

A COMMISSION of specialists plans to spend four months this summer investigating conditions in Russia and Siberia. The tentative personnel of the commission includes: Franklin S. Harris, president of Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, chairman and agronomist; J. B. Davidson, Iowa State College, agricultural engineer; Benjamin Brown, North Carolina Agricultural College, poultry and marketing specialist, and K. B. Sauls, secretary. Others may be added to the group. The Russian government is planning to set aside a tract of ten million acres in Siberia where Russian Jews are to be colonized in order that they may have complete religious and industrial freedom. The Russian government is asking wealthy Jewish people in America to aid in the project. Before the backers consent they wish to obtain first hand information on the condition of members of their race in Russia and the nature of the land in Siberia.

Nature reports that a summer school of biology, under the direction of Professor F. A. E. Crew, is being organized by the Education Committee for the County Borough of Brighton, to be held at the Municipal Training College from August 2 to 16. Courses will be given on biology and the school curriculum (Professor A. D. Peacock, University of St. Andrews, and Mr. G. B. Walsh, High School for Boys, Scarborough), on the theory of the cell, the gene and organic inheritance in man (Professor F. A. E. Crew), and there will be single lectures on special topics. Practical and field work is being arranged. Particulars can be obtained from the secretary to the Brighton Education Committee, Mr. F. H. Toyne, 54 Old Steine, Brighton.

THE foundation stone of the International Hydrographic Bureau was laid at Monte Carlo on April 20 by the Prince of Monaco in the presence of the delegates of the International Hydrographic Conference and many prominent members of the British colony. The building is to be erected on the Quai de Plaisance. The Marchese Paulucci di Calboli, assistant secretary-general to the League of Nations, expressed the satisfaction with which the offer of the Principality of Monaco to provide such a suitable site for the International Hydrographic Bureau had been received by the Council of the League of Nations. The Marchese recalled that in July, 1919, when it was decided to provide a permanent bureau, Monaco was chosen because of its associations with the late Prince of Monaco, the founder of the Oceanographic Museum, who had contributed during his lifetime such valuable assistance to the furtherance of oceanographic research. On behalf of Sir Eric Drummond, secretary-general to the League of Nations, the Marchese tendered his thanks to the Dynasty of Monaco.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NOTES

THE General Education Board of the Rockefeller Foundation of New York has offered to Harvard University a conditional gift of \$400,000 to construct a laboratory for physics. The gift is offered subject to raising by the university of an additional \$600,000.

ANNOUNCEMENT has been made at the University of Virginia that the anonymous gift of a trust fund of \$6,000,000 for scholarships and fellowships made last year was from the late Philip Francis du Pont, who was a student at the university from 1897 to 1900.

Two gifts for the study of the structure of the brain have been received by Yale University. Harry Payne Bingham has placed at the disposal of the department of anatomy the duplicate specimens in his unique collection of fishes deposited in the Peabody Museum, and Mrs. Dudley S. Blossom, of Cleveland, has subsidized the study by a grant of \$5,000 a year for five years.

The Boston Evening Transcript reports that the Sargent School of Physical Education has been transferred to Boston University by Dr. Ledyard Sargent, president and owner, and will become a part of the Boston University school of education under the direction of Dean Arthur H. Wilde.

ON the occasion of the presentation of the freedom of the city of Edinburgh to Sir Alfred Ewing, principal and vice-chancellor of the university, he read a letter from Sir Alexander Grant, enclosing a check for £25,000 towards the building of a new department of geology, and promising a like amount within twelve months. This, he said, was in addition to a sum of £50,000 given to the university by Sir Alexander Grant a few years ago.

PROFESSOR FRED W. UPSON has been appointed dean of the graduate college of the University of Nebraska. He will retain the chairmanship of the department of chemistry, which he has held since 1918.

DR. E. U. CONDON, assistant professor of physics at Princeton University, has been appointed professor of theoretical physics at the University of Minnesota.

PROFESSOR J. H. BODINE, of the department of zoology of the University of Pennsylvania, has been appointed head of the department of zoology at the State University of Iowa. He succeeds Professor W. W. Swingle, who goes to Princeton University.

DR. PERCY EDWARD RAYMOND, since 1917 associate professor of paleontology at Harvard University, has been promoted to a professorship.

