

natural products as carried on in several European laboratories.

DR. OSCAR ZARISKI, professor of mathematics, the Johns Hopkins University, to conduct researches in the theory of algebraic varieties from the standpoint of modern algebra.

#### THE ABRAHAM FLEXNER LECTURES AT THE MEDICAL SCHOOL AT VANDER- BILT UNIVERSITY

DR. ALBERT SZENT-GYÖRGYI, director of the Institute for Medical Chemistry and professor of medical chemistry at the Royal Hungarian Franz Joseph University at Szeged, Hungary, and winner of the 1937 Nobel prize in physiology and medicine, is the Abraham Flexner Lecturer at the Vanderbilt Medical School this year, having arrived at the school on March 4 for a two-month period.

Dr. Szent-Györgyi has visited the United States twice before, first about 1930 as guest of the Mayo Clinic, and in 1935 he returned as a visiting lecturer at the Harvard Medical School.

He has been an active contributor to scientific literature for about twenty years. In his earlier studies he was interested in physico-chemical problems in biology, such as the phenomena of agglutination, cataphoresis and the effect of electrolytes on albumin, and such biochemical problems as the estimation of free fatty acids in blood.

In 1932 he was able to identify vitamin C, the anti-scorbutic acid responsible for the elimination and pre-

vention of the condition known as "scurvy," by the use of hexuronic acid (ascorbic acid) derived from adrenal cortex and from cabbage. In 1933 he prepared large quantities of ascorbic acid from paprika, and obtained a crystalline monoacetone derivative. He has also been interested in the wide-spread sub-clinical vitamin C deficiency in man.

Dr. Szent-Györgyi delivered the following lectures during March: "General Principles of Biological Oxidation," "Respiration of Muscle," "Fermentation and Some Problems of Intermediary Metabolism," "Vegetable Respiration" and "On Vitamins, Health and Disease." During April he will remain at the Medical School as visiting professor of biochemistry.

The Abraham Flexner lectureship was established in 1927 by the brother of Abraham Flexner, Bernard Flexner, who wrote to the chancellor of Vanderbilt University in establishing the endowment: "It is in my mind to set aside certain securities for the medical department of Vanderbilt University. I would like these securities to be held in trust as the 'Abraham Flexner Lectureship,' the accumulated income to be used at intervals of two years or more as an honorarium to be given to some American or foreigner, highly distinguished in the field of the medical sciences; the lecturer to be in residence for the purpose of contact with faculty and students during a period of approximately two months, and to give a series of lectures, the number and character of which shall be determined by the lecturer himself and the university."

## SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

THE annual meeting of the National Academy of Sciences will be held in Washington on April 24, 25 and 26. As has already been announced, the first lecture in America under the Pilgrim Trust will be given by Sir William Bragg on the evening of Monday, April 24. The sessions for the reading of scientific papers will be held on Monday morning and afternoon, on Tuesday morning and perhaps on Tuesday afternoon. The annual dinner, at which medals and awards are presented, will be on Tuesday evening. Arrangements have been made to visit the Supreme Court of the United States late on Monday afternoon.

THE American Philosophical Society will hold a general meeting in the hall of the society in Independence Square, Philadelphia, on April 20, 21 and 22. Sessions for the presentation of papers will be held on Thursday, April 20, on Friday afternoon and on Saturday morning. There will be an executive session on Friday morning and an open forum for members only on Saturday afternoon. The R. A. F. Penrose, Jr., memorial lecture will be given on Friday evening by Eduard Benes, formerly presi-

dent of Czecho-Slovakia. The lecture will be followed by a reception. The annual dinner will be on Saturday evening.

THE honorary degree of doctor of humane letters was conferred by Bridgewater College, his alma mater, upon Dr. William T. Sanger, president of the Medical College of Virginia, Richmond, on April 3 when he made the Founders Day address. The honorary doctorate of laws will be conferred upon him at the commencement exercises of the University of Richmond.

ON the occasion of the retirement of Herbert B. Brooks from the National Bureau of Standards on February 1, his colleagues assembled a collection of his published papers and prepared a biographical note "as a mark of their appreciation of him as a skillful engineer, an inspiring friend, and a wise counselor."

A TESTIMONIAL dinner in honor of Dr. Robert L. Swain, secretary-treasurer of the Maryland Board of Pharmacy, was given on March 29 in Baltimore. Dr. Swain recently resigned the position of deputy food

and drug commissioner of the State of Maryland, to accept the editorship of *Drug Topics* and *Drug Trade News*, published in New York.

