APPROPRIATIONS FOR FEDERAL GEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

ACCORDING to information sent by Science Service the elimination of fundamental geologic research in the U. S. Geological Survey and its investigation of mineral resources in Alaska is threatened in the appropriation bill for the Department of the Interior for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1934, reported in the House of Representatives on December 16.

The appropriations committee has eliminated completely the items for "fundamental research, geologic science" for which the budget estimated $46,470 and the item for "investigation of mineral resources in Alaska" for which the budget estimate was $60,180. In all the committee-recommended appropriations for the U. S. Geological Survey are $457,400 less than the budget estimates of $2,384,900.

Volcanologic surveys, largely in Hawaii, remain in the bill with $12,500, which is $2,500 less than the appropriations for 1933 and $6,010 less than the budget's recommendations.

If the appropriations for fundamental geologic research are not restored when the bill is considered by the House, the progress of geology in this country will be dealt a severe blow. The federal Geological Survey is the nation's principal research agency in geology, cooperating with universities and a few mining and oil companies which provide the only other organization supporting geological science.

The lack of appropriations for the Alaskan explorations would bring to an abrupt end the pioneer service under frontier conditions that was begun more than 30 years ago. Less than half of Alaska has been covered by the topographic and geologic maps necessary for any utilization of its resources.

Twelve investigators who have made geological service to the nation their life work would no longer be able to serve the public if the fundamental geologic research is killed by lack of appropriation. Cuts in geologic research have already been made, the budget recommendation of $46,600 being less than half of the $100,000 expended in the 1932 fiscal year. The elimination of Alaskan resources investigations would affect over twenty employees. The expenditures in 1932 for this work amounted to $84,500.

Other cuts included in the nearly half-million dollars eliminated from the reduced appropriations for topographic surveys by $62,000, geologic surveys by $35,700, stream gaging by $81,400, printing and engraving geologic maps by $64,170, investigations of minerals on public lands by $25,180, classification of lands by $72,950, general salaries by $3,340.

The whole Department of Interior bill recommends appropriations of $43,192,904 which is less than the budget estimates by $2,891,025. The only appropriations singled out for complete elimination in the whole bill are those for fundamental geological work and Alaska resources investigations of the U. S. Geological Survey.

So important are the geologic surveys, fundamental research and the Alaskan researches considered that under the economy act passed by Congress last spring additional funds for the current year were transferred by the Secretary of the Interior to these essential activities. Actual funds available for geologic surveys and fundamental research combined were $500,000 in 1932 fiscal year, $419,750 in 1933 fiscal year compared with the $300,000 proposed for geologic surveys and nothing for fundamental research proposed in the House committee report, a reduction of 40 per cent. in two years. For the Alaskan work $69,000 is currently available, compared with nothing recommended.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AND THE TARIFF ON LABORATORY EQUIPMENT

THE *U. S. Daily* reports that the board of trustees of the University of Illinois on Dec. 6 filed a petition with the Supreme Court of the United States seeking a review of the ruling that the university is required to pay customs duties on laboratory equipment imported from abroad and used in educational work.

It is contended in the petition for a writ of certiorari that the imposition of customs duties on the equipment involved constitutes an unconstitutional burden and tax upon a state governmental agency. The university claims that it is a governmental agency of the State of Illinois, and that the equipment was imported in the exercise of a governmental as distinguished from a proprietary function. The Supreme Court is asked to hear the case and apply to it the rule that the Federal Government has no power to tax a state or any of the governmental agencies of a state.

Review is sought of the decision, with two judges dissenting, of the Court of Customs and Patent Appeals. The lower court stated in the majority opinion that it was necessary to determine in the case whether the university is a governmental agency. It was held that the rule sought to be invoked by the university is not applicable since the tariff law imposing the customs duties was an exercise by Congress of its power to regulate foreign commerce, and that Congress, having the sole power to regulate such commerce under the commerce clause of the Federal Constitution, has the power to subject merchandise imported by a state to customs duties.

