OBITUARY

HARVEY WASHINGTON WILEY

DR. WILEY was born in Kent, Jefferson County, Indiana, on October 18, 1844. His broad education was achieved in spite of the almost complete absence of early opportunities. Public schools were unknown there in his early life. In his rural community schools were supported by subscription, when available at all, and were limited to about three months during the winter season.

Until 1862, when he was eighteen years of age, his schooling consisted of four of these winter sessions. During that year he entered the preparatory department of Hanover College. During his sophomore year in college, in May, 1864, he enlisted in the Union Army and served until the end of the war. He graduated from Hanover in 1867, having given his chief attention to Latin and Greek, although it was his aim to study medicine.

In 1868, he was appointed instructor of Latin and Greek in the Northwestern Christian University, now Butler University, at Indianapolis. While occupying that position he studied at the Indiana Medical College and received the degree of doctor of medicine in 1871. The following year he was appointed professor of chemistry of the Indiana Medical College and given a year's leave of absence at his request for advanced study. This year was spent at Harvard College, where he was given the degree of bachelor of science in 1873.

In 1874, Purdue University was organized and Dr. Wiley was appointed professor of chemistry, which position he held until appointed chief chemist of the U. S. Department of Agriculture in the spring of 1883. During this period he spent a year in Europe where he had the opportunity to work with Dr. Sell, the director of the Imperial Health Laboratory at Berlin. Here he became familiar with the work of that laboratory on food analysis and particularly on the examination of sugars and syrups. On returning to Purdue he secured a small appropriation from the state legislature, which made possible a systematic examination of the sugars and syrups then on sale in Indiana. He also had some practical experience at that time in the manufacture of sorghum syrup and sugar.

The most noteworthy achievement of the first ten years of Dr. Wiley's service as chief chemist of the Department of Agriculture was probably the series of contributions made by him and his associates to the manufacture of sugar. Largely owing to his efforts, strains of beets were developed with a higher sugar content than was formerly known. Exhaustion batteries used in the manufacture of beet sugar were introduced into the cane sugar industry and led directly to the improvement of the presses of that industry to a much higher degree of efficiency. During this same period epoch-making contributions were made under Dr. Wiley's direction to the chemistry of soils and of cereals.

During the same period much attention was also given to the subject of food analysis, especially for the purpose of detecting adulterations. As a result of this work, Bulletin 13 was published, consisting of ten parts. The first part, on dairy products, was published in 1887, and the tenth part, on preserved meats, in 1902. This series of bulletins, giving the methods of analysis developed for the various products studied and the results obtained by those methods from foods purchased in the markets, afforded the best literature of that time on the subjects of food analysis and food adulteration.

During his first year as chief chemist of the Department of Agriculture, Dr. Wiley was elected president of the Association of Official Agricultural Chemists at its third annual meeting and was more active than any other member of the association while he remained in official life. At the sixth annual meeting of the Association of Official Agricultural Chemists, he was elected secretary, which position he held until he resigned from the department in 1912. He was then made honorary president of the association and addressed each meeting until the year 1929, when illness prevented him from attending the meeting.

His studies on food adulteration impressed on him the need of federal legislation which would control the purity of foods and drugs. He wrote many articles and gave many addresses on this subject. The first pure food bill was introduced in Congress in 1889. Various bills were introduced after that time, but manufacturing interests succeeded in preventing their passage for a period of seventeen years. Finally in 1906, the Food and Drugs Act, written by Dr. Wiley, was passed by Congress and signed by the President. Its passage and perhaps its approval by the President were the results of a tremendous popular demand which was due undoubtedly to the personal influence of Dr. Wiley.

His life was militant and, perhaps, spectacular. He had many enemies as a result of his intense activity in behalf of legislation for the public good. Largely because of the same activity, his friends were beyond number. Intensely partisan, he retained the respect and admiration of the most bitter opponents of his policies. Although the center of a series of storms during his long and active life, his buoyant

wit and humor averted many a threatened clash and won many victories.