At the opening general session of the American Chemical Society, which met at Baltimore from April 3 to 7, presentation of the Borden Award in the Chemistry of Milk was made to Dr. Leroy S. Palmer, professor of agricultural chemistry at the University of Minnesota and dairy chemist at the Experiment Station, and of the Eli Lilly and Company Award in Biological Chemistry to Dr. George Wald, instructor and tutor in biology at Harvard University. Each award is of the value of \$1,000.

DR. NORMAN R. F. MAIER, assistant professor of psychology at the University of Michigan, who received the award of \$1,000 of the American Association for the Advancement of Science at the Richmond meeting, has received from the university the Henry Russel Award for 1938-39 in recognition of his scientific work. The Russel award and the Henry Russel lectureship were made possible by a bequest of the late Henry Russel, of Detroit, an alumnus of the University of Michigan.

THE Meyer Medal for distinguished services in plant introduction has been awarded by the council of the American Genetic Association to Kate O. Sessions, horticulturist, of San Diego, California. The presentation took place at the Southern California Spring Flower Show, held at Pasadena on April 1, 2 and 3. Miss Sessions, who is now eighty-two years old, has contributed to the horticultural beauty of southern California through fifty years of active work spent there as a landscape gardener and horticulturist. The Meyer Medal had its origin in a bequest by the late Frank N. Meyer, plant explorer of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, who left to his fellow workers in the Office of Foreign Seed and Plant Introduction money for a farewell party in his honor. They elected to use this fund to have a medal struck to commemorate outstanding achievements in plant introduction. The council of the American Genetic Association was appointed the agency to make these awards.

DR. JAMES D. BRUCE, chairman of the division of health sciences of the University of Michigan, was designated president-elect of the American College of Physicians at the recent New Orleans meeting. He will assume office at the next annual convention. Dr. O. H. Perry Pepper, professor of medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, assumed the presidency, succeeding Dr. William J. Kerr, professor of medicine at the University of California. Dr. Allen A. Jones, of Buffalo, was elected first vice-president; Dr. Gerald B. Webb, of Colorado Springs, second vice-president,

and Dr. J. Morrison Hutcheson, of Richmond, Va., third vice-president.

ACCORDING to *Nature*, the following have been elected officers of the British Physical Society for the year ending March, 1940: *President*, Professor Allan Ferguson; *Vice-presidents*, Professor G. I. Finch, Dr. Ezer Griffiths, Dr. L. Hartshorn and R. W. Paul; *Honorary Secretaries*, J. H. Awbery and Dr. W. Jevons; *Honorary Foreign Secretary*, Professor O. W. Richardson; *Honorary Treasurer*, Dr. C. C. Pater-son; *Honorary Librarian*, Dr. J. H. Brinkworth. The Geological Society of London has elected as *President* Professor H. H. Swinnerton; *Vice-presidents*, Dr. E. B. Bailey, Professor W. G. Fearnside, Professor O. Jones and Professor C. E. Tilley; *Secretaries*, Dr. Hawkes and Professor W. B. R. King; *Foreign Secretary*, Sir Arthur Smith Woodward; *Treasurer*, F. Ashcroft.

DR. FRANK N. FREEMAN, professor of educational psychology at the University of Chicago, has been appointed chairman of the department of psychology. Concurrently with the appointment, the department has been transferred from the Division of Biological Sciences to the Division of Social Sciences. Professor Freeman succeeds Professor Harvey Carr, who retired last autumn. In the interval, Professor Louis L. Thurstone, Charles F. Grey distinguished service professor of psychology, assumed responsibility for the administrative details of the department pending the appointment of a chairman. The transfer of the department to the Division of Social Sciences for administrative purposes was made because Dr. Freeman is connected with that division. The field of interest of the department will continue to be in both biological sciences and social sciences.

DR. MAURICE N. RICHTER, since 1928 assistant professor of pathology in the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University, has been promoted to a professorship, and has been appointed executive officer of the department of pathology in the New York Post-Graduate Medical School.

DR. PATRICK H. DREWRY, JR., has been appointed assistant professor of neuropsychiatry at the Medical College of Virginia at Richmond. He is now in London for special study in this field under a fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation. He expects to begin his work at the college next spring when it is anticipated that the new hospital, which will have an active psychiatric service, will be completed.

DR. J. FISHER STANFIELD, of the department of biology of Knox College, has been appointed assistant professor of botany in the department of science of the Chicago Teachers College. He took up his work there in February.

