For the following two years he served as professor of biology at Illinois College, Jacksonville, which institution later (in 1930) gave him the honorary degree of Sc.D. The year 1903–4 was spent in Strasburger's laboratory at Bonn, under appointment by the Carnegie Institution of Washington as research assistant. In 1904 he came to the University of Wisconsin as instructor in botany. Here he remained, being successively assistant professor of botany (1907), associate professor of plant physiology (1912) and professor of plant physiology (1915).

On December 26, 1901, he was married to Mary E. Cochran, of Ashland, who with one son and two daughters survives.

Overton's work with *Thalictrum purpurascens* was one of the very early studies of parthenogenesis in plants. In this species he first demonstrated that parthenogenesis occurs, and then determined the details of the cytological history which supplies an explanation of the phenomenon. Following this came a series of studies of meiosis, spore-formaton and nuclear organization. Gradually his attention was turned to the experimental phases of physiology, in which his interest had been aroused while working with Barnes and Loeb at Chicago. In this field falls his successful induction of parthenogenetic development under controlled conditions in *Fucus*, a piece of work which recalls his previous study of *Thalictrum*. Most extensive of his physiological investigations were those dealing with the course of the sap flow and with its determining and regulating factors. Part of this work was done at the Tucson and Carmel laboratories of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, where, as research associate, he spent parts of each year from 1925 to 1929. The outcome of these years was a series of studies, published in conjunction with Dr. D. T. MacDougal and Dr. G. M. Smith. At this time also Overton began a study of the structure and history of the long-lived cells which had been found by MacDougal to occur in the stems of certain cacti.

Reference has been made to Dr. Overton's wide circle of friends and acquaintances. His unusually extensive acquaintance was an outcome of his deep interest in human problems and of the capacity for friendship which was one of his notable traits. Somewhat the same type of interest was manifested by his activities in connection with the scientific and other organizations of which he was a member. A fitting recognition of his services in this direction was the award in 1933 by the American Society of Plant Physiologists of its Charles Reid Barnes life membership. He was a regular attendant at scientific meetings until the precarious state of his health in more recent years had made travel, especially in the winter, dangerous and often impossible. Despite frequent illnesses, however, he retained so much of his old-time vigor, and was so active in the interims of comparatively good health, that there was no premonition in any mind of the end that finally came so suddenly.

CHARLES E. ALLEN

# SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

## THE STANDARDIZATION BUILDING FOR THE BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

A NEW six-story building has been made available for the Bureau of Agricultural Economics to house many of the research activities centering about the standardization of farm products. It will be devoted particularly to standardization and research in cotton, wool, hay, seeds, beans, peas and soybeans. It contains more than seventy-five offices and laboratories equipped for intensive study of the properties and qualities of these products. In addition, it provides warehouse space for more than 1,000 bales of cotton, 600 bales of hay and large quantities of wool, which will be stored under conditions in which fire hazards have been reduced to the minimum. Every effort also has been made to provide for the fullest possible protection of fiber standards employed internationally in world trade of cotton, research records and technical equipment. Special emphasis has been given to provide the best possible natural lighting for grading and classification work and for intensive research related to fiber properties, including color.

On the top of the building is a group of classing rooms for cotton and wool with slanted skylights facing the north. These rooms were designed to be shadowless. They provide lighting conditions which have been found essential in judging color, diameter and other factors in grading fibers. Cotton, wool and hay produced in all areas of the country, and to some extent in foreign countries, will be sampled, classed and graded in connection with the program of evaluating properties and qualities.

Fireproof doors and automatic sprinkler systems in the warehouse section, which may be isolated from the offices and laboratories, are safeguards against the extreme fire hazard. By day and by night all parts of the warehouse will be under constant watch.

Scientific research in the new cotton laboratories will include studies of cotton staple length in relation to staple classification and standardization, the relationship of cotton color to grade classification and stand-

ardization, new uses for cotton, the preparation of cotton for the market, and studies of cotton seed and cotton seed products. The building has a scientifically constructed hay laboratory and warehouse where workers will study hay quality standardization factors. Studies will be made to develop improved methods of determining factors of quality in beans, peas and split peas. Research on wool will include the study of ways to improve methods and practices in the preparation of wool for market and the standardization of wool for length and strength of staple. Experiments will be conducted to perfect a reliable method of determining the shrinkage of wool.

The Standardization Building will be the headquarters of the market news services for cotton, grain, hay, feed, seeds and a number of other farm products. It likewise will be the headquarters for the South-wide cotton quality reporting service involving the issuance of cotton grade and staple reports on the growing crop.

In the new building government standards for the various commodities will be prepared, and the cotton appeal board will function in settling trade disputes over classifications of cotton according to the standards.

## PROPOSED WILDLIFE CONSERVATION INSTITUTE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

ESTABLISHMENT of a Wildlife Conservation Institute, composed of four divisions, under which the University of Wisconsin would utilize every opportunity to contribute to Wisconsin's wildlife conservation movement, is proposed in the third publication of the state university's Science Inquiry. Members of the commission who prepared the report include: Professors Aldo Leopold, agricultural economics; L. J. Cole, genetics; N. C. Fassett, botany; C. A. Herrick, Chancey Juday and George Wagner, all of zoology.

The institute, through which cooperative relationships would be maintained with the state conservation department, with other state and federal bureaus, with the lay movement, with other educational institutions and especially with other departments of the state university able to contribute to conservation, would be composed of a series of four chairs to cover the wildlife field.

These would be those of game management, already established; fish management, floral conservation and ornithology and mammalogy. Each of the four divisions could be connected with a present department of the university.

The chair of game management, established by the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation in 1933, is now connected with the College of Agriculture. The chair of fish management, which would apply to aquatic conservation problems the great accumulation of research on Wisconsin waters collected during the past half-century by the Wisconsin Natural History Survey, would be attached to the department of zoology. The chair of floral conservation, designed to work out techniques for conserving non-commercial plants, would be attached to the department of botany, while the chair of ornithology and mammalogy, which would work out techniques for conserving non-game birds and mammals, would be attached to the department of zoology.

Each of the four chairs which would compose the Wildlife Conservation Institute would teach cultural courses to non-professional students, would do research with the help of graduate students aiming at professional careers, and would build up demonstration areas and other physical equipment for research and teaching.

The Wisconsin Science Inquiry, of which the wildlife conservation publication is the third, was established at the university in 1934. The objective of scientific studies made under the inquiry is to appraise the nature of a certain problem and its significance to the state, to examine the facilities available for its study at the university and to sketch the outlines of a more comprehensive attack upon the problem for the benefit of the state.

## GIFT TO BROWN UNIVERSITY OF A CHEMICAL RESEARCH LABORATORY

A GIFT of $500,000 to Brown University to construct a new chemical research laboratory was announced on March 29 by President Henry M. Wriston. The gift is from Jesse H. Metcalf, formerly United States senator from Rhode Island, a member of the Board of Trustees.

The fund will be used to build and endow a laboratory for research in specialized phases of electrochemistry and photochemistry. The new building will more than double the present accommodations and equipment for research. A site for the laboratory will be chosen in the near future. Actual construction will begin as soon as plans can be approved and contracts let. The new laboratory is expected to be ready for occupancy by next spring.

Research in chemistry for the last seventy-five years has been conducted for the most part in the Newport Rogers Laboratory. The new building will contain research equipment for between thirty and forty graduate students and for the research staff, more than twice as many as can be accommodated now. It will have adequate library facilities. It will in future be possible to give undergraduates majoring in chemistry added opportunity to carry on chemical investigations of their own.

Mr. Metcalf's interest in the department has been