DR. W. H. ADOLPH, who has served the past two years as associate professor of chemistry in the Uni-

versity of Nebraska, will return to China in the autumn as professor of biochemistry at the Yenching University at Peking.

PROFESSOR J. E. HAWLEY, of the University of Wisconsin, has been appointed head of the department of mineralogy at Queens University. He is a graduate of Queens and succeeds Professor E. L. Bruce, who takes the Miller Memorial Research Chair in Geology.

DISCUSSION

AMBITIOUS AGRONOMY

ORGANIZATION is the slogan of to-day; mass production is typically American. Surely no carping critic could do less than admit that the American Society of Agronomy is achieving its full 100 per cent. of United States modernism. Not content with sloughing off even the suspicion of representing an art rather than a science or with establishing an excellent scientific journal or with the enrolment of a large and enthusiastic membership, the agronomists now seem ready to assume control of the evolution of our mother tongue.

When a committee comprising a university president, a university professor and a head of a large office of a large government bureau issues pronouncements designed to bring about extensive changes in the English language, and the American Society of Agronomy accepts these reports and indorses them, at least by implication, by continuing this committee on agronomic terminology, the question now may be: Is it necessary to organize a Society Opposed to the American Society of Agronomy or will ridicule erase the effects of such well-intentioned blundering?

A year ago the first detailed part of the committee report¹ set forth a motley crew of adjectives, "median terms"—illogical, carelessly constructed, poorly if at all defined, confusing rather than an aid to concise scientific expression, and generally undesirable.² A few samples are quoted from the lists in the report:

midlow	midplumph
midheight	midlux
midhigh	midumblux
midthickth	midrugaplane

¹ Carleton R. Ball, Homer L. Shantz and Charles F. Shaw, "Median Terms in Adjectives of Comparison," *Journal of the American Society of Agronomy*, 20: 182-191. 1928.

² K. F. Kellerman, "Criticism of the Report of the Committee on Agronomic Terminology," *Journal of the American Society of Agronomy*, 20: 519-522. 1928.

J. H. Kempton, "Agronomic Jabberwocky," *SCIENCE*, 67: 629-630. 1928.

H. A. Allard, "Words and Life," *SCIENCE*, 69: 41-43. 1929.

midstraightth
midcoolth
midgoodth

midceptisist
midceptimmune
midstouth

Rather especial attention should be given to *stouth*, the proposed basic term from which the word "mid-stouth" was made. In answering a criticism to the effect that *stouth* was a word with a meaning entirely different from that proposed by the committee, the chairman of the committee has stated:³ "As the committee pointed out . . . 'stouth' is not a new word but an old term having exactly the meaning of stoutness." Perhaps the committee can submit more definite evidence regarding the connotation of these two words than a dogmatic statement from its chairman. Our leading dictionaries, such as Century, Webster's International, and Standard, however, have failed to discover the common use of *stouth* meaning stoutness. The words *stout* and *stouth* are derived from quite different sources, and at least from the beginning of the fourteenth century to the present time even the derived meanings in "common use" have never been interchangeable. Throughout this period *stouth* has carried the idea of theft, stealth, etc., but never stoutness; *stout* has meant proud, valiant, hardy, thick in body, etc., but even with the variant spellings up to the present time it seems never to have been confused with *stouth*. The second part of the last year's report⁴ urges mass action in simplification and standardization of plural forms of Latin words with the plea of greater efficiency in instruction of the young.

Of course no attention would need be given to these reports were they fathered merely by an individual. They become important solely because the American Society of Agronomy seems impressed by its impressive committee. Probably no group of technical men in the United States is publishing more per man year than the agronomists. These agronomically standardized evolutions will soon, therefore, be firmly intrenched in the respectability of "dictionary usage" unless agronomists as well as others can be stimulated to thoughtful review of language building in general and in particular of the character of the recommendations or the creations of the committee. For example, in the second report two new words, "phytoleum" and "zooleum," are suggested. Although the report seems to state that these words were constructed to be "similar" to the trade names *congoleum* and *linoleum*, it may be assumed the committee in-

³ Carleton R. Ball, "Comment on Dr. Kellerman's Criticism of the Committee Report on 'Median Terms,'" *Journal of the American Society of Agronomy*, 20: 523-526. 1928.

⁴ Carleton R. Ball, "English or Latin Plurals for Anglicized Nouns" (A contribution from the Committee on Agronomic Terminology), *American Speech*, 3: 291-325. 1928.