

Clemens, director of the Pacific Biological Station, Nanaimo, B. C., died on May 23. She graduated from Mount Holyoke College in 1909 and received the doctorate degree from Cornell University in 1914. From 1912 to 1918 she was a member of the staff in zoology at Mount Holyoke College.

DR. JOHANNES WALTHER, professor emeritus of geology and paleontology at the University of Halle, died on May 3 at the age of seventy-seven years. In 1927 Dr. Walther spent several months in the United States as visiting professor at the Johns Hopkins University and at Columbia University.

ADMIRAL GOTTFRIED HANSEN, of Copenhagen, a member of the Arctic expeditions of Roald Amundsen, died on May 27. He was sixty-one years old.

A CIRCULATING library has been established at the Central Maine General Hospital, Lewiston, through a grant of the Bingham Associates, in honor of the late Dr. Frederic Henry Gerrish, formerly professor of anatomy at Bowdoin College Medical School, Portland. Material in the library, which now contains seventy-five journals, together with a large collection of reprints, will be available to all members of the State Medical Association.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

THE Research Corporation of New York has awarded, through the Stevens Institute of Technology, plaques and the sum of \$2,500 each to Professor Percy W. Bridgman, of Harvard University, and to Professor Ernest O. Lawrence, of the University of California, in recognition of their research in physics. The presentation was made at a dinner in New York City, presided over by Elon Huntington Hooker, chairman of the executive board of the Research Corporation, at which Dr. Harvey N. Davis, president of Stevens Institute, and Dr. Karl T. Compton, president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, were the speakers.

AT the hundred and eighty-third commencement of Columbia University on June 1 the degree of doctor of science was conferred on Dr. John Howard Northrop, member of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, and on Robert Broom, keeper of anthropology and vertebrate paleontology of the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria.

CLARK UNIVERSITY on June 5 conferred the honorary degree of doctor of science on Dr. H. H. Donaldson, member of the Wistar Institute of Anatomy and Biology, Philadelphia.

THE degree of doctor of science will be conferred on June 14 at the commencement of the Ohio State University on Dr. Charles Felton Scott, professor emeritus of electrical engineering at Yale University. He is a son of the late Dr. William Henry Scott, third president of the university, and a brother of the Rev. Dr. Herbert Scott, Pittsburgh, Pa., who will give the baccalaureate sermon on June 13.

FRANKLIN AND MARSHALL COLLEGE on June 2 conferred the doctorate of science on Dr. Frank Clifford Whitmore, dean of Pennsylvania State College.

ON May 31, Kansas State College conferred the honorary degree of doctor of science on Miss Flora Rose, '04, now director of the College of Home Economics at Cornell University, and on Dr. F. C. Sears,

'92, emeritus professor of pomology at the Massachusetts State College.

DR. EDWARD A. BOYDEN, professor of anatomy at the University of Minnesota, was awarded the gold medal of the Southern Minnesota Medical Association for the best scientific exhibit at the annual meeting of the Minnesota State Medical Association, held in St. Paul on May 3. The medal was presented by Dr. A. W. Adson, of the Mayo Clinic, the retiring president of the association. Honorable mention was given to Dr. L. F. Hawkinson for endocrine studies and to Dr. Horace Newhart for his work on the prevention and amelioration of deafness.

ABOUT two hundred friends and colleagues of Professor W. J. Fraser honored him at a dinner on May 21. Professor Fraser will retire from active work in the University of Illinois at the close of the present academic year with the rank of professor emeritus. He was graduated from the University of Illinois in 1893 and in 1896 founded the department of dairy husbandry.

AUSTIN H. CLARK, of the U. S. National Museum, was authorized by an Act of Congress passed by the House of Representatives on June 1 and by the Senate previously to accept the Cross as a Knight of the Order of Dannebrog conferred upon him by the King of Denmark and Iceland.

DR. J. C. TH. UPHOF, of Orlando, Fla., was recently elected a corresponding member of the Dendrological Society of the Netherlands.

DR. OTTO HAHN, director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Chemistry and professor of chemistry at the University of Berlin, has been elected a corresponding member of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences.

OFFICERS of the North Central Branch of the Society of American Bacteriologists at the recent meeting in Madison, Wis., were elected as follows: Dr. William C. Frazier, of the department of agricultural bacteriol-

ogy of the University of Wisconsin, *president*; Dr. Max Levine, Iowa State College, *vice-president*, and Lyle A. Weed, University of Iowa, *secretary-treasurer*.

