without issue. He is survived by a brother, James Belling, of Cornwall, England.

CHARLES B. DAVENPORT

RECENT DEATHS

EDWARD BRUCE WILLIAMSON, research associate in the Museum of Zoology, University of Michigan, died on February 28, at the age of fifty-five years.

DR. H. GREGG SMITH, associate in biochemistry at the State University of Iowa, died on February 26. He was thirty-four years old.

NATURE reports the deaths of Professor Johan van Baren, an authority on soil mineralogy, professor of geology and mineralogy in the Agricultural University of Wageningen, Holland, on February 7, aged fifty-seven years, and of Lieutenant-Colonel J. C. G. Kunhardt, formerly of the Indian Medical Service, who did valuable work on plague prevention in India and also in the advancement of the rubber industry, at the age of fifty-seven years.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE OF PARIS

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Journal* of the American Medical Association writes that the Faculty of Medicine of Paris, having often complained of its cramped quarters, which in view of the constantly increasing number of students have became inadequate, received from the Rockefeller Foundation the offer of a gift of $6,000,000 for new buildings for the faculty of medicine, on condition that the French government furnish an equal sum. It was impossible to erect the new buildings on the present site along the Boulevard St. Germain, in the center of Paris, where real estate commands an enormous price. When a different site was sought, consideration was given to the site occupied by the Halle-aux-vins, on the bank of the Seine farther to the east. The Halle-aux-vins in that case would have been moved outside the city. The wine merchants refused to move. Attention was then given to a large unoccupied area south of the city, which was being used for a military aviation school. The suggestion of this site brought protests from the professors, students, medical libraries and the dealers in surgical instruments that had been grouped for centuries about the present buildings. This site was several miles away from the principal teaching hospitals. Attention was then given to a tract occupied by the Ste. Anne psychopathic hospital, located to the south in the vicinity of the University City. It was not long before protests were heard. Professors think the location is still too remote, and their opinion is shared by the merchants. Furthermore, it would be necessary to rebuild a much larger psychopathic hospital elsewhere; for it is now inadequate, owing to the increasing number of insane persons. The council of the faculty of medicine, according to the correspondent, is placed in an embarrassing position by the gift of the Rockefeller Foundation, especially in view of the state of the French treasury. The present buildings of the faculty of medicine are only fifty years old, and it would suffice to add further stories or erect annexes. In short, the council appears disposed to postpone until more propitious times the realization of the generous proposal of the great American philanthropist. Attention has been called also to the fact that the magnificent university buildings erected with the same aid but located too far from the center of the city are already revealing grave disadvantages by reason of their remoteness. The students are attending their lectures less regularly on account of the time required to go to and fro.

REVISION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ELECTRICAL UNITS

THE Bureau of Standards reports that the third biennial meeting of the advisory committee on electricity and photometry established by the International Committee on Weights and Measures opened on January 31 at the International Bureau of Weights and Measures, at Sevres, near Paris.

The international committee has undertaken to revise the present international electrical units. It proposes to base the units directly upon absolute measurements in the electromagnetic centimeter-gram-second system, instead of defining them by means of the mercury-ohm tube and the silver voltameter. Redeterminations of the ohm and ampère by absolute measurements are in progress in several national standardizing laboratories, including the Bureau of Standards; at the meeting at which the bureau was represented by E. C. Crittenden, chief of the Electrical Division, plans were made for comparing the results found in different countries and for furnishing to all countries standards based upon the combined results.

The international committee likewise hopes to establish uniform units and standards throughout the world for the measurement of light. In this attempt it is collaborating with the International Commission on Illumination. A special committee on units and standards appointed by the latter commission, and consisting of representatives of France, Germany, Great Britain, Japan, the Netherlands and the United States, met in Paris on January 30 to prepare recom-

mendations on photometry for the official advisory committee.