He had the faculty of applying his fertile mind intensely and worked rapidly. When a period of work was over he was able to dismiss it entirely from his mind. He was an ardent baseball fan and, in fact, was interested in sports of all kinds. His kindly interest in their welfare endeared him to his associates. A keen student of human nature, he was a prince of good fellows. He loved a good story, and always told a better one. He was a patron of literary and musical events of his community.

He owned the third automobile in Washington and always claimed to have met with the first accident, in which he encountered the first "hit-and-run" driver, who, however, drove a team of horses and not an automobile. His experience at Purdue University led him into several embarrassing situations because of his tendency to vary from accepted traditions. During that period, for instance, charges were preferred against him for donning a uniform and playing baseball with the boys and also for riding a bicycle while wearing knee breeches.

His activities were not, by any means, limited to his duties as chief chemist of the Department of Agriculture. Before and after his resignation from that department he published a series of books, which alone were sufficient for a man's life work. He was elected president of the American Chemical Society in 1893 when it numbered some four hundred members. He remained president for two years, when largely because of his activities the membership of the society had increased to over a thousand. During this period he presided at the World's Chemical Congress which met at the Chicago Exposition in 1893.

After his resignation from the Department of Agriculture in 1912, he wrote a chapter for each issue of *Good Housekeeping* and conducted a correspondence bureau for that magazine until January 1 of the present year. During the first seven years after his resignation from the department he also lectured in Chautauqua circles. Then, because of failing eyesight and defective hearing, he gave up regular lecturing.

In 1921 the cataracts which were forming in his eyes reached the stage which required operation. For a time he was unable to read; always after that he read with difficulty. His hearing had become impaired. These limitations lessened his diversions but increased the constancy and earnestness of his work. He continued to publish books, to write his regular chapter for *Good Housekeeping* and to conduct an extensive correspondence bureau. He continued to participate in public hearings relating to a wide range of popular interests. Within a month before his death he participated in two public hearings relating to the enforcement of the Food and Drugs Act.

To the public Dr. Wiley was best known as the "father of the pure food law." Those who knew more intimately the position he achieved in the field of science, both at home and abroad, the breadth of his vision, the courage of his character and the scope of his interest in all questions relating to the public welfare recognized in him a leader among leaders—a man whose death on the thirtieth of June was an international loss.

W. D. BIGELOW

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE SIXTEENTH INTERNATIONAL GEOLOGICAL CONGRESS

REPRESENTATIVES of the principal geological groups in the United States have selected a committee on organization for the next meeting of the International Geological Congress which will be held in the United States in 1932. The officers of the committee so far chosen are: Honorary president, Herbert Hoover, President of the United States; chairman of the committee, Professor Waldemar Lindgren, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; general treasurer, Professor Edward B. Mathews, the Johns Hopkins University; general secretary, W. C. Mendenhall, U. S. Geological Survey; assistant secretaries, H. G. Ferguson and M. I. Goldman, U. S. Geological Survey. The members of the committee are as follows.

L. K. Armstrong, Spokane, Washington; Dr. H. Foster Bain, American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers; Professor A. M. Bateman, Yale University; Dr. C. P. Berkey, Columbia University; Dr. Eliot Blackwelder, Stanford University; Dr. Isaiah Bowman, American Geographical Society; H. A. Buehler, State Geological Survey, Missouri; Professor R. A. Daly, Harvard University; Dr. A. L. Day, Geophysical Laboratory, Carnegie Institution; E. DeGolyer, New York City; C. A. Fisher, Denver, Colorado; H. G. Ferguson, U. S. Geological Survey; M. I. Goldman, U. S. Geological Survey; President W. O. Hotchkiss, Michigan College of Mining and Technology; Arthur Keith, National Research Council; Dr. H. B. Kummel, State Geological Survey, New Jersey; Professor H. Landes, University of Washington; Professor A. C. Lawson, University of California; Dr. C. K. Leith, University of Wisconsin; Professor Waldemar Lindgren, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Professor E. B. Mathews, the Johns Hopkins University; W. C. Mendenhall, U. S. Geological Survey; Professor R. A. F. Penrose, Jr., Philadelphia; Dr. Sidney Powers, Amerada Petroleum Corporation, Oklahoma; W. E. Pratt, Humble Oil and Refining Com-