flora of which the actual type, with which Linnaeus, Lamarck or Michaux worked, has been neglected. There are hundreds and hundreds of others. In that happy period when weight of authority and established usage were the law the old and historic specimens were of natural interest but not too binding upon the student. Now, with emphasis upon the historic type (beginning with 1753) and strict priority of publication the whole picture has changed. It becomes imperative that the groundwork of all our species be reinspected. This is slow and exacting work and too often there is difficulty in determining beyond dispute just which of several different elements should stand as the actual type. With the addition of these newly imposed burdens, the author of a manual which aims to be authoritative must be allowed some time in which to prosecute his exacting studies. If these unescapable studies are constantly retarded by the thoughtless and needless urging upon the author of too many axes to grind for others the question must inevitably arise: Which do eastern American botanists want done first, the "Manual" or its author?

OBITUARY

WILTON EVERETT BRITTON

1868–1939

A STERLING gentleman and an able scientist passed from life on February 15, 1939, with the death of Wilton Everett Britton, state entomologist of Connecticut and director of the State Geological and Natural History Survey. Few entomologists have had a more fully rounded career, and few have given so full a measure of unselfish service to their fellow workers and to the public.

Dr. Britton was the builder of the department of entomology of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station. He lived to see his department housed in a building designed for biological research, and he gathered about him a staff of earnest and able men to carry on his traditions of quiet and thorough work. He took part in a score of activities relating to his scientific duties, and he exerted a wide and healthful influence.

Dr. Britton was born at Marlboro, Mass., on September 18, 1868. His early background, however, was rural, and his early years were spent on a farm in New Hampshire, near the city of Keene. In 1893 he received the degree of bachelor of science from the New Hampshire College of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts, now the University of New Hampshire. In 1894 he was a graduate student at Cornell University. That same year he became a member of the staff of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, as horticulturist, and he continued as a servant of the state of Connecticut until his death. In 1901 he became state entomologist and entomologist of the experiment station. In 1925 he assumed the additional duties of director of the State Geological and Natural History Survey. On April 30, 1895, Dr. Britton was married to Bertha Madeline Perkins, of Surry, N. H. There were no children. In 1938, after a long illness, Mrs. Britton died. Two brothers and a sister of Dr. Britton survive him.

Two years after Dr. Britton became state entomologist of Connecticut he was granted the degree of doctor of philosophy by Yale University. Twenty-seven years later, in 1930, the University of New Hampshire conferred upon him the honorary degree of doctor of science.

The breadth of Dr. Britton's interest and activities relating to his profession is well evidenced by the memberships that he held in various organizations and the responsibilities that he discharged. Early in his work he became a member of the American Association of Economic Entomology, and he was elected president in 1909. He was associate editor of the *Journal of Economic Entomology* from 1910 to 1929. He assisted in preparing the indexes of *American Economic Entomology* covering the years 1905 to 1934. He was a fellow of the Entomological Society of America. For thirty-five years he was a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and for thirty-three of those years he was a fellow. He was one of the organizers of the Eastern Plant Board and was president in 1936.

He was actively identified with the work of the Crop Protection Institute and for a period was a member of its board of governors. From its beginnings he was chairman of the Connecticut Tree Protection Examining Board. He was a member of the National Malaria Committee. His activities with various Connecticut associations included the Pomological Society, the Beekeepers Association, the Forest and Park Association, the Botanical Society, the Nurserymen's Association and the Vegetable Growers' Association.

Dr. Britton was deeply interested in books and their significance. He was a member of the Library Association of Connecticut, was director and president of the Donald G. Mitchell Library and for seven years was director of the New Haven Public Library. For twenty-seven years he was a director of the Young Men's Institute Library.

The breadth of his service is further indicated by the fact that he was twice president of the Edgewood Civic Association, was a member of the Governor's Foot Guard for three years, was a member of the

Grange for forty years, and was chairman of the Committee on Food of the New Haven War Bureau during the world war.

Dr. Britton began his professional work at a time when difficult insect problems were arising. Early in his career the San José scale was discovered in Connecticut. The gipsy moth presented further problems, both administrative and technical. It was followed by the Japanese beetle, the European corn-borer and the Oriental beetle. In addition came the task of organizing and administering mosquito control.

A long list of publications attest Dr. Britton's tireless professional activities. Outstanding among these are his thirty-eight annual reports on the insects of Connecticut, a comprehensive series of publications which are continually referred to by entomologists everywhere. Bulletins from his department of the experiment station include among others a plant pest handbook. Publications of the State Geological and Natural History Survey also are noteworthy, including a check list of the insects of Connecticut, a guide to the insects of Connecticut and monographs of the Euplexoptera and Orthoptera, the Hymenoptera, the Hemiptera and the Odonata. At the time of his death a monograph of the Diptera of Connecticut was being prepared. In addition to these various reports and bulletins, Dr. Britton was the author of many articles in farm papers and magazines.

Most of all, Dr. Britton was a helpful co-worker among entomologists, giving freely of his energies and always contributing the orderly judgment which was a part of his fine mental equipment. His service to his state was signally recognized on July 30, 1936, at the Farm and Home Week, when he was especially honored as a leader in agricultural and rural life.

W. C. O'Kane

University of New Hampshire

RECENT DEATHS AND MEMORIALS

Dr. Charles Rupert Stockard, professor of anatomy and head of the department at the Cornell University Medical College, died on April 7 at the age of sixty years.

Dr. William Hallock Park, Hermann M. Biggs professor of preventive medicine at the New York University Medical School, formerly director of the Bureau of Laboratories of the Health Department of New York City, died suddenly on April 6 at the age of seventy-five years.

Dr. James Clifton Edgar, emeritus professor of obstetrics at the Cornell University Medical College, died on April 7. He was in his eightieth year.

Dr. William C. Thro, from 1918 to 1937 professor of clinical pathology at the Cornell University Medical College, died on April 6. He was sixty-four years old.

Dr. Thomas S. Baker, from 1922 to 1935, when he retired with the title emeritus, president of the Carnegie Institute of Technology, died on April 7 at the age of sixty-eight years.

On the occasion of the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Théodule Ribot, who played an important part in France in the establishment of a scientific psychology, a commemorative ceremony will be held in Paris in June. There will also be celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the chair in experimental psychology in the Collège de France, which was first held by Th. Ribot and later by Pierre Janet, and of the laboratory of physiological psychology at the Sorbonne, of which Dr. Alfred Binet was director.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

PATENT INQUIRY OF THE AMERICAN ENGINEERING COUNCIL

The Executive Committee of the American Engineering Council at its meeting on December 8 accepted the invitation of the National Industrial Conference Board to undertake a factual inquiry into the American Patent System. The inquiry is to be conducted by a separate special staff employed under direction of the Patents Committee of the American Engineering Council. The inquiry is to be financed from funds outside the present income of American Engineering Council, which are being provided by the National Industrial Conference Board.

The announcement of the plan was made by the National Industrial Conference Board in the following statement:

A comprehensive investigation of the whole patent problem has just been started by the National Industrial Conference Board, independent fact-finding organization of management and labor. Technical phases of the investigation will be supervised by the Committee on Patents of the American Engineering Council, while the economic aspects will be analyzed by the conference board's economists under supervision of Dr. Robert F. Martin, director of the Economic Research Division of the board. Much work on the patent situation has already been done by the American Engineering Council Committee under the chairmanship of R. S. McBride, consulting chemical engineer. The other members of the committee are James