

here, though it is important to note that it was to Ritter to whom Scripps intrusted the task of interesting and organizing the scientific supporters of the enterprise.

To all who really knew him William E. Ritter looms large, not only as a most lovable personality but as a scientist of much originality and forcefulness. His constant interest, both in the scientific achievements and the personal welfare of the members of his staff at the Scripps Institution, was an outstanding feature of our lives throughout his term as director. Every new bit of information gathered by one of us, whatever its subject-matter, seemed to fit in some way into his framework of thought, and often as not served to illustrate some one of his favorite ideas. He was fond of discoursing with us, singly or in groups. These discourses were often stimulating. But we did not always find them easy to follow. Former President Wheeler, of the University of California, once characterized Ritter, so I am told, as "a great soul struggling for utterance." But this epigrammatic description hardly does him justice, for these "struggles" were not infrequently productive of impressive results.

FRANCIS B. SUMNER

## SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

### A GOVERNMENT TESTING LABORATORY IN SOUTH AFRICA

It is reported in *Industrial Standardization* that in order to safeguard the public and to aid in checking quality and performance of materials and manufactured products, the South African Standards Institution has recommended that a National Standards Testing and Investigational Bureau be set up by the Government. Such a bureau would act as a national standardization laboratory and would carry out or arrange for investigations and tests in connection with standardization. The institution recommended that this bureau be established by Act of Parliament as a corporate body.

The functions of the bureau would include the testing and calibration of precision instruments, gages and scientific apparatus; determining their degree of accuracy with regard to fundamental standards, and issuing certificates with regard thereto. Testing and investigations on behalf of the South African Standards Institution and others would be done either by delegating the work to approved institutions or by providing laboratory facilities. Such testing would include physical or chemical examination of materials and products and tests of their use and performance.

The bureau would also assist the South African

### DEATHS AND MEMORIALS

GEORGE STEIGER, chief chemist, retired, of the U. S. Geological Survey, died on April 18 at the age of seventy-five years. He joined the survey in 1892 and was chief chemist from 1916 to 1930.

DR. ROGER CLARK WELLS, chief chemist of the U. S. Geological Survey, died on April 19 at the age of sixty-seven years. He had been connected with the survey since 1908, succeeding Mr. Steiger as chief chemist in 1930.

ALBERT HIGGINS SLUSS, professor of mechanical and industrial engineering at the University of Kansas, died on April 17 at the age of sixty-six years.

DR. HERBERT A. CLARK, physicist of the Taylor Instrument Company at Rochester, N. Y., a former professor of physics at Syracuse University, died on April 20. He was sixty-eight years old.

A LIBERTY ship will be named for the late Dr. William E. Ritter, co-founder and honorary president of Science Service. The *S. S. William E. Ritter* will be launched early in May.

SIR ROY FEDDEN will give next month the thirty-second Wilbur Wright Memorial Lecture of the Council of the Royal Aeronautical Society, London.

Standards Institution in investigating any questions affecting the preparation of its standard specifications. It would provide facilities for testing goods, articles and materials purchased on specification to decide whether such materials comply with the specification, and would act on behalf of the Government in testing locally manufactured and imported goods with a view to determining whether the goods comply with the regulations laid down by the Merchandise Marks Act or any other act and to verify standards. It would also test manufactured products and carry out investigations and inspections to enable the South African Standards Institution and other standardizing bodies to control their marks. In addition to all this, it is suggested that the bureau could also assist the Government departments in any tests which might need to be undertaken.

### THE AMERICAN MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY

MEETINGS of the American Mathematical Society are announced for April 28 and 29 at Columbia University, and on the same dates at the Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago. On Saturday, April 29, there will be a meeting at the University of California at Berkeley.

At Columbia University, by invitation of the Pro-