

## SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

A NEW EDITION OF WILLARD GIBBS'S  
WORKS AND PROPOSED  
COMMENTARY

IN 1906 the writings of Willard Gibbs were printed in a collected edition of two volumes entitled, "The Scientific Papers of J. Willard Gibbs." Volume I contained all his papers on thermodynamics, and volume II the remainder of his published writings, with the exception of the book "Elementary Principles in Statistical Mechanics," which had been published only five years earlier and was at that time still available. At the present time both volume I of the "Scientific Papers" and the volume on "Statistical Mechanics" are out of print.

In connection with a movement started last winter to establish at Yale University a memorial in honor of Willard Gibbs, provision has been made, through the generosity of a donor who prefers to remain anonymous, for a new and complete edition of Willard Gibbs's writings. This will consist of either two or three volumes, well printed and bound, and will be sold at a very moderate price to encourage a wide distribution. It will probably be published during 1928.

In addition to this reprinting of the original text of Gibbs's works, it is proposed to publish, at some later date, a volume or volumes designed to aid the reader to bridge the well-recognized gap between Gibbs's theorems on the one hand and the actual experimental data of the chemist and physicist on the other. This supplementary material, to be written by competent authorities in the several fields, would aim (a) to explain the philosophical background of Gibbs's method; (b) to amplify the treatment of points of special difficulty; (c) to discuss the evaluation of Gibbs's functions in terms of directly measurable quantities, and (d) to furnish a variety of illustrative examples from the literature now available. Such treatment is most needed in the case of the thermodynamic papers, but the plan may be extended to cover Gibbs's writings on other subjects if it seems expedient. The financial support of the undertaking has been liberally provided for, and suitable honoraria will be paid to the authors of the new material.

The undersigned committee, appointed to study this plan, earnestly solicits suggestions and comments from all persons interested, especially with respect to any or all of the following questions:

I. Which of the aims outlined above are the most important?

II. How should the subject-matter be subdivided into parts which can be handled by a single author?

III. What persons, irrespective of nationality, are best fitted by ability and training to undertake these different parts?

Letters containing suggestions or criticisms will be welcomed and may be addressed to the Gibbs Committee, Sterling Chemistry Laboratory, New Haven, Conn.

JOHN JOHNSTON,  
WILLIAM F. G. SWANN,  
RALPH G. VAN NAME, *Chairman*

YALE UNIVERSITY

## BARRO COLORADO ISLAND STATION

DR. THOMAS BARBOUR, chairman of the executive committee of the Institute for Research in Tropical America, has made his fourth annual report on Barro Colorado Island Station. It is a report of encouraging progress in the work and material development of the station.

"Redwood House," at the end of Armour trail, has been built of redwood lumber sent from California in order to test this lumber for resistance to termites. The new house is now completed and provided with everything necessary for a stay of several days. A new storeroom 28 feet long and 9 feet wide has also been built of redwood. An observation tower 28 feet high has been erected on the highest point of the island. Old trails have been extended and new ones laid out. Bridges have been made across some of the steepest ravines.

Among those who have carried on studies at the station during the year may be mentioned Dr. Frank M. Chapman, of the American Museum of Natural History; Dr. L. A. Kenoyer, head of the department of biology of Western State Normal School at Kalamazoo, Michigan; Dr. Josselyn Van Tyne, of the museum of zoology of the University of Michigan; Dr. Alfred O. Gross, professor of biology at Bowdoin College; Dr. George B. Wislocki, of the department of anatomy of the Johns Hopkins University; Dr. Curt P. Richter, of the Johns Hopkins Hospital; Miss Walburga A. Petersen, of the University of Wisconsin; Dr. Howard E. Enders, head of the biology department of Purdue University; Dr. Herbert Osborn, director of the Ohio Biological Survey; Dr. Thornton W. Burgess, of Springfield, Mass.; Dr. W. E. Hastings, of the conservation commission of Michigan, and Messrs. Ludlow Griscom and Maunsell S. Crosby, of the Museum of Comparative Zoology.

During the year a number of technical papers of importance have been published by various workers embodying the results of work on the Island and Isthmus.

The financial support of the station has continued to come from the University of Michigan, American Museum of Natural History, Harvard University, the Johns Hopkins University and Missouri Botanical Garden; from fees from scientific workers, and from