The bureau has proposed the establishment of a system of photometric units based primarily upon the intensity of the light given by a "black body" radiator at the freezing point of platinum. The adoption of such a basic unit must be supplemented by agreement upon a method for measuring lights differing from that of the basic standard in color. The flicker photometer, with proper allowance for the characteristics of individual observers, affords one of the most simple and practical methods for making such measurements. Its use has, however, not been viewed with favor abroad. Consequently, a basis for international agreement is being sought in spectrophotometric measurements of colored filters, from which standard values for transmission of visible light can be calculated by means of "visibility factors" which have already been accepted by the International Commission on Illumination.

In both of these projects the National Physical Laboratory of Great Britain and the Bureau of Standards have been cooperating. Mr. Crittenden therefore visited London on his way to Paris in order to compare experimental results found at the bureau with those of the British laboratory. These two laboratories have joined in proposing that the new units in electricity and in light be put into general use on January 1, 1935. An alternative proposal is that their introduction be deferred until 1937. The most important duties of the 1933 meeting are to choose between these dates and to agree upon a definite schedule for carrying out the series of comparisons and interchange of standards which will be necessary.

THE PRIESTLEY LECTURES AT THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE COLLEGE

THE seventh annual Priestley Lectures at the Pennsylvania State College will be given at 7:30 P. M., on April 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Two memorials to Joseph Priestley have been established by the faculty and alumni of the department of chemistry: 1. In 1919 the alumni of the department purchased the old Priestley residence at Northumberland, Pennsylvania, about seventy miles from the college. They have built near the house a museum to hold such Priestley relics as can be gathered together. The alumni have assumed responsibility for the maintenance of the whole property in recognition of Joseph Priestley's contributions to early American chemistry. 2. An annual series of lectures was inaugurated by members of the faculty in 1926, bearing the name of the Priestley Lectures. These lectures deal each year with the border-line between physical chemistry and some other branch of science.

In 1931, Phi Lambda Upsilon (honorary chemical fraternity) undertook the financial support of the Priestley Lectures. These lectures, therefore, now constitute a joint memorial to Joseph Priestley on the part of both the faculty of the Department of Chemistry and the Honorary Fraternity of Phi Lambda Upsilon.

This year's lectures deal with the border-line between physical chemistry and metallurgy. They will be given by Professor Eric R. Jette, of the School of Mines of Columbia University.

The former Priestley Lectures are as follows:

The first year's lectures dealt with the border-line between physical chemistry and biocolloids. They were given by V. Cofman, of the Experimental Station of E. I. Du Pont de Nemours and Company.

The second year's lectures dealt with the border-line between physical chemistry and metallography. They were given by Dr. S. L. Hoyt, of the Research Laboratory of the General Electric Company.

The third year's lectures dealt with the border-line between physical chemistry and medicine. They were given by Dr. H. B. Williams, head of the department of physiology of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University.

The fourth year's lectures dealt with the border-line between physical chemistry and ceramics. They were given by Dr. Louis Navias, of the Research Laboratory of the General Electric Company.

The fifth year's lectures dealt with the borderline between physical chemistry and electrical engineering. They were given by Dr. John W. Williams, assistant professor of chemistry at the University of Wisconsin.

The sixth year's lectures dealt with the border-line between physical chemistry and biological chemistry. They were given by Dr. Victor K. LaMer, associate professor of chemistry of Columbia University.

THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL GEOLOGICAL CONGRESS

THE International Geological Congress will hold its sixteenth session in Washington, D. C., from July 22 to 29.

The project of holding an International Geological Congress originated in connection with the Centennial Exposition of 1876 at Philadelphia. A Founders' Committee was formed in that year with James Hall, state geologist of New York and one of America's foremost geologists, as its president. The committee included T. Sterry Hunt, of Canada, as secretary, six other members from the United States and Canada, and one each from England, Sweden and Holland. Thomas Henry Huxley was the member from England. This committee asked the Geological Society of France to cooperate in preparing for a congress at the Paris Exposition in 1878 and the French society appointed an organization committee on July 27, 1877.