among American growers was so obvious that the pioneering of the industry along lines technically efficient and economically sound was a difficult undertaking. Though the funds available were woefully inadequate for the purpose, Dr. Griffiths entered the field with such enthusiasm of spirit and tenacity of purpose, and so promptly devised scientifically sound and practical methods of procedure that he soon became recognized as the unquestioned leader in this field. Maintaining experimental plots and to some extent variety collections at Arlington Farm, Va., Bellingham, Wash., Willard, N. C., and cooperative tests with interested amateurs and commercial growers in many sections, his leadership was largely responsible for the progress thus far made in commercial bulb production in the United States.

Even as senior horticulturist much of his field work was of necessity done with his own hands, frequently under weather and soil conditions which involved physical hardship and hazard to health which would have discouraged one less resolutely persistent and determined to carry through the undertaking. His sustained enthusiasm and courage under such conditions inspired loyalty in his assistants and encouraged them to do their very best.

Dr. Griffiths' most extensive and immediately important bulb work from the economic standpoint dealt with the devising of practical methods of growing and handling the bulbs of narcissi, tulip, hyacinth, as well as Easter, Madonna, Henry, Speciosum and Tiger lilies and other already widely grown and extensively imported Dutch bulbs, upon most of which he published extensively and usefully through the Department of Agriculture. He was at the same time intensively interested in the newer and less well-known bulbous plants, notably the Regal, Nankeen and other foreign lilies, and especially in such potentially important lilies as the Leopard, Lemon, Humboldt, Columbia, Martagon, Turk's-cap, Canada and other native species. He worked out and published practical methods of propagation of these and many other bulbous plants. Determination of the economic value of the American grown bulbs in contrast with the imported product necessitated intensive experimentation in their curing, transporting and storing, and especially the effects of storage temperatures upon their reaction to the forcing house conditions under which they are extensively utilized by florists. He had much hybridization of bulbous plants under way, particularly lilies and daffodils and had named and described a considerable number of promising new varieties, some of which are in process of dissemination.

His technical articles on bulb subjects, which comprise many papers in the proceedings of scientific societies and bulletins of the department, were effectively supplemented by a steady flow of less formal articles addressed mainly to a rapidly increasing audience of actual and potential bulb growers who could best be reached through such representative horticultural trade periodicals as *Florists' Exchange, Florsists' Review, Seed World,* etc., in which more than one hundred articles were published. His crisp and lucid style of presentation added greatly to the practical value of these communications, for he possessed in marked degree that informal clarity of expression which while sometimes vexatious to editors is the joy and satisfaction of the lay reader.

Reared, and in the main schooled, close to the agricultural frontier of that time Dr. Griffiths developed a rare combination of scientific accuracy in his research, and sound common sense in the practical application of his discoveries. Indefatigably industrious and efficient, the work which progressively he undertook on fungi, grasses, cacti and bulbs he put his whole soul into.

Dr. Griffiths married Miss Emigene Lily in 1905, who died in 1909. A daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Griffiths Lash, and a son, John D. Griffiths, survive, together with his widow, Mrs. Louise Hayward Griffiths, a sister and a brother.

WM. A. TAYLOR

BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

PROTECTING WILD LIFE

THE possibility of new conventions for the preservation of wild life in various parts of the world was referred to by Sir P. Chalmers Mitchell, secretary of the Zoological Society of London, when presiding on April 15 at a general meeting of the Society for the Preservation of the Fauna of the Empire. Dr. Mitchell stated, according to the London *Times,* that since the last meeting the most important event, so far as they were concerned, was the final ratification by the British Government of the African Convention. They had been waiting a long time for it, but the British Government had had to consult a large number of provincial governments in Africa and other parts of the world. Now that the British Government had ratified the convention there was no doubt that the other governments whose delegates had signed would also ratify it. It was the first and a very important stage in preserving the flora and fauna of the Continent of Africa. They hoped that the convention would serve as a model for similar conventions which would gradually embrace a large part of the world. There had been an All-India conference

and the chief business was to see how far it was possible to adhere, so far as India was concerned, to the African Convention. They had reason to hope that the All-India conference would prove to be a direct step towards a conference to deal with a large part of Asia and Australasia.

