first time in history a heavier-than-air machine had on that day been successfully flown at Kitty Hawk. Thus the airplane was born. Its creators were the immortal Wright brothers, Wilbur and Orville: and its place of birth was Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

The fortieth anniversary of this epochal event, December 17, 1943, will come in the midst of the greatest war in history—a war in which the airplane will be the decisive implement of victory for democracy, decency and righteousness in the epochal struggle against aggression, brutality and slavery.

Before this global war and its tragic consequences had thrown a shadow over the face of the earth, the airplane was already revolutionizing the transportation and communications of the world. This swift messenger of peace and friendliness as between nations, this harbinger of a new world of trade and good will, had already served to bring the world closer together. In the miracle of this winged swiftness the farthest nations of the earth had been brought closer together in understanding and in commercial relationship. After the carnage of war is over and when victory is crowned, the airplane, immeasurably stimulated in its production and perfection, will prove the indispensable agency for rebuilding a disordered and mutilated world.

Under these circumstances, it is altogether fitting that the anniversary date of this world-changing event should be appropriately observed at the place of its occurrence.

Now, therefore, I, J. Melville Broughton, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby designate Friday, December 17, 1943, as Kitty Hawk Day, and do hereby call upon all citizens of North Carolina, and in so far as I may be privileged to do so all citizens of an America grateful for the achievement of the Wright brothers, to give suitable observance to this deeply significant event, and further do call upon all who are vitally connected with the airplane industry in America and upon representatives of the Army and Navy and governmental agencies to designate and delegate official representatives to attend a suitable observance of this event which will be held at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, on December 17, 1943, when and where appropriate tribute can be paid to the memory of Wilbur Wright, now deceased, and to Orville Wright, the surviving member of this world-famous partnership endeavor.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina to be affixed at Raleigh, the Capital, this the sixth day of October A.D. 1943.

J. MELVILLE BROUGHTON,
Governor

PREFERENCE RATINGS FOR LABORATORY EQUIPMENT

THE Safety and Technical Equipment Division has issued the following explanatory statement (see SCIENCE, October 22, page 358) on preference ratings for laboratory equipment of all kinds.

Blanket MRO ratings, that is, ratings which are assigned without specifying the kind and quantity of material to which the rating is applied, may not be used for laboratory equipment, according to the provisions of Priorities Regulation No. 3. This restriction applies only to finished products and not to parts and materials for repair and maintenance of existing equipment. Such parts and materials may be purchased with blanket MRO ratings.

An exception to the rule against the use of blanket ratings is that ratings assigned under Orders P-43, P-56, P-58, P-68, P-73, P-89 and P-98b may be used for laboratory equipment even though they are blanket ratings. Blanket ratings assigned by CMP Regulation 5 and 5A may not be used, however.

Persons who need ratings and are not operating under one of these "P" orders should file PD 1A applications. However, where the purchase covers items on List A of Order L-144, the rating assigned in the authorized Form WPB 1414 may be used.

In reference to Order L-144 the division pointed out that the prospective purchaser should notify his supplier when he receives WPB authorization on Form WPB 1414 and should apply the authorized preference rating. Notification should be given by sending the supplier the certification described in paragraph (d)(2) of L-144 and the authorization should be retained by the purchaser.

A SURVEY OF MEDICAL COLLEGES

WILLIAM L. LAWRENCE contributes to *The New York Times* an account of a survey of seventy-two leading American medical colleges which shows that "the severe reduction in teaching staffs and the accelerated program" have resulted in a lowering of standards in a fourth of the colleges and threaten "a serious situation in medical education."

A report on the survey, made by the executive council of the Association of American Medical Colleges, was read at Cleveland at the annual meeting of the association by Dr. Willard C. Rappleye, dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Columbia University, chairman of the council.

Dr. Rappleye stated that "Many schools report that about a third of their most active and able teachers have gone into service. Upon those remaining have fallen the tasks of carrying the instructional load and the care of patients in the wards of the teaching hospitals which in a normal academic year would be a heavy burden. But the accelerated program which requires instruction throughout the calendar year places a demand upon the staffs still in the schools which can be met only for a limited time."

