Department of the Interior. The area on which the cave is located contains approximately 40 acres and is in Churchill County. Its withdrawal is for the purpose of affording opportunity of scientific study of interesting prehistoric material found in the cave. According to the secretary of the Smithsonian Institution articles taken from Lovelock Cave are in a remarkable state of preservation and are particularly valuable on this account. With its temporary retention in public ownership as a result of the executive order, the site will be the subject of further archeological research.

THE National Forest Reservation Commission met recently, under the chairmanship of Secretary Davis, of the war department, and approved the purchase of 96,000 acres additional to the White Mountains National Forest in New England, the Allegheny in Northwestern Pennsylvania and the Pisgah in North Carolina. The commission also gave a hearing to a delegation from New England which urged the purchase of 23,000 acres within the boundaries of the White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire, containing one of the few virgin timber stands in Northeastern United States. No decision was reached.

AN Imperial Agricultural Research Conference, at which delegates from all parts of the Empire will be present, will be held in London beginning on October 4. The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries decided some time ago to call such a conference in 1927, and the proposal was endorsed by the last Imperial Conference, which appointed a special sub-committee to inquire into research. The ministry is responsible for arranging the conference, and the Empire Marketing Board is providing the necessary funds. An organiz-

ing committee has been appointed under Lord Bledisloe's chairmanship and has already held its first meeting.

MILK ISLAND, lying off the coast of Gloucester, Mass., has been accepted by the state as a wild life sanctuary, according to an announcement of the state division of fisheries and game of the Department of Conservation. The island is the gift of Mrs. Roger Babson to the Federation of the Bird Clubs of New England, upon condition that it shall be known as the Knight Wild Life Reservation, in memory of Mrs. Babson's mother and father. The federation, in turn, has deeded the property to the state in trust for this purpose, and the governor and council have accepted it by formal vote. It will be administered by the Fisheries and Game Division, of which William C. Adams is director.

### UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NOTES

AT the commencement exercises of Harvard University it was announced that during the year 1926-27 the university had received gifts of \$6,003,372, in addition to subscriptions to the ten-million-dollar campaign and to the alumni endowment fund and the income received under the will of Gordon McKay. Most of these gifts have during the year been chronicled in SCIENCE. Those of special interest to scientific men include: anonymous, for research and instruction in abnormal and dynamic psychology, \$25,113; from the estate of Richard Dana Bell, for biological chemistry in the medical school, \$100,000; from the General Education Board for the department of ophthalmology, \$188,400; from the International Education Board endowment, for a southern astronomical observatory, \$180,000; from the estate of Arthur S. Luke, for medical and surgical science, \$237,081; from the Rockefeller Foundation, for the school of public health, \$137,250; from the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, for industrial psychology and for a survey of crime, \$37,000; for the Charles Sprague Sargent Memorial Fund, \$142,720; from Dr. Frederick C. Shattuck, to establish the Richard P. Strong Fund in Tropical Medicine, \$100,000; from Harold S. Vanderbilt, for a medical school dormitory and salary for an instructor of physical training in the medical school, \$470,100.

GIFTS to Wellesley College amounting to \$814,000 were announced at the recent commencement exercises, bringing the Centennial Fund to \$7,220,000. The gifts include \$100,000 by George W. Farwell, of Boston, to establish the Ruby Frances Howe Farwell chair of botany, and \$40,000 from the class of 1882, for the Susan Hallowell chair of botany. A gift of

\$30,000 by Mrs. Robert Gould Shaw will be divided: \$10,000 to the Hallowell chair of botany, \$20,000 to the Hallowell Arboretum.

BOWDOIN COLLEGE has received a gift of \$175,000 from Augustus F. Moulton, of Portland, for the construction of a Bowdoin Union, to be the social center of the college.

THE legislature of the state of Kansas before adjournment appropriated \$300,000 for the erection of new buildings for the school of medicine of the University of Kansas at Kansas City. \$100,000 is for a new nurses' home and \$200,000 for an additional ward unit.

THE University of Pittsburgh announces the appointment of Dr. Robert T. Hance as professor and acting head of the department of zoology. Dr. Hance has been associated for the past several years with the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research.

At the Carnegie Institute of Technology the following appointments have been made: John H. Neelley, associate professor of mathematics; Howard V. Russell, assistant professor of physics and Walter H. J. Taylor, assistant professor of chemical engineering.

THE following promotions are announced in the department of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania: to professorships of psychology: Drs. Samuel W. Fernberger and Karl G. Miller, and to assistant professorships of psychology: Drs. Robert A. Brotemarkle, Henry E. Starr and H. Sherman Oberly.

DR. R. L. SHRINER, associate in biochemistry at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station at Geneva, has accepted a position in the chemistry department at the University of Illinois.

DR. TOMLINSON FORT, head of the department of mathematics at Hunter College, New York City, has resigned in order to accept a similar position at Lehigh University.

DR. ALEXANDER G. RUTHVEN has been elected chairman of the department of zoology at the University of Michigan, and Dr. Robert R. McKibbin, assistant professor of soils at the University of Maryland, has been appointed lecturer in the chemistry department of Macdonald College, McGill University, Ste. Anne de Bellevue, Quebec, Canada.

## DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

### CONCERNING "SPECIES-GRINDING"

IN SCIENCE for December 10, 1926, Dr. James G. Needham gives an interesting and well-deserved encomium of the natural history work of Dr. Curtis Gates Lloyd. But in praising his friend, Dr. Need-

ham quotes from one of the least laudable of his personal prejudices.

In a general criticism of workers in taxonomy as engaged in "species-grinding," "practiced for the purpose of seeing one's name in print," "a sort of cheap notoriety which places a premium on slipshod and hasty description," he takes a needless slap at a group as a whole signally unselfish and conscientious. For systematic zoology and botany give most of our clues to the origin of species, and therefore to "organic evolution," and on accuracy in taxonomy rests all our actual knowledge of geographical distribution. Slipshod amateur work in any field is a nuisance in science, and there is no field it may not sometimes invade. The greater the public interest in any branch of science, the more likely it is to attract the charlatan and those unquiet spirits who find the methods of science too slow and laborious.

In the interest of accuracy, taxonomists are obliged to resort to what Dr. Lloyd calls contemptuously "The time-wasting devices of priority hunters because he deemed them a hindrance to science." In like manner care for tools or instruments of precision in any science is likewise "time-wasting." It takes effort as keen for an anatomist to keep his knives sharp as for a geneticist to keep track of his observations. The eminent "intuitionists" do not do this, and in the long run their inspired guesses count for nothing.

More than eighty years ago Agassiz justified the work he put on his "Nomenclator-Zoologicus," as an effort to save systematic zoology from the utter confusion into which it was then falling. It was plain to him, as to all conscientious workers that the language of systematic science could not be altered at will without being made incomprehensible and useless, and that the law of priority was the sole basis on which order in the naming of any group could be established. If for any reason a writer rejects an earlier or established name for one he likes better, it opens the door to anybody's play of choice. Take any name you like or make a new one, and all continuity and certainty is lost. We know more or less well a million kinds of animals and almost as many plants, and we are not yet near the end of the list. To declaim against law and order in nomenclature is a sin against accuracy. That there are so many kinds of life in one small world is not the fault of naturalists. Facts are facts, and our duty is in Agassiz's oft-quoted words, to "strive to interpret what really exists."

All easy problems in biology are already solved, and any of the others may bring up new points of view. Practically also, one line of genuine work in any field is just as difficult as in any other and just as important. To sneer at any other lines of