The petition was filed by Attorney General Oscar E. Carlstrom, of Illinois, and Sveinbjorn Johnson, counsel for the Board of Trustees. Attorneys General of the States of California, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky,

Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New York, North Dakota, Texas and Vermont also joined in the petition for review.

NATIONAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS IN THE BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

NATIONAL RESEARCH fellowships in the biological sciences (agriculture, forestry, botany, zoology, anthropology and psychology), are as usual to be awarded in 1933 by the National Research Council.

These fellowships are administered by a board appointed by the National Research Council. They are for study and research in America or abroad, and are open to citizens of both sexes of the United States and Canada who possess a Ph.D. degree or its equivalent. The purpose of these fellowships is the promotion of fundamental research through development of thoroughly trained investigators. The present policy of the board of administration is to restrict appointment to those applicants in the early stages of a research career who have demonstrated a high order of ability and who give promise of developing individual judgments and viewpoints in investigative work.

The basic stipends per annum are $1,620 for unmarried fellows and $2,070 for married fellows, in America; or $1,620 and $2,160, respectively, with additional travel allowance, for fellows appointed to study in Europe. Awards are made for one year, but fellowships may be renewed. Applications for 1933–34 must be in the hands of the fellowship board not later than March 1, 1933. Appointments will be made about May 1.

The fellowships are not granted to any institution or university, but the choice of place to work is left to the fellow, subject to the approval of the fellowship board. The appointments are for full time and no other remunerative or routine work is permitted.

For further information address: Chairman, Board of National Research Fellowships in the Biological Sciences, the National Research Council, Washington, D. C.

THE HERSEY PROFESSORSHIP OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF PHYSIC AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

A MEETING celebrating the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Hersey Professorship of the Theory and Practice of Physic, one of the first three professorships in medicine established at the university, was held on December 20, at the Harvard Medical School.

The professorship was established on December 24, 1782. In the 150 years since that time, it has had seven holders. The first incumbent was Benjamin Waterhouse, who held the post from 1782 to 1812. His successors have been James Jackson, 1812–1836; John Ware, 1836–1859; George C. Shattuck, 1859–1873; Francis Minot, 1873–1891; Reginald Heber Fitz, 1892–1908, and Henry A. Christian, who was appointed in 1908.

The speakers at the meeting were Dr. Christian, the present holder of the professorship, and descendants of his six predecessors. Five of these six descendants of the former professors are themselves now members of the teaching staff at the Medical School. The program, in addition to Dr. Christian's address, was as follows:

"Benjamin Waterhouse and the Introduction of Vaccination into America," by his great-great-granddaughter, Margaret Thayer Lancaster.

"James Jackson as Professor of Medicine," by his great-grandson, Dr. George R. Minot, professor of medicine.

"John Ware, the Family Physician," by his grandson, Dr. Robert M. Green, assistant professor of applied anatomy.

"George Cheyne Shattuck and his Medical Contributions," by his grandson, Dr. George Cheever Shattuck, assistant professor of tropical medicine.

"Francis Minot and Hemorrhage in the Newborn," by his grandson, Dr. Francis Minot Rackemann, instructor in medicine.

"Reginald Heber Fitz and Appendicitis," by his son, Dr. Reginald Fitz, associate professor of medicine.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

IN view of the death of Dr. Louis W. Austin in July, 1932, Professor A. E. Kennelly has been elected to the presidency of the International Scientific Radio Union (Union Radio Scientifique Internationale) to succeed the late General Gustave A. Ferrié.

DEAN ANDREY A. POTTER, of the School of Engineering at Purdue University, was elected president of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers at the recent New York meeting.

THE Paul Ehrlich Foundation of Germany has awarded its gold medal to Dr. Oswald T. Avery, of the Hospital of The Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, New York, and its silver medal to Dr. Michael Heidelberger, formerly of the Hospital of The Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research and now of the Medical Department of the Presbyterian Hospital and associate professor of biochemistry of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, for their "epoch-making chemo-immunological discoveries."