According to Mr. Lawrence, nineteen of the schools reported that their staffs were now below the number necessary to provide reasonably satisfactory instruction and are greatly overworked. Many of the other

fifty-three reported that they were at their minimum and any further withdrawals for military duty or by retirement or death would mean inability to maintain their programs.

From the data and comments obtained from the inquiry the following conclusions were drawn:

(1) Any further depletion of the instructional staffs of the medical schools will result in a serious breakdown of students of medical training. Already there is a definite deterioration of the quality of instruction in one fourth of the medical schools.

(2) The qualifications and educational preparation of trainees selected and assigned to the medical schools in the future must be kept high if even reasonable standards of academic performance are to be maintained under war conditions.

(3) If the present trend continues, consideration may have to be given to possible modification of the accelerated program to maintain proper instruction of medical officers for the Army and Navy and of physicians for the civilian needs of the future.

PERSONNEL PROBLEMS IN GEOLOGY

THE Office of Scientific Personnel of the National Research Council was established in 1941 primarily to aid in solving problems of scientific and technical personnel in connection with the activities of the National Defense Research Committee. During more than two years of its existence the office has handled successfully a large number of cases, chiefly in the field of physics, but also in other fields of science and engineering. The director of the office is Dean Homer L. Dodge, of the University of Oklahoma.

The needs of the Office of Scientific Research and Development and the availability of physicists and mathematicians have changed with the progress of the war. Therefore the Office of Scientific Personnel can now give more attention to fields other than those involved in the Office of Scientific Research and Development, some of which fields are suffering manpower shortages and can profit from the methods developed in this office for handling personnel problems in critical fields. The Geological Society of America is cooperating with several other scientific organizations to maintain the Office of Scientific Personnel for the remainder of 1943 and at least several months of 1944. During this time the effective machinery that has been built up by Dr. Dodge will be available to all geologists and their employers in the adjustment of wartime personnel problems.

The work of the Office of Scientific Personnel has been chiefly of two kinds: (1) placing qualified scientific and technical workers in positions connected with the war effort, and (2) taking steps to secure the deferment of scientists and technicians who can make their best contribution to the war effort by occupying civilian positions calling for their special skills. The office can serve in the first capacity to the extent that needs for geologists are reported and available geologists register. This service will be developed to meet the demand.

With respect to deferment problems, recent developments have made it uncertain how the office can best function. In the past, Dr. Dodge has assisted employers of physicists and mathematicians by writing letters to local Selective Service boards and state directors and by advising with officials in the National Selective Service Headquarters. Out of this work developed the National Committee procedure which is described in "Activity and Occupation Bulletin," No. 35, and which Dr. Dodge had hoped would be extended to include geologists in the near future. Instead, an entirely new procedure has been developed by the War Manpower Commission to be administered by the U. S. Employment Service.

The Division of Geology and Geography of the National Research Council has appointed a Committee of Geological Personnel, of which the chairman is W. B. Heroy, who is located in Washington. The primary function of this committee will be to coordinate personnel activities of the several geological societies; Dr. Dodge's office will consult with this committee in cases affecting geologists.

The Geological Society of America will prepare mimeographed statements of further helpful information as it becomes available. Those who have specific questions not answered in the present notice should address the Secretary, Geological Society of America, 419 W. 117th Street, New York, N. Y.

TERCENTENARY COMMEMORATION OF THE INVENTION OF THE BAROMETER, 1643–1943

A TERCENTENARY Commemoration of the Invention of the Barometer was held at the University of Toronto on October 19. There were afternoon and evening meetings.

Under the patronage of the Canadian Branch of the Royal Meteorological Society, the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, the Royal Canadian Institute and the University of Toronto, two sessions were devoted to four papers indicating the origin and development of the barometer, discovered by Evangelista Torricelli in Florence in 1643.

The afternoon meeting was held in West Hall, Professor C. A. Chant presiding. The first paper was presented by Professor Louis C. Karpinski, of the University of Michigan, representative of the History of Science Society. This paper stressed the fact that Torricelli put together mentally the "force of the vacuum," 32 feet of water when the pump fails as