THE Columbia Chapter of Sigma Xi has elected the following officers to serve from June 1, 1937, to May 31, 1939: Professor Harold W. Webb, *president*; Professor Arthur W. Thomas, *vice-president*, and Professor Dana P. Mitchell, *secretary-treasurer*.

DR. T. S. PAINTER, professor of zoology at the University of Texas, has been appointed research professor for 1937-38. Dr. E. H. Sellards, professor of geology and director of the University Bureau of Economic Geology, held the position in 1936-37. This appointment is made each year by the board of regents on the basis of distinguished work. According to custom, Dr. Painter will deliver in the spring a series of lectures either of general or of technical interest embodying the results of his research.

DR. DAVID HILL TENNENT, head of the department of biology at Bryn Mawr College, has been appointed research professor for a five-year term. This is the first full-time professorship with no teaching duties at Bryn Mawr College. It has been made possible by a recent gift to the college.

PROFESSOR HENRY H. W. KEITH, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has been appointed head of the department of naval architecture and marine engineering.

DR. PETER VAN DE KAMP, of the Leander McCormick Observatory of the University of Virginia, has been appointed associate professor of astronomy at Swarthmore College and director of the Sproul Observatory.

DR. G. R. WENDT, of the University of Virginia, has been appointed assistant professor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania.

DR. VICTOR WEISSKOPF, of Copenhagen, who has been for the past several years a research assistant to Professor Niels Bohr and who had previously served in the same capacity with Professor W. Pauli at Zurich, has been made instructor in physics at the University of Rochester.

DR. THOMAS B. MAGATH, of the Mayo Clinic, has become health officer of the city of Rochester, Minn. He succeeds Dr. Charles H. Mayo, who has been health officer for the past twenty-five years.

PROFESSOR GURTH WHIPPLE, acting director of forest extension at the New York State College of Forestry, Syracuse, has been promoted to the position of director, succeeding the late Professor Frank B. Myers, who died on February 14.

PROFESSOR BERWIND P. KAUFMANN, head of the department of botany at the University of Alabama,

has resigned to join the staff of the Department of Genetics of the Carnegie Institution of Washington at Cold Spring Harbor, N. Y., where he has been visiting investigator on leave of absence since February. He will continue his work on the cytology of *Drosophila* in cooperation with Dr. M. Demerec, assistant director of the department of genetics.

DR. E. M. LINDSAY, assistant at the Harvard Observatory in Bloemfontein, South Africa, has been appointed astronomer at Armagh Observatory, Ireland.

RENE GOVEIL, formerly of the Dominion Entomology Service at Ottawa, has been named chief entomologist of the Quebec Department of Lands and Forests.

DR. E. B. WORTHINGTON, of the University of Cambridge, has been appointed director of the laboratory of the Freshwater Biological Association of the British Empire. The association maintains a laboratory at Wray Castle on Windermere in which investigations are carried out on the zoology and botany of fresh waters.

DR. J. S. PLASKETT, director emeritus of the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory, Victoria, B. C., has returned from a three weeks' visit to Cleveland. There, in his capacity as scientific consultant of the Warner and Swasey Company, he has been observing progress and consulting on methods in the figuring of the 82-inch mirror for the McDonald Observatory in Texas.

DR. ERNEST O. LAWRENCE, of the University of California, delivered on May 10 the annual address to the University of Cincinnati Chapter of Sigma Xi, on "Atoms, New and Old."

DR. OSCAR RIDDLE, of the Carnegie Institution, Station for Experimental Evolution, Cold Spring Harbor, N. Y., on April 27 addressed the Ohio State University Chapter of Sigma Xi on "The Hormones of the Anterior Pituitary Gland."

DR. L. C. GRATON, professor of mining geology at Harvard University, gave the address at the annual meeting on May 18 of the Harvard Chapter of Sigma Xi. The subject treated was "Controversies Regarding the Origin of Ores."

PROFESSOR C. L. METCALF, head of the department of entomology at the University of Illinois and president of the Illinois Chapter of Sigma Xi, gave the address entitled "The Morbific Triangle" at the annual meeting on May 13 of the College of Medicine Chapter in Chicago.