DR. C. H. O'DONOGHUE, reader in zoology at the University of Edinburgh, has been appointed professor of zoology at the University of Reading, England. He succeeds Professor F. J. Cole.

HAROLD L. MADISON, director of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Ohio, retired on April 1.

DR. RICHARD WEISSENBERG, formerly professor extraordinary of anatomy at the University of Berlin and during 1937 visiting professor of cytology at the School of Medicine, Washington University, St. Louis, has been appointed a member of the Wistar Institute of Anatomy and Biology, Philadelphia.

DR. HERMAN E. HAYWARD, professor of botany at the University of Chicago, has resigned, effective on March 16, to accept a post with the U. S. Regional Salinity Laboratory at Riverside, Calif.

DR. A. ASHLEY WEECH has been appointed director of the Normal Child Development Study of Columbia University, replacing Dr. Herbert B. Wilcox, who has become director of the New York Academy of Medicine. The appointment took effect on April 1.

M. H. V. VALLOIS, in charge of the anthropological laboratory for practical studies of the Ecole des Hautes Etudes, Paris, since 1937 and professor in the faculty of medicine of the University of Toulouse, has been appointed professor of prehistoric anthropology in the Institut de Paléontologie humaine of the University of Paris. M. Vallois is senior editor of *L'Anthropologie*.

A GRANT of \$2,000 from Parke Davis and Company will provide for a year's research at the College of Medicine of Wayne University into the cause and treatment of peptic ulcer. Dr. David Sandweiss and

Research Associate M. H. F. Friedman, members of the department of physiology, will be in direct charge of the work. Dr. T. L. Patterson will supervise the research. General investigations of peptic ulcer conducted during the past two years by the department of surgery will be continued in collaboration with the new work.

THE ninth Joseph Henry Lecture of the Philosophical Society of Washington, on "Recent Developments of Cosmic-Ray Investigation," was given by Dr. Thomas H. Johnson, of the Bartol Research Foundation, Swarthmore, Pa.

DR. H. T. DAVIS, professor of mathematics at Northwestern University, will give the academy address at the fifty-third annual meeting of the Iowa Academy of Science at Ames, on April 21. His subject will be "The Philosophy of Science."

PROFESSOR DETLEV W. BRONK, director of the Johnson Research Foundation and of the Institute of Neurology of the University of Pennsylvania, delivered the Louis Clark Vanuxem Lectures at Princeton University from March 20 to 23. The subjects of the several lectures were: "The Social and Biological Significance of the Nervous System," "The Sensory Outposts and Their Messages," "Physical and Chemical Determinants of Behavior Patterns" and "The Cellular Integration of the Organism."

DR. KAZYS PAKŠTAS, professor of geography at the University of Vytautas-the-Great, Kaunas, Lithuania, has been invited to lecture at the summer session of the University of California at Los Angeles from June 26 to August 10 on human and political geography in Central Europe. He plans to spend a year in the United States.

## DISCUSSION

### A MILITARY CLASSIFICATION FOR FOSSIL FRAGMENTS

PALEONTOLOGISTS have long been forced to use the binominal system in an unorthodox fashion in classifying fossils which are merely parts of an undiscovered, and possibly undiscoverable, organic whole. With increased activity in micropaleontology there come into prominence more and more groups in which zoological relationships may never be determined, so that, if the groups are to be studied at all, strictly artificial classifications *must* be employed.

How important this situation has become may be illustrated by the echinoderms, whose fragments in the form of both holothurian and echinoid spicules, echinoid spines, stelleroid and crinoid ossicles,<sup>1</sup> pedicel-

lariae, fragments of Aristotle's lantern and other isolated plates are being more extensively studied every year. Naturally, if these and other fragments are to have correlative value they must first be classed as so many different bolts, nails or screws regardless of whether or not it can, at the moment, be demonstrated that they were made out of the same metal or in the same factory. But actually most of these groups we now classify as if they were biological units, and give them "generic" and "specific" names.

The infelicities due to the use of these non-biological "genera" also are serious in the more conventional fields of paleontology. Vertebrate paleontologists, for instance, have employed dual classifications long and commonly. Nine "families" and a host of "genera" have been established for fossil vertebrate tracks from the Triassic of the Connecticut River valley alone, and the

<sup>1</sup> R. C. Moore, *Bull. Geol. Soc. Amer.*, 49: 1918, 1938.