One of the greatest troubles that had existed in Africa for a long time had been a plague of locusts. A new method of dealing with it by the use of aeroplanes had been adopted and a powder fatal to locusts and containing arsenic in some form had been used. It was very effective, but it also, either directly or indirectly, killed a large number of other kinds of animal life. They had been considering the matter and collecting all the information they could about it, and there was some hope now of getting a preparation which, while destructive to locusts, would not do damage to other forms of life.

The executive committee of the society reported that the fate of seals both on the southwest coasts of Britain and also in the waters of Newfoundland and Labrador continued to exercise their attention. Regarding Cornish seals they were now consulting various authorities of scientific note and were endeavoring to arrive at an unbiased view of the situation before deciding on any definite representations in official quarters.

A STUDY OF AIR POLLUTION IN NEW YORK CITY

A SURVEY of air pollution which it is hoped will provide the basis for purer air and more sunshine in Greater New York will be undertaken as a Works Division project of the Emergency Relief Bureau under the auspices of the Department of Health, according to an announcement made by Oswald W. Knauth, chairman and executive director of the bureau.

With the cooperation of Health Commissioner John L. Rice, combustion engineers, chemists and bacteriologists will take part in the work. The plan also calls for inspectors, many of whom will be engineers, who will be assigned throughout the city to watch for undue smoke from factory chimneys, apartment house incinerators, automobile exhausts, steamboat funnels and other sources of air pollution. Offending equipment will be investigated to determine the cause of the faulty combustion and each case of air pollution, whether by smoke, gas, fume, or by dust and dirt, will be reported to the Department of Health for action. The engineers will also explain how defects can be remedied and will supplement this service with an educational campaign among building owners and others, both by personal interview and by the distribution of printed technical information.

Five observation posts will be established on high buildings in the more congested districts, where hourly examinations will be made throughout the day for comparison with the Riegelmann chart, which gives a standard of comparison generally accepted in studies of this type. Dust caps will be placed at strategic points throughout the five boroughs and the accumulations in these will be analyzed, both quantitatively and qualitatively, by chemists at regular intervals for bacteriological content.

Observation posts are also to be established at Jones Beach and in Westchester to make similar readings and analyses for purpose of comparison.

SIGMA XI LECTURES

DR. KARL LASHLEY, professor of psychology at the University of Chicago, who recently accepted a call to Harvard University, delivered the Sigma Xi annual circuit lecture at the Kansas State College and at the Universities of Kansas and Missouri, giving in each case the annual initiation address. His subject was "Functional Reorganization after Brain Injuries."

Dr. Harlan T. Stetson, visiting professor at the Institute of Geographical Exploration, Harvard University, addressed the Brown University chapter on April 16 on "Earth-Moon Relations."

Professor R. A. Wardle, of the University of Manitoba, on April 11 addressed the chapter at the Iowa State College on "Zoological Problems of the Canadian West."

The annual dinner of the Rensselaer Chapter was held at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute on April 26. Dr. Edgar Allen, of Yale University, spoke on "The Endocrine Control of Reproduction."

Professor Robert H. Baker, of the Observatory of the University of Illinois, gave two lectures on April 16 and 17 under the auspices of the Ohio University Club on "The Present Great Problems of Astronomy" and "Beyond the Milky Way."

DETENTION OF PROFESSOR KAPITZA IN RUSSIA

PROFESSOR PETER KAPITZA, who has been conducting researches in the Mond Laboratory at the University of Cambridge, has been detained in Russia where he went to attend a conference in honor of Mendeleef. When he was preparing to return to Great Britain he was told that the government would not renew his passport as his services were needed as director of a new Institute of Physical Research under the Academy of Sciences at Leningrad.

In a long letter to the London *Times*, fully reported by wireless to *The New York Times*, Lord Rutherford says that Professor Kapitza after twelve years of work was on the eve of completing experiments expected to throw new light on the properties of matter in intense magnetic fields at the lowest possible temperatures. He further writes:

Professor Kapitza, although he long resided in England, remained a Soviet citizen and a loyal one, who regu-