DR. G. W. MCCOY, medical director of the U. S. Public Health Service, Washington, D. C., addressed the members of the Dugas Journal Club of the School of Medicine of the University of Georgia on May 17.

Dr. McCoy discussed the relationship of epidemiology to public health.

SIR HENRY DALE, director of the National Institute for Medical Research, Hampstead, London, was the guest speaker on May 18 at the Academy of Medicine of Washington, D. C. Dr. Dale spoke of his researches into the mechanisms of transmission of excitation from nerve ending to end organ. The address was preceded by a dinner at which announcement was made of the election of Dr. Dale to honorary membership in the academy.

THE next annual meeting of the American Society of Zoologists will be held in Indianapolis on December 28, 29 and 30 in association with Section F of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. All sessions for the reading of papers and for demonstrations will be held at the Indiana University School of Medicine. Titles and abstracts of papers and demonstrations to be presented by members of the society should be sent to the secretary, E. G. Butler, Princeton University, Princeton, N. J., before November 8.

THE summer meeting of the Genetics Society of America will be held at Woods Hole on August 31 and September 1. On the evening of August 30 a lecture will be delivered by Dr. Boris Ephrussi, of the Institut de Biologie Physico-Chimique, Paris. Two sessions of the program will be devoted to round table conferences on different methods of study as applied to problems of genetics. These conferences are being organized by Professor L. C. Dunn, who will act as leader in the discussions. The different topics will be introduced by: W. Landauer, E. W. Sinnott, H. B. Tukey, D. F. Poulson, B. Ephrussi, E. Hadorn, M. Demerec and others. One session has been reserved for demonstration papers.

THE Carolina Geological Society was formed by a group interested in earth sciences, meeting at the invitation of Professor W. C. Holland, of the department of geology of Furman University, Greenville, S. C., on May 15. The object of the society is to promote the sciences of geography, geology, metallurgy, mining, ceramics and soil science in North and South Carolina. It was decided to hold annual field trips of from one to two days each autumn. Professor W. C. Holland was elected *president*; Berlen C. Moneymaker, of the Tennessee Valley Authority, Murphy, N. C., *vice-president*, and Professor Willard Berry, Duke University, *secretary-treasurer*. Professor G. R. MacCarthy, of the University of North Carolina, was elected chairman of the membership committee.

THE Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory at Crested Butte, Colo., will be opened on June 28 to enable biologists who attend the Denver meeting of

the American Association for the Advancement of Science to leave immediately afterwards for a visit, or for a longer period of investigation, study and recreation. A three-day excursion to the laboratory, beginning on Sunday, June 27, is being arranged from Denver. The cost of the trip will be approximately \$12.00, including lodging (3 nights), meals and transportation by auto, covering in the round trip some 570 miles in the heart of the Rockies. The laboratory centers its activities around problems of the alpine and subalpine regions. Those wishing to take part in the excursion should communicate with the director of the laboratory, Dr. John C. Johnson, Pennsylvania State Teachers College, West Chester.

THE *Journal* of the American Medical Association reports that under the recent reorganization of the Scientific Research Division of the U. S. Public Health Service, effective on February 1, three new divisions were established at the National Institute of Health: the division of biologic control under the direction of Senior Surgeon Walter T. Harrison; the division of public health methods, which incorporates the work of the former field office of public health methods with the work of the offices of child hygiene, milk investigations, statistical investigations and the laboratory of stream pollution investigations, under the direction of Surgeon Joseph W. Mountin, and the division of industrial hygiene, which coordinates the work of the former office of industrial hygiene and the extensive laboratory studies of occupational dermatoses carried on at the National Institute of Health, under the supervision of Senior Surgeon Royd R. Sayers. The former division of bacteriology and pathology was further reorganized so that part of the division relating to bacteriology is known as the division of infectious diseases. Under the direction of Senior Surgeon Rolla E. Dyer, this division covers the field and laboratory work relating to infectious diseases, including leprosy studies, malaria investigations, the Rocky Mountain Laboratory, tuberculosis and epidemiologic studies. The division of pathology now includes the field office of cancer investigations. The former divisions of chemistry, pharmacology and zoology of the institute remain under the direction of Drs. Claude S. Hudson, Carl Voegtlin and Maurice C. Hall, respectively.

