

The present bequest is Mr. Murphy's fourth benefaction to the university. He made two gifts in 1923, one of \$5,000 to the College of Liberal Arts and one of \$10,000 to the School of Commerce. In 1939, through the Walter P. Murphy Foundation, he gave \$6,735,000 to erect and equip the new building of the institute.

Completed in the fall of 1941 at a cost of \$5,000,000, the Lannon stone building was dedicated on June 15 and 16, 1942, with a series of conferences in which educational and industrial leaders of the nation participated. It houses the departments of civil, chemical, mechanical and electrical engineering of the institute, and the departments of physics and chemistry of the university.

The institute is operated on the "work-study" plan in which student engineers alternate three months of study on the campus with equal periods of work in cooperating industries. It began operations in the fall of 1939, before the present building was erected, and to-day has an enrolment of 750 full-time students.

Approximately 95 industrial organizations in thirteen states cooperate with the institute in its work-study program.

Built to accommodate about 1,000 engineering students, the institute is to-day training 4,500 men and women to acquire technical skills essential to winning the war. In addition to training engineers, it is carrying on the following vital activities: a Naval Radio Operators' School; an Army Signal Corps Officers' Training School; a pilot training program for the Navy; evening courses to train workers for war industries; and a vast program of confidential war research for the government.

Mr. Murphy has consistently avoided any personal recognition of his generosity in founding the institute, rejecting on several occasions the suggestion that the institute be named after him. In the great halls of engineering and science that he established, there is no mark of recognition of him except one—a portrait that he permitted to be hung in the faculty lounge on the top floor of the north tower.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

DR. JAMES B. CONANT, president of Harvard University, formerly Sheldon Emery professor of organic chemistry, will receive the annual award of the New York Academy of Public Education for distinguished service to education. The presentation will be made at the annual dinner meeting of the academy, which will be held at the Hotel Waldorf-Astoria on February 18. Dr. Conant will be the speaker at the dinner. His subject will be "The Relation of Science to Society in the Post-War World."

SIR JOHN RUSSELL will retire on September 30, under the age limit, from the directorship of the Rothamsted Experimental Station. Sir John succeeded Sir Daniel Hall in 1912. The station reaches its hundredth year in 1943, and but for the war the centenary would have been the occasion of an international celebration.

IN recognition of his distinguished services as rector of the Imperial College of Science and Technology from 1929 to 1942, Sir Henry T. Tizard, president of Magdalen College, Oxford, has been elected to an Imperial College fellowship.

THE honorary degree of doctor of science was conferred by the Drexel Institute of Technology, Philadelphia, on December 17 on William L. Batt, chairman of the Engineering Industrial Division of the National Research Council, who gave the commencement address at the Founder's Day and commencement exercises of the institute.

AT the fiftieth anniversary commencement of the

New Jersey College of Pharmacy in Newark on January 6, Rutgers University conferred the honorary degree of doctor of science on George D. Beal, assistant director of Mellon Institute of Pittsburgh. According to the citation the action was taken "to pay appropriate tribute to Dr. Beal for his contributions to scientific progress in general and to pharmaceutical chemistry in particular."

THE *Journal* of the American Medical Association reports that Dr. John L. Myers, Kansas City, was presented with a wrist watch during the meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology, in appreciation of his sixteen years' service as a section secretary of the academy.

DR. WILLIAM A. PROUT has been appointed acting director of the School of Pharmacy of the Medical College of the State of South Carolina, Charleston. He will continue as professor of pharmacy.

Chemical and Engineering News reports that R. Bowling Barnes, of the Stamford Research Laboratories of the American Cyanamid Company, has been elected first president of the National Conference of Electron Microscopy formed by leading workers in this field meeting at the National Chemical Exposition in November. Albert F. Prebus, of the Ohio State University, was elected vice-president, and Charles Banca, of the RCA Manufacturing Company, Camden, N. J., secretary-treasurer. Dr. V. K. Zworykin, of the Radio Corporation of America, and Dr. O. S. Duffendach, of the University of Michigan, were

elected to serve with the officers of the conference as its directors. Dr. G. L. Clark, of the University of Illinois, presided at the formation meeting. Dr. Clark, L. A. Matheson, Dow Chemical Company, and Dr. Duffendach constituted the committee which called and arranged the initial conference.

