tween ship and launch. Specimens will be sought of large game fishes such as marlin, and attempts will be made to study their life history.

Many of the islands and cays to be visited have been incompletely explored biologically. Some of them are known to be inhabited by species and sub-species of birds and reptiles different from those of the adjacent mainland, and it is hoped that the expedition may be able to contribute to the further knowledge of an area which is of special interest to science.

SOIL CONSERVATION

DR. W. C. LOWDERMILK, assistant chief of the Soil Conservation Service, has recently returned from an extended survey of the experience of older countries in the use of land as it relates to soil erosion, soil and water conservation and torrential flood control. His studies took him into Europe, including Great Britain, Holland, France, Italy, Algeria, Tunisia, Lybia, Egypt, Palestine, Trans-Jordan, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon. The war interrupted the course of the survey, which was to have continued through Turkey, Bulgaria, southern Germany and Switzerland and return.

The survey was made in overland travel by auto, including nearly 27,000 miles. It included conferences with more than 120 scientists, agriculturists and government officials, the examination and study of 124 areas of special interest, the collection of soil samples, particularly profiles dated by archeological evidence and the taking of some 3,500 illustrative photographs. Of special interest to American agriculture are evidences of an advanced degree of refinement in measures to control and conserve storm waters and to control erosion of a productive agriculture during the Roman epoch 2,000 years ago in Northern Africa and in ancient Syria. After the destruction of the Roman civilization and the traditions of agriculture by conquering nomad peoples, former measures of water and erosion control fell into disuse and were broken down. Soil erosion then began its damaging work and throughout this area has generally washed off soils from the slopes, sorting erosional débris and carrying the finer fractions out to the sea and spreading the coarser fractions over old alluvium on the valley floors. Increased torrential run-off from the bared slopes produces torrential streams, and is cutting gullies through the alluvium of the valley floors. This in short is the predominant process at work in the old lands south and east of the Mediterranean Sea, except in the broad alluvial plains of the Nile and Mesopotamia. Agricultural possibilities of to-day are restricted principally to the alluvium of lodged soils in the valley floors and outwash plains and in the improved management of vast grazing areas, where drought and famine have been the chief controls. It is possible to reforest the hill and mountain lands in Algeria, in Palestine and Syria, particularly where the country rock is limestone and to restore or to improve the productivity and prosperity of these wasted areas.

THE MINNEAPOLIS MEETING OF THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA AND ASSOCIATED SOCIETIES

THE Geological Society of America is meeting this week in Minneapolis. Many sections of the United States and Canada are represented, and the attendance was expected to reach five hundred. The principal universities, colleges, state and federal geological surveys of Canada and the United States planned to send delegates. Three associated societies—the Paleontological Society, the Mineralogical Society and the Society of Economic Geologists are meeting in conjunction with the Geological Society.

According to the preliminary program Dr. T. Wayland Vaughan, of Washington, D. C., president of the Geological Society, gave the address of the president on Thursday, December 28. His subject was "The Ecology of Modern Marine Organisms with Reference to Paleogeography." Earlier on Thursday Professor R. W. Chaney, of the University of California at Berkeley, retiring president of the Paleontological Society, addressed the several societies on "Tertiary Forests and Continental History." The title of the address of Professor E. S. Moore, of the University of Toronto, retiring president of the Society of Economic Geologists, was "Genetic Relations of Gold Deposits and Igneous Rocks in the Canadian Shield."

A general meeting of the four societies was held on Thursday morning. In the afternoon the sessions of the Geological Society were devoted to a discussion of structural geology; of the Paleontological Society to a discussion of new fossils; and of the Mineralogical Society to a discussion of crystal structure and textures. Papers read before the Economic Geologists were concerned with ground water supply and other applications of geology to the field of non-metallic resources. The technical sessions of the different societies were continued on Friday. On that day, in addition to the general session of the Geological Society, two joint sessions were held, one with the Paleontologists and one with the Mineralogists and Economic Geologists. Technical sessions were planned for Saturday morning, after which the meeting will close with an open house and tea at the Pillsbury Hall of the University of Minnesota.

