

irrigation, long-continued tillage of orchard soils, organic materials and soil microorganisms were considered. In addition, enzymatic *vs.* microbial concepts of urea hydrolysis, the maintenance of nitrogen in dry farm soils and the persistence of algae in old adobes were topics presented.

At the banquet on Wednesday evening at which were present fifty-one members and guests, President

F. S. Harris, of Brigham Young University, described some interesting and peculiar agricultural problems of Iran.

Officers of the society elected for the coming year were as follows: *President*, T. L. Martin, Brigham Young University; *Vice-President*, O. C. Magistad, U. S. Regional Salinity Laboratory; *Secretary-Treasurer*, W. P. Martin, University of Arizona.

OBITUARY

RAYMOND L. DITMARS

As a keen student of human nature has reminded us, "Contemporaries appreciate the man rather than the merit, but posterity will regard the merit rather than the man." Most creative thinkers are content to have it this way, for they realize that they labor for future generations rather than for their own. The life and works of Dr. Ditmars will illustrate the truth of the observation. Quietly and persistently he toiled in his chosen field. To many biologists he was but little known; to others he was the modest curator of reptiles in the New York Zoological Park. But it may be safely predicted that future historians of American zoology will recognize in him an important contributor to the science.

Scientists too generally fail to appreciate that research is promoted not only by the efforts of skilled investigators but also by the labors of those who undertake to develop the students of the future. Zoologists particularly are prone to decry attempts to popularize the results of their studies. This is unfortunate, for most teachers will testify to the great value of natural histories and manuals in stimulating in the youthful mind an interest in the natural sciences. It is to this field that Dr. Ditmars has contributed effectively and permanently. He has successfully popularized, in the best sense of the term, the study of reptiles, and the results are already appearing in an augmented group of specialists in the habits, distribution and relationships of an important, difficult, neglected and much maligned group of animals.

Thus, while it will be the future Copes, Boulengers and Stejneger who will really give to this man full credit, we who are privileged to have known him may feel proud to have been associated with one who is destined to be considered a good teacher. He would desire no other epitaph.

Dr. Ditmars died on May 12. The events of his life are given in biographical directories. "American Men of Science" prints the following:

Ditmars, R(aymond) L(ee), Zoological Park, New York, N. Y. *Natural history*. Newark, N. J., June 20, 76. Pub. and private schs. Asst. curator entom., Am. Museum Nat. Hist., 91-97; stenographer, 97-99; re-

porter, 'N. Y. Times,' 99-00; *curator reptiles*, N. Y. Zool. Park, 00-, *mammals*, 27- Soc. Ichthyol. and Herp.; N. Y. Zool. Soc.; N. Y. Entom. Soc.; Linnaean Soc. N. Y. Herpetology; mammalogy; educational motion pictures.

ALEXANDER G. RUTHVEN

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

HENRY FRANCIS NACHTRIEB

HENRY FRANCIS NACHTRIEB, professor emeritus of animal biology at the University of Minnesota, died at his home in Berkeley, California, on July 17 in his eighty-sixth year. He is survived by his wife and daughter. Born near Galion, Ohio, in 1857, Professor Nachtrieb began his higher education at German Wallace College at Berea, Ohio. From there he came to the University of Minnesota and received his B.S. degree in 1882. Graduate work at the Johns Hopkins University from 1883 to 1885 completed his professional training. Returning to the University of Minnesota in 1885 as an assistant, he became assistant professor the following year and department head in 1887, which position he held until his retirement in 1925.

During his long service to the university he was untiring in his efforts to build up the work in zoology. When Governor John S. Pillsbury was considering the gift of a building to the university in 1889, Professor Nachtrieb was influential in having the building devoted to the natural sciences. As the work grew, and additional space became imperative, he was again influential in securing a legislative appropriation for a new building to be devoted exclusively to zoology. This fine modern laboratory was built in 1915, according to plans largely developed by him.