DR. JAMES G. HORSFALL, head of the department of botany and plant pathology of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, a member of the "plant protection committee" of the National Research Council, has been appointed chairman of the "fungicide sub-committee" of the American Phytopathological Society.

DR. ALBERT W. DAVISON, William Weightman Walker professor of chemical engineering and head of the department at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, has been appointed scientific director of the research laboratories at Newark, Ohio, of the Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corporation. He is succeeded at the institute by Dr. Louis S. Coonley, associate professor of chemical engineering.

THE *Journal* of the American Medical Association states that Dr. Bert E. Caldwell, for fifteen years executive secretary of the American Hospital Association, has resigned effective on the appointment of a successor. Dr. Caldwell has been editor, since its establishment seven years ago, of *Hospitals*, the journal of the association.

RICHARD A. MCLEAN, assistant curator of mollusks at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, has been commissioned an ensign in the Navy and is assigned to Fort Schuyler, N. Y.

DR. DONALD FAIRBAIRN has been appointed post-doctorate fellow in biochemistry under a Hoffmann-La Roche grant in the University of Pittsburgh.

HAROLD W. COLES, of the Mellon Institute, has become associated with the research staff of the Bausch & Lomb Optical Company, Rochester, N. Y. He has been placed in charge of the new department of organic chemistry.

DR. ENRIQUE BELTRÁN, professor of zoology at the University of Mexico and head of the Division of Protozoology of the Institute of Public Health and Tropical Diseases, has been invited by the American Government to make a visiting tour to the United States. Professor Beltrán, who is also permanent secretary of the Mexican Society of Natural History, plans to visit various laboratories, museums and learned institutions at Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Chicago, Memphis and New Orleans.

A DINNER meeting of the Midwest Section, American Association of Cereal Chemists, will be held on

January 11 at 29 South LaSalle Street, Chicago. At that time Dr. Robert D. Coghill, chief of the fermentation division, Northern Regional Research Laboratory of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Peoria, Ill., will be the speaker. Dr. Coghill will present the latest authoritative information on fermentation as a tool in the utilization of farm products, based on a recent paper he gave before the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The meeting will be shared by cereal chemists and brewing chemists.

THE Naval Ordnance Laboratory at the Navy Yard, Washington, D. C., is a research and development agency of the Bureau of Ordnance, concerned with the design of new types of naval mines, depth charges, torpedoes, aerial bombs and other ordnance equipment, including measures for the protection of ships against mines. This laboratory is urgently in need of additional technical personnel. Physicists and electrical engineers with electronics experience are required. The laboratory also needs mechanical engineers familiar with the design of small mechanical movements or mechanisms. Several openings are available in technical report writing and editing.

THE New York meeting of the American Physical Society, originally announced for December 28, 29 and 30, will be held on January 22 and 23 at Columbia University. The meeting normally held in February will be omitted. However, a meeting will take place toward the end of April in a city (not Washington) later to be designated.

"THE Role of the Teacher and the Scientist in Civilian Defense" will be the subject of a discussion to be held by the New York branch of the American Association of Scientific Workers on Wednesday, January 13, at 8:15 P.M. Dr. Harry A. Charipper, chairman of the department of biology, Washington Square College of Arts and Science, and member of the Central Training Staff, Air Warden Service, Police Department, New York City, will be the main speaker. Three British civilian defense films will be shown, describing the detection and identification of poison gases, the incendiary bombing of London and the Air Raid Precaution Services of London and Moscow. The meeting will be held in Room 703, Main Building, Washington Square College of Arts and Science, 100 Washington Square East, New York City.

THE Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University has recently received a gift of \$50,000 from Miss Louisa W. Case, of Weston, Mass., together with her residence, barns, greenhouses and fifty-nine acres of land in Weston, to be utilized for the general purposes of the arboretum. The real estate is assessed at \$84,000. The gift is a memorial to James B. Case, the father of Miss Case. Several hundred young hybrid oriental

crab apples and cherries have already been planted by the arboretum staff on the Case estate.

