

RECENT DEATHS

SELSKAR MICHAEL GUNN, vice-president since 1927 of the Rockefeller Foundation and from 1922 to 1927 director of the Paris office of its International Health Board, died on August 2 at the age of sixty-one years.

EDWARD BAUSCH, chairman of the board of the Bausch and Lomb Optical Company, Rochester, N. Y., died on July 30. He was eighty-nine years old.

A CORRESPONDENT writes: "Professor Charles Homer Baxter, head of the departments of civil and mining engineering at the Michigan College of Mining and Technology, died on July 29 after a brief illness. Professor Baxter had been head of the departments since

1927. He was a graduate of the college in the class of 1902. For many years he engaged in mining, and was superintendent of large iron-mining operations. He was the senior author of a standard work on mine examination and valuation, had served on various tax bodies and was an expert witness in the Minnesota Taxation Cases of 1935. He had also been president of the National Alumni Association of the Michigan College of Mining and of the Lake Superior Mining Institute."

DR. RAMÓN G. LOYARTE, director of the Institute of Physics of the National University of La Plata, Argentina, died on May 30.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE KRESGE-HOOKER SCIENTIFIC LIBRARY

THE original collection of books now known as the Kresge-Hooker Library was made by Samuel Cox Hooker, whose complete biography has been written by C. A. Browne.¹ Dr. Hooker was a native of England who received his Ph.D. degree from the University of Munich and then came to America with the hope of securing a position at a university. Being disappointed in his efforts, he accepted a position with the Franklin Sugar Refining Company and became a sugar chemist in 1885. After thirty years of outstanding scientific, technical and financial success in that field, he retired at the age of 51 to devote the remainder of his life to private research and the assembling of a world-famous library. During the next 20 years he had representatives in various foreign countries to help him complete his collection.

At Dr. Hooker's death in 1935, the library was catalogued and offered for sale. At the spring meeting of the American Chemical Society Dr. Charles L. Parsons announced that the library was for sale. Since the writer was to take a position at Central College the following fall he felt that this offer might present an opportunity to acquire certain additions for its library.

Mr. Sidney W. Davidson, of New York City, was the executor for the estate, and on reaching his office it was learned that the Hooker Library would not be divided. Mr. Davidson stated that he had already had offers of \$100,000 for the entire library from three different industries, but he had not accepted any of them because it had been Dr. Hooker's request that it go to some college or university, if possible, preferably in the West. The writer was able to get a 24-hour option on the library for Central College. In order that Dr. Hooker's request might be fulfilled, the

heirs of the Hooker estate contributed \$30,000, while Mr. G. A. Pfeiffer and Mr. and Mrs. Henry Pfeiffer, of the William R. Warner and Company, Inc., contributed the other \$70,000 for the purchase of the library. The Chemical Foundation paid for moving the library from New York to Central College.

Central College accepted the gift without taking time to ascertain the cost of maintaining such a library. When this cost was ascertained, it proved to be greater than the college could bear. Thereupon the writer organized the society known as the "Friends of the Hooker Scientific Library" in order, first, to create an endowment fund for keeping the library up to date, and, secondly, to form an organization through which the library might have a greater function than serving a small college. In the fall of 1940 Dr. Julian F. Smith, of the du Pont Company, was employed to help make the library more serviceable by providing translations, abstract work, searches, photo copies, etc. This organization continued until the spring of 1942, when the writer accepted the chairmanship of the Department of Chemistry at Wayne University, Detroit, Michigan, under the condition that he be permitted to attempt to transfer the Hooker Scientific Library to Wayne University.

On examination of the problem of the transfer by a committee of Detroit chemists, it was found that, in order to make the transfer on a satisfactory basis, \$200,000 would be required. The first \$100,000 would be for the purchase of the library, and the second for providing publications for which subscriptions had lapsed so that the library might once more claim the title of being the most complete one in its field in the world. Furthermore, the plan called for the maintenance of the library by Wayne University. This general plan was specifically presented to some industries outside Detroit, as well as in Detroit, with the result that five donations were quickly obtained from

¹ *Jour. Am. Chem. Soc.*, 550: 1936.