During the years of the Geological and Natural History Survey of Minnesota, Professor Nachtrieb was active in directing this work as state zoologist. At this time he began his work on the spoon bill or paddle fish, *Polyodon*. He accumulated much material on this extraordinary form, but, unfortunately, the greater part was never published. His published papers dealt chiefly with leeches and fishes.

In addition to his scientific interest, Professor Nachtrieb had a warm interest in the whole of human life

which manifested itself in many ways. He was active in church work. He was instrumental in establishing the Minnesota Chapter of the Psi Upsilon fraternity. He was one of the most active members of the General Alumni Association of the University of Minnesota, which was organized at a meeting called by him in 1904 and whose president he became for the following eleven years. He was a leader in many other movements, the purpose of which was to improve the university.

Thus a long and beautiful life of service has come to its close. Professor Nachtrieb will be long and gratefully remembered by the university to which he devotedly gave his life work. And he will be affectionately remembered by those of us fortunate enough to have known him as a beloved teacher, a wise counselor and a loyal friend.

D. E. MINNICH

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

RECENT DEATHS

DR. WADE H. BROWN, pathologist, member of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research at Princeton, N. J., died on August 4 at the age of sixty-three years.

DR. WILLIAM JESSE GOAD LAND, professor of botany at the University of Chicago until his retirement with the title emeritus in 1931, died on August 1 in his seventy-seventh year.

DR. CLARENCE ERROL FERREE, formerly professor of physiological optics and director of the research laboratory of physiological optics at the Johns Hopkins University, died on July 26 at the age of sixty-five years.

DR. JAMES HAYDEN TUFTS, professor of philosophy at the University of Chicago, who retired in 1930 with the title of emeritus, died on August 5. He was eighty years old.

DR. EDWIN W. MILLER, associate professor of mathematics at the University of Michigan, died on July 23, at the age of thirty-seven years.

DR. C. C. BUNCH, research professor in education of the deaf in the School of Speech at Northwestern University, an authority on otology and audition, died on June 14 at the age of fifty-seven years.

SIR FRANCIS EDWARD YOUNGHUSBAND, explorer of Tibet and northern India, died on July 31 at the age of seventy-nine years.

AN Associated Press dispatch reports the death at the hands of the Germans of eight Polish scholars and artists. Among them were Aleksander Patowski, formerly chairman of the Polish Geographic Society and counselor of the former Polish Ministry of Education in Warsaw, and Antoni Nieszorkiewicz, custodian of the National Museum of Warsaw.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE OXFORD INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH IN AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING

THE *Times*, London, points out that the Agricultural Machinery Development Board for Great Britain, which was set up at the beginning of this year to arrange for the testing of agricultural machinery and implements and to consider questions of uniformity and standardization, the provision of educational and advisory facilities, and any matters relating to the mechanization of agriculture, requires a highly qualified staff of agriculturists and engineers with adequate workshop facilities. A National Institute of Agricultural Engineering is accordingly being set up at Askham Bryan, near York.

The nucleus of the institute is the Institute of Research in Agricultural Engineering at Oxford, which the University of Oxford has handed over to the Ministry. S. J. Wright, the director of the Oxford institute, has been appointed director of the new institute. The staff will be considerably strengthened and adequate workshop facilities provided. The institute will be housed temporarily during the war in buildings belonging to the Yorkshire Council for Agricultural Education, but when these have to revert, after the

war, to their original purpose, it is intended to build a permanent home for the institute on a site near the temporary accommodation.

The main functions of the new institute will be to act as a general clearing house for information about agricultural machinery and its use, to carry out tests or demonstrations of new or improved implements, to undertake experimental and demonstration work on the better utilization of existing equipment, and to fill the gap between inventor and manufacturer by putting new ideas into practical shape and constructing the prototype machine.

THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

DR. J. L. MAGNES, president of the Hebrew University, has been appointed chairman of the Scientific Advisory Committee established by the War Supply Board for the purpose of investigating scientific problems in connection with the war effort. Professor L. Farkas, of the department of physical chemistry, is secretary of the committee. The scientific departments of the university are giving increased aid to industrialists, farmers, physicians and others in the performance of essential wartime functions.