mond, dean of engineering, the Pennsylvania State College, *vice-chairman,* representing the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education; G. M. Butler, dean of engineering, University of Arizona, representing American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers; Ivan C. Crawford, dean of engineering, University of Kansas, representing the American Society of Civil Engineers; P. H. Daggett, dean of engineering, Rutgers University, representing the National Council of State Boards of Engineering Examiners; A. B. Newman, College of the City of New York, representing the American Institute of Chemical Engineers; A. A. Potter, dean of engineering, Purdue University, representing the American Society of Mechanical Engineers; D. B. Prentice, president of the Rose Polytechnic Institute, and J. R. Killian, Jr. of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Dean Potter has been chosen chairman of the 1939–40 committee. J. W. Barker, dean of engineering, Columbia University, succeeds Dean Hammond on the committee and E. L. Moreland, dean of engineering, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, replaces Dr. Compton. President R. E. Doherty, of the Carnegie Institute of Technology, succeeds Dean Daggett on the committee.

THE FRANCIS AMORY SEPTENNIAL PRIZE OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

IN compliance with the provisions of the will of the late Francis Amory, The American Academy of Arts and Sciences, as trustee of a fund given by the testator, announces a prize to be known as "The Francis Amory Septennial Prize" to be awarded for conspicuously meritorious work performed during the immediately preceding septennial period, "through experiment, study or otherwise, in the treatment and cure of diseases and derangement of the human sexual generative organs in general, and more especially for the cure, prevention or relief of the retention of urine, cystitis, prostatis, etc." While the donor wished especially to reward the discovery of any new method of treatment, he expressly authorized that the prize might be given to any author who might have contributed any theoretical or practical treatise of extraordinary or exceptional value and merit on the anatomy of said organs or the treatment of their diseases.

If there shall appear work of a quality to warrant it, the first award will be made in 1940. The total amount will exceed $10,000, which may be divided at the discretion of the academy among several nominees. While formal nominations are not expected and no essays or treatises in direct competition for the prize are desired, the committee invites suggestions looking toward the wise performance of their duty. Communications on this subject should reach the committee not later than May 15, 1940, and should be addressed in care of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 28 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass., U. S. A. The members of the committee on the Francis Amory Septennial Prize are: Dr. Roger I. Lee, *chairman;* Dr. Walter B. Cannon, Dr. David Cheever, Professor Leigh Hoadley, Dr. William C. Quinby, Dr. E. E. Tyzzer and Dr. Soma Weiss, secretary.

A ZOOLOGICAL EXPEDITION OF THE FIELD MUSEUM

A ZOOLOGICAL expedition of the Field Museum of Natural History, sponsored and personally led by Leon Mandel, of Chicago, will sail from Havana in January on Mr. Mandel's yacht *Buccaneer* for a cruise to out-of-the-way cays, islands and rocks in the Caribbean Sea. Birds, mammals and reptiles will be collected, and fishes and other marine creatures will be sought in the surrounding waters. The scientific staff of the expedition plans also to make ecological studies of several species in the exotic fauna of the tropic American region to be visited. This is the fourth expedition Mr. Mandel has conducted for the museum. Rudyerd Boulton, curator of birds, and D. Dwight Davis, assistant curator of anatomy and osteology, who will accompany the expedition, have left for Havana. Mr. Mandel will also take an active part in the collecting, and another collector will be Captain William Gray, of Palm Beach. Mr. Boulton will concentrate his efforts chiefly on birds, and Mr. Davis will specialize in reptiles. Both will also seek desirable specimens of mammals and of oceanographic material, and will assist Mr. Mandel and Captain Gray in the collecting of fishes. Other members of the party include Mrs. Mandel and her mother, Senora Elvira Panerai.

Included in the itinerary are such places as Swan Island, a small possession of the United States; the Bay Islands, which belong to the republic of Honduras; Glover's Reef, Half Moon Cay, Turneffe Cay, Chinchorro Bank, Cozumel Island, Holbox Island and the Triangles—three large rocks in the Gulf of Mexico. The ship will also call at the Mexican port of Progreso, at which time a trip inland will be made to Yucatan's famous Maya archeological site at Chichen Itza. The expedition is expected to complete its work and return to Havana about the middle of February.

