

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-

posals further, it is suggested that you read the above-mentioned address. Practically all officers and members of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists and affiliated societies are extremely interested in this project.

The American Association of Petroleum Geologists will hold its annual meeting in conjunction with the Society of Economic Paleontologists and Mineralogists and the Society of Exploration Geophysicists in Fort Worth, Texas, on April 7, 8 and 9.

With this in mind, the executive committee of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists proposes to hold a meeting from 9:00 A.M. to noon, or later, if necessary, on April 10, following the conclusion of the meeting, to discuss, plan and organize the American Geological Association (or similar title). You are, therefore, invited and urged to appoint representatives to attend this meeting so that they can give you a report on the proceedings. Even though you may not feel like delegating authority to these representatives to act in behalf of your society, you are still urged to have them present and take part in the discussion and plans.

We hope that you are in accord with our views on this matter and that we will receive your hearty cooperation. Please advise the names of your representatives, if you wish to participate in this project.

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PLANNING FOR WAR AND POST-WAR MEDICAL SERVICES

THE National Conference on Planning for War and Post-war Medical Services held on March 15 a joint meeting at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel under the auspices of the Carlos Finlay Institute of the Americas. The medical societies participating were the American Medical Association, the American College of Physicians, the American College of Surgeons, the American Drug Manufacturers Association, the American Hospital Association, the American Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association, the American Pharmaceutical Association, the American Surgical Trade Association, the Wholesale Surgical Trade Association and the National Physicians Committee for the Extension of Medical Services.

The conference was devoted to a discussion of the spread of disease as a consequence of the war, including malaria, influenza and tropical diseases. It was emphasized that malnutrition in many lands will increase further the danger of the spread of epidemic and other diseases.

The speakers at the morning session included Lieutenant Colonel Thomas T. Mackie, Army Medical School, Washington, D. C.; Professor Thomas Francis, Jr., and Dr. Lowell T. Coggeshall, both of the School of Public Health of the University of Michigan; Dr. John B. Youmans, of the School of Medicine of Vanderbilt University. Dr. James E. Paullin,

president of the American College of Physicians and president-elect of the American Medical Association, presided.

In the afternoon addresses were made by Dr. Edward C. Elliott, president of Purdue University and member of the War Manpower Commission; Colonel C. F. Shook, Army Medical Corps, and Dr. A. R. Dochez, Columbia University. Brigadier General Fred Rankin, Army Medical Corps, president of the American Medical Association, presided.

Speakers at the evening dinner-session were Nelson A. Rockefeller, coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, Washington, D. C.; Frederick P. Keppel, of New York; Norman Davis, chairman of the American Red Cross, and Dr. Morris Fishbein, editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Basil O'Connor, president of the Carlos Finlay Institute and of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, was toastmaster.

CONFERENCE ON FISHERIES

THE National Research Council called a conference on February 15 and 16 of twenty-six representatives of the scientific, administrative and commercial aspects of the fishing industry, to discuss better utilization and conservation of resources of the sea and inland waters in the war effort. The conference passed the following resolution:

A serious shortage exists in the production of food fish and fish meal (an important ingredient of certain farm animal feeds) and it is in the interest of the war effort that every means be taken to increase production, not only in the United States but also in Canada, Newfoundland and Mexico, whence the United States has formerly drawn a portion of its supplies.

The conference, in examining the question, is of the opinion that the state of affairs warrants immediate study, consideration and appropriate action by the Government of the United States, and it suggests that the sympathetic cooperation of the Governments of Canada, Newfoundland and Mexico be enlisted in the task of increasing the fisheries production of North American waters.

The conference is further of the opinion that the only way to obtain large increase in production is to provide fishing vessels, gear, crews and processing plants for increased exploitation of the great oceanic fisheries.

Lesser sources of fisheries products should also be developed and utilized to the fullest possible extent.

Increased exploitation should not be applied to species that have been demonstrably over-fished.

Evidence was presented at the conference indicating that the great oceanic fisheries, herring (including pilchard), cod and haddock, could be more heavily exploited without danger of over-fishing.