THE Army-Navy "E" Award was presented on December 29 by Major General Benjamin W. Chidlaw, assistant chief of staff of the Engineering and Material Division of the U. S. Army Air Forces, to the Nylon Research Laboratory and Pilot Plant of the du Pont Company. The award of lapel pins to employees was made by Captain C. A. Bonvillian, U.S.N., of the Industrial Department, Philadelphia Navy Yard. This will be the sixteenth official presentation among seventeen "E" awards which have been made to plants of E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company.

THE council of the British National Farmers' Union has decided to ask the Ministry of Agriculture to send a representative to the United States, New Zealand, and any other countries where drying of foodstuffs is being carried out on a commercial scale in order to

secure full information regarding processes of dehydration.

The Times, London, states that plans for the world after the war were discussed at two meetings in London on November 20. Allied physicians of the nations who spoke on medical aid to stricken Europe agreed that steps would have to be taken by instruction and propaganda, possibly through broadcasting, to restore suitable standards of nutrition and to prevent an increase in infection in the occupied territories. The physicians who work as a technical advisory committee under the Allied Post-war Requirements Bureau have also agreed upon a basic list of drugs which will be needed in the occupied territories as they are liberated. At the second meeting representatives of allied departments met at the Board of Trade to discuss questions relating to the post-war economic structure. Mr. Harcourt Johnstone, parliamentary secretary to the Department of Overseas Trade, presided.

DISCUSSION

FIGMENTS OF THE IMAGINATION

MOST residents of the United States who have not had tropical experience look on the tropics with dread because of the "snake-infested jungles." This idea has been built up over a long period of time by highly imaginative travellers who apparently feel that they must impress their audiences with the great dangers they encountered and overcame in their arduous explorations of these terrible regions; the curious thing is that they always live to tell their harrowing experiences with these deadly reptiles. They are always encouraged to expand on the subject by the enterprising newspaper reporter and popular writers who must make a story. The result is that the average individual, visiting the tropics for the first time, expects to see poisonous reptiles behind every tree and bush and even hanging from the branches ready to do their deadly work. These traveller's tales, told over and over again, and losing nothing in the telling, have resulted in establishing an ingrained fear of the tropics on the part of our general public, and this in turn proves to be distinct dis-service to the thousands of our soldiers and marines who, of necessity, must now serve in one part of the tropics or another.

As a matter of fact in no part of the Old World tropics with which I am personally familiar are poisonous snakes either common or numerous, and I speak on the basis of twenty-two years actual experience. Much of this time was spent in the forests and jungles in all parts of the Philippines, with some experience in the Malay Peninsula, Java, and Borneo.

On many trips lasting from two to six weeks each, on some of them being constantly in the forests and jungles, and seeing no other persons than the members of my own party, I have never actually seen a single snake, poisonous or otherwise; on other trips one might average seeing perhaps one snake in a week. The snakes are there, but if one is interested in snakes one must know where, how, and when to look for them. They are mostly timid and disappear at the slightest disturbance. Interested in checking on my own personal experiences I asked Dr. Frans Verdoorn, who spent two years prosecuting intensive field work in botany in the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra and Java, and he reports that he almost never saw a snake in the jungle. I asked Colonel Arthur S. Fisher, who was evacuated from Corregidor shortly before that fortress fell to the Japanese, and who for three months was in active service on Bataan Peninsula after the fall of Manila, and he stated that he saw exactly four snakes in three months, and two of these were brought to him by soldiers. My personal experiences in the American tropics are limited to six trips to Cuba; and I never saw a snake in Cuba. Professor Oakes Ames informs me that in his trips to parts of Mexico, Yucatan, Panama, Honduras, Costa Rica, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Brazil, he saw a total of three snakes.

As a matter of fact there is infinitely less chance of an individual operating in the tropical forests and jungles being bitten by a poisonous snake than there is in any part of the United States where the water moccasin and the rattlesnake occur. On any pleasant