Among the objectives of the expedition is the collection of various specimens needed for a new hall of fishes in preparation at the museum. Efforts will be made to harpoon a large devilfish, a species of ray known as manta, which has a fin spread of twelve feet or more in fully developed individuals. An especially equipped fishing launch will be used for work in waters not navigable by the larger vessel. Two-way radio-telephone communication will be maintained be-

tween ship and launch. Specimens will be sought of large game fishes such as marlin, and attempts will be made to study their life history.

Many of the islands and cays to be visited have been incompletely explored biologically. Some of them are known to be inhabited by species and sub-species of birds and reptiles different from those of the adjacent mainland, and it is hoped that the expedition may be able to contribute to the further knowledge of an area which is of special interest to science.

SOIL CONSERVATION

DR. W. C. LOWDERMILK, assistant chief of the Soil Conservation Service, has recently returned from an extended survey of the experience of older countries in the use of land as it relates to soil erosion, soil and water conservation and torrential flood control. His studies took him into Europe, including Great Britain, Holland, France, Italy, Algeria, Tunisia, Lybia, Egypt, Palestine, Trans-Jordan, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon. The war interrupted the course of the survey, which was to have continued through Turkey, Bulgaria, southern Germany and Switzerland and return.

The survey was made in overland travel by auto, including nearly 27,000 miles. It included conferences with more than 120 scientists, agriculturists and government officials, the examination and study of 124 areas of special interest, the collection of soil samples, particularly profiles dated by archeological evidence and the taking of some 3,500 illustrative photographs. Of special interest to American agriculture are evidences of an advanced degree of refinement in measures to control and conserve storm waters and to control erosion of a productive agriculture during the Roman epoch 2,000 years ago in Northern Africa and in ancient Syria. After the destruction of the Roman civilization and the traditions of agriculture by conquering nomad peoples, former measures of water and erosion control fell into disuse and were broken down. Soil erosion then began its damaging work and throughout this area has generally washed off soils from the slopes, sorting erosional débris and carrying the finer fractions out to the sea and spreading the coarser fractions over old alluvium on the valley floors. Increased torrential run-off from the bared slopes produces torrential streams, and is cutting gullies through the alluvium of the valley floors. This in short is the predominant process at work in the old lands south and east of the Mediterranean Sea, except in the broad alluvial plains of the Nile and Mesopotamia. Agricultural possibilities of to-day are restricted principally to the alluvium of lodged soils in the valley floors and outwash plains and in the improved management of vast grazing areas, where drought and famine have been the chief controls. It is possible to reforest the hill and mountain lands in Algeria, in Palestine and Syria, particularly where the country rock is limestone and to restore or to improve the productivity and prosperity of these wasted areas.

THE MINNEAPOLIS MEETING OF THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA AND ASSOCIATED SOCIETIES

THE Geological Society of America is meeting this week in Minneapolis. Many sections of the United States and Canada are represented, and the attendance was expected to reach five hundred. The principal universities, colleges, state and federal geological surveys of Canada and the United States planned to send delegates. Three associated societies—the Paleontological Society, the Mineralogical Society and the Society of Economic Geologists are meeting in conjunction with the Geological Society.

According to the preliminary program Dr. T. Wayland Vaughan, of Washington, D. C., president of the Geological Society, gave the address of the president on Thursday, December 28. His subject was "The Ecology of Modern Marine Organisms with Reference to Paleogeography." Earlier on Thursday Professor R. W. Chaney, of the University of California at Berkeley, retiring president of the Paleontological Society, addressed the several societies on "Tertiary Forests and Continental History." The title of the address of Professor E. S. Moore, of the University of Toronto, retiring president of the Society of Economic Geologists, was "Genetic Relations of Gold Deposits and Igneous Rocks in the Canadian Shield."

A general meeting of the four societies was held on Thursday morning. In the afternoon the sessions of the Geological Society were devoted to a discussion of structural geology; of the Paleontological Society to a discussion of new fossils; and of the Mineralogical Society to a discussion of crystal structure and textures. Papers read before the Economic Geologists were concerned with ground water supply and other applications of geology to the field of non-metallic resources. The technical sessions of the different societies were continued on Friday. On that day, in addition to the general session of the Geological Society, two joint sessions were held, one with the Paleontologists and one with the Mineralogists and Economic Geologists. Technical sessions were planned for Saturday morning, after which the meeting will close with an open house and tea at the Pillsbury Hall of the University of Minnesota.

OFFICERS OF THE AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

DR. WILLIAM LLOYD EVANS, head of the department of chemistry of the Ohio State University, has been elected president of the American Chemical Society for 1941. He will take office as president-elect on January