OFFICERS OF THE AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

DR. WILLIAM LLOYD EVANS, head of the department of chemistry of the Ohio State University, has been elected president of the American Chemical Society for 1941. He will take office as president-elect on January

1, at which time Dr. Samuel Colville Lind, dean of the Institute of Technology of the University of Minnesota, becomes president, succeeding Professor Charles A. Kraus, of Brown University.

The president-elect was chosen by the council of the society from four nominees receiving the largest number of votes in a national poll by mail of the 24,000 members of the society. The council includes national officers, directors, editors of the publications of the society, past presidents, chairmen of eighteen professional divisions and councilors of the ninety-two local sections.

Other elections were:

Directors: Dr. Elmer K. Bolton, chemical director of E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company, Wilmington, Del., *director-at-large.*

Leason H. Adams, director of the Geophysical Laboratory of the Carnegie Institution, for the fourth district of the society, comprising Alabama, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.

Dr. Robert E. Swain, head of the department of chemistry at Stanford University, reelected for the sixth district, including Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, Alaska and Hawaii.

Councilors-at-large: Dr. Per K. Frolich, director of the chemical laboratories of the Standard Oil Development Company, Elizabeth, N. J.; Dr. Edward Mack, Jr., of the Battelle Memorial Institute, Columbus; Dr. C. E. K. Mees, vice-president in charge of research and development of the Eastman Kodak Company; Professor William A. Noyes, Jr., of the University of Rochester, New York.

Professor Evans, who received the William H. Nichols Medal of the New York Section of the society in 1929 for his work on the chemistry of carbohydrates, has been a member of the faculty of the Ohio State University for thirty-five years and has been chairman of the department of chemistry since 1928. From 1892 to 1894 he was chemist of the American Encaustic Tile Company, Zanesville, Ohio. He served as assistant in the department of ceramics at the Ohio State University from 1896 to 1898, and instructor in the Colorado Springs High School from 1898 to 1902. He became assistant professor of chemistry at the Ohio State University in 1905, associate professor in 1908 and full professor in 1911.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

THE American Association for the Advancement of Science and some thirty of its associated and affiliated societies are meeting this week at Columbus. The address of the president, Professor Wesley C. Mitchell, is printed in the present issue of SCIENCE. This will be followed by other addresses of special interest. A general report of the meeting, edited by the permanent secretary, will be printed in the issue for February 2.

DR. ALEXANDER WETMORE, assistant secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, has been elected a corresponding member of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union.

IT is stated in *Nature* that Dr. Gerhard Domagk, who was recently awarded the Nobel Prize for Physiology and Medicine for 1939, has been elected an honorary member of the Pharmaceutical Association of the Hindu University of Benares.

DECORATIONS of the Chinese Order of the Jade were presented on December 20 at a reception in New York City to Dr. John Dewey, professor emeritus of philosophy of Columbia University, in recognition of his work for Chinese students, and to Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia University. The presentations were made by Dr. Tsune-chi Yu, Chinese Consul-General in New York.

PHILIP TORCHIO, who retired in 1938, at the age of seventy years, from the position of vice-president of the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc., has been awarded the Edison Medal for 1939 of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers in recognition of "distinguished contributions to the art of central station engineering and for achievement in the production, distribution and utilization of electrical energy." The presentation will be made on the evening of January 24 during the winter convention of the institute, which will be held in the Engineering Societies Building, New York.

E. MEAD JOHNSON awards of $500 each were presented by the American Academy of Pediatrics at its annual meeting in Cincinnati to Dr. Frederic A. Gibbs, instructor in neurology, Harvard Medical School, and Dr. Dorothy H. Andersen, New York. The award was made to Dr. Gibbs in recognition of his work on epilepsy and to Dr. Andersen for her work on pancreatic disorders.

E. R. SQUIBB AND SONS have established an annual award of $1,000 to encourage investigation in endocrinology. The administration of this award has been intrusted to the Association for the Study of Internal Secretions, of which Dr. Philip E. Smith is president. Dr. Edward A. Doisy is chairman of the Committee on Awards. Nominations for the 1940 award must be received before March 1 by the secretary of the so-