AN expedition to the Pribilof Islands in the Bering Sea, off the coast of Alaska, to collect fur seals for a projected habitat group for the Field Museum, Chicago, is leaving early in June. It is planned to collect more than thirty specimens of both sexes and of various ages. The group, illustrating the "home life" of the animals, will reproduce a rookery or breeding ground. It will be installed in the Hall of Marine Mammals. The leader of the expedition, C. J. Albrecht, taxidermist, who worked in the same region a

number of years ago, will spend the greater part of the summer in the islands, living among the native Aleut inhabitants.

A WIRELESS dispatch from Berlin to *The New York Times* reports that in the presence of Chancellor Adolf Hitler the Reich Research Council was inaugurated on May 25. National Socialist Cabinet members and a large body of scientific men attended. The new organization was created especially to further the four-year plan. Minister of Education Bernhard Rust ex-

plained that technical and natural science research would be pursued systematically by the council, Germany's economic self-sufficiency being the objective. General Karl Becker outlined the principal departments of the new institution as follows: physics, chemistry and physical chemistry, automotive power, rubber, textiles, fats, cellulose, non-ferrous metals, mineralogy, geology, biology, including zoology and forestry, the technical side of defense research, electrotechnic mining, iron and steel, medical research and preventive medicine.

DISCUSSION

STYLISTIC INFELICITIES AND THE EXCESS WORD

MR. URBACH, of the department of English and history of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, recently¹ has complained about the bad writing manners of "a great many American scientists." He is particularly aggravated about "stylistic infelicities," "excess words," circumlocutions and mixed metaphors, of which he gives a number of examples "from the current writings of scientists." Perhaps because these examples were all taken from the writings of social and biological scientists, the pertinent comments to date have been limited to one from a psychologist² and another from a botanist.³

Any one who has had to correct theses in the making is apt to lend a sympathetic ear to Mr. Urbach's complaints. But in reading the works of most full-fledged physical and biological scientists one is constantly amazed not that they write so poorly, but rather that they express themselves so well. It is true that some have a minor genius for mixing metaphors, yet few have produced such classics as, "I smell a rat, I'll nip it in the bud." And even the Bard of Avon did not lose his reputation when he wrote: "to take arms against a sea of troubles." Furthermore, however common or reprehensible may be such "stylistic infelicities" in scientific writing, the average scientist is not a habitual criminal when it comes to the sin of the "excess word." Not only is he likely to express himself succinctly, but, if he errs, there are the watchful editors of scientific journals to insist that the verbose mind their verbiage and to urge the commonly curt to become more consistently concise. There is a deluge of scientific papers submitted for publication, and a dearth of journals wherein they may be printed. So that, instead of the truly classical writings of some of the older scientists, we now of necessity can have only a sort of scientific shorthand which should be

criticized not for the "excess word," but for the excised phrase.

We are all professionals at finding fault with our colleagues' writings, but we are tyros at correcting our own; nevertheless, since Mr. Urbach brought up this matter of the "excess word," perhaps he will permit us to examine his note in the light of his own criticism. He began:

"During the last six months I have analyzed from the point of view of their composition perhaps fifty scientific articles. My survey (if merely red-penciling errors and stylistic infelicities may be so dignified) was startling in its revelation of how badly a great many American scientists do write." Few real scientists would venture to express themselves in such a prodigal fashion. Many would have written:

"An analysis of the composition of some fifty scientific articles reveals how badly a great many American scientists write." And some editors would even blue pencil four of the nineteen words surviving out of the original forty-nine.

Mr. Urbach continued his discussion with two juicy paragraphs from which the average scientific writer could squeeze a veritable stream of "excess words," before he even arrived at his stated consideration of the crime of wordiness as illustrated by the writings of a number of scientific culprits. He began his treatment of the subject:

"Nothing makes for more cumbersome, pedantic writing than the use of unnecessary words." Nine of these very words are certainly unnecessary. Most scientists would write:

"Unnecessary words make cumbersome writing." And there are some disgruntled writers who would insist that scientific editors, with their fine disregard for context, might feel that even "Words make writing" was sufficient.

Mr. Urbach then goes on to cite another horrible example of the "excess word," apparently from the writings of some unsuspecting political scientist, concerning whose efforts he says:

"The italicized words boil down to 'undoubtedly

¹ W. F. Urbach, *SCIENCE*, 84: 390-391, October 30, 1936.

² E. G. Boring, *SCIENCE*, 84: 457-459, 1936.

³ H. W. Rickett, *SCIENCE*, 85: 45-46, 1937.