

RECENT DEATHS

BARNARD S. BRONSON, from 1908 to 1939 professor of chemistry in the State College for Teachers at Albany, N. Y., died on March 14. He was sixty-two years old.

DR. EDGAR BILLINGS, archeologist and geologist, who had been research associate of the University of Pennsylvania Museum, the Academy of Natural Sciences,

Philadelphia, and the Carnegie Institution of Washington, died on March 18 at the age of fifty-six years.

DR. ROBERT HARCOURT, head of the department of chemistry of the Ontario Agricultural College, died on March 30 at the age of seventy-seven years.

COLONEL SIR SIDNEY GERALD BURRARD, F.R.S., geologist and geographer, Surveyor-General of India from 1910 to 1919, died on March 16 at the age of eighty-two years.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

BRITISH PARLIAMENTARY AND SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE¹

ACCORDING to the annual report for 1942 of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee, the membership now includes thirty-three organizations associated with scientific work and seventy-four members of the Houses of Parliament. During the past year, the main work of the committee has been connected with the better utilization of scientific men in the war effort.

A memorandum on the subject was prepared and a strong deputation saw R. A. Butler, then chairman of the Scientific Advisory Committee. Later, a motion urging the establishment of a Central Scientific and Technical Board was tabled in the House of Commons. This motion was allowed to lapse, after several questions designed to elucidate the position had been asked in the House, on the understanding that the functions of the scientific advisers to the Ministry of Supply would be widened as they became established. The committee is watching the position. Discussions arranged during the year dealt with the dissemination of scientific knowledge among farmers, the Industrial Health Research Board, the use of geology in wartime, pasteurization of milk and visual efficiency in factories. The secretaries of the committee have continued to issue *Science in Parliament*, which summarizes important Parliamentary proceedings relating to science and technology.

The following officers have been appointed for 1943: *President*, Lord Samuel; *New Vice-presidents*, Captain L. F. Plugge, M.P.; Professor B. W. Holman, R. B. Pilcher (Institute of Chemistry); *Chairman*, E. W. Salt, M.P.; *Vice-chairman*, Professor J. A. Crowther (Institute of Physics); *Deputy Chairman*, M. P. Price, M.P.; *Honorary Treasurer*, C. S. Garland (Institution of Chemical Engineers); *Honorary Secretary*, Dr. W. R. Wooldridge (National Veterinary Medical Association).

THE PROPOSED GEOLOGICAL UNION

F. L. AURIN, president of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, has given out the following

¹ From *Nature*.

statement in regard to a plan for the organization of a geological union:

During the present emergency the geologists and especially such organizations as the Geological Society of America, the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, the Society of Exploration Geophysicists and others have attempted to bring to the attention of the proper military and other governmental agencies the fact that these scientific and technical men have special qualifications applicable not only to military operations, but also to other operations in civilian capacities having a direct relation to essential and vital phases of the war effort. The results of all these efforts have not been entirely successful or satisfactory.

In connection with a study of this subject, we have come to several conclusions, as follows:

(1) That our greatest handicap in securing results has been the ignorance or lack of public understanding of the science of geology and related subjects and especially their application to the important military, engineering and other operations and problems connected with both the war and the peace.

(2) That in order to create an understanding of geology by the public and others concerned, it will be necessary to educate the interested public and to popularize our scientific and technical accomplishments through some medium other than those now established. If such a medium is organized and the policy carried out along the proper lines, it would be of valuable assistance in supporting the present and future efforts of the geological societies during the present emergency and also future post-war conditions and adjustments.

(3) That the proposed plan of Carey Croneis as outlined in his address, "Geology in War and Peace," before the Denver meeting of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, later published in the July, 1942, *Bulletin*, and still later amplified in his address on "Geological Warfare" before the affiliated geological societies of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, is sound, reasonable, and will fulfil the requirements of the project under consideration. In brief, Dr. Croneis proposes to form an outside organization such as an "American Geological Association" or "Geological Union" to carry out the above program. Many of the members of your society or organization are familiar with the views of Dr. Croneis, and in the event you would care to investigate the pro-