var Bush, president of the Carnegie Institution of Washington and director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development.

THE meeting of the Philosophical Society of Washington on October 11 was devoted to the eclipse expedition of 1940 of the National Geographic Society and the National Bureau of Standards. The titles and authors of the papers presented were: "The Design and Construction of Eclipse Apparatus," by Dr. Irvine C. Gardner, of the National Bureau of Standards; "Contact Times of the 1940 Eclipse, Determined from Photographs of the Partial Phases," by Paul A. McNally, S.J., of Georgetown University; "Sky Brightness at Patos, Brazil, during Twilight and during the Total Solar Eclipse of 1940," by Dr. E. O. Hulburt, of the Naval Research Laboratory; "The 1940 Flash Spectrum," by Dr. C. C. Kiess, of the National Bureau of Standards (by invitation); "Radio Observations of the Ionosphere at the 1940 Eclipse in Brazil," by Theodore R. Gilliland, of the National Bureau of Standards (by invitation), and "The Story of the Expedition in Colored Motion Pictures," by R. H. Stewart (by invitation).

THE first seminar for Teachers of the History of Pharmacy was held at Madison, Wis., on July 28 and 29, under the auspices of the American Institute of the History of Pharmacy. It is intended to make this an annual feature of the institute. Special periods of the history of pharmacy and their teaching will be made the subjects of seminars, the individual topics being assigned in so far as possible to specialists in the fields concerned. Dr. Arthur H. Uhl, director of the department of pharmacy of the University of Wisconsin, president of the institute, assigned the task of determining the place and the general topic of the next seminar to a committee consisting of Drs. R. D. Bienfang, E. J. Ireland, C. O. Lee, *chairman,* Minnie M. Meyer and Dr. George Urdang.

The Harvard Alumni Bulletin reports that during the summer the work of the Harvard Public Health Unit and of the American Red Cross-Harvard Hospital, under the direction of Dr. John E. Gordon, of the Harvard Medical School, assisted by many other appointees of the staff, has proceeded rapidly. On September 22, the hospital, outside the old cathedral town of Salisbury, was formally opened to patients and the admission buildings and one ward became available. In addition to these, the laboratory is now completed and ready for research work, which has been going on since mid-January. The hospital will consist of 22 units in all, with accommodations for 126 patients—including laundry, laboratory, kitchen and quarters for the personnel. The buildings occupy an area of approximately fifteen acres.

AN Associated Press dispatch states that the Fish and Wildlife Service has apportioned $2,530,000 among the forty-eight states for restoration of wildlife under the Pittman-Robertson act. The Federal Government pays 75 per cent. of the cost of projects and the states 25 per cent. With the state contributions, the wildlife work will cost $3,373,333. The largest appropriation was allotted to Michigan, which will receive $143,946. Texas was second, with $132,716; Pennsylvania, third, $130,083; New York, fourth, $120,204, and California, fifth, $111,800. Apportionments are based on the number of licensed hunters and the area of each state. The service reported that two states, Georgia and Nevada, had failed to adopt cooperative legislation and could not obtain the apportionment funds until they did.

DISCUSSION

THE ZOOLOGICAL MUSEUM AT TRING

ZOOLOGY in Britain has been fortunate in enlisting the interests of men who not only possessed wealth, but were themselves keen students of animal life. The Biologia Centrali-Americana, issued by Godman and Salvin, contributed enormously to our knowledge of the life of the lands south of us, though of course incomplete in the light of what we know to-day. At Tring, in Hertfordshire, Lionel Walter, Lord Rothschild, founded a splendid museum, devoted principally to birds and Lepidoptera. I visited it several years ago, and was shown over the place by Dr. K. Jordan, who works on fleas and certain beetles, as well as Lepidoptera, and is one of the keenest entomologists of his time. I was amazed at the collections and the elegant way in which they were displayed; thus the drawers of butterflies have glass below as well as above, so that one only has to turn the drawer over to see the undersides of the wings. The arrangements for study, with perfect lighting, are also very noticeable, so that when Dr. Jordan said I should be welcome to work there, I regretted that circumstances would make this impossible, and that moreover the collections did not include the subjects of my studies.

Then there came a time when the Tring Museum was the occasion of serious criticism. There had been a sort of tacit understanding that the great collection of birds would some day go to the British Museum, which had in fact neglected to secure various species which were known to be at Tring. Rothschild, for financial reasons, decided that he must sell his study collection of birds, and without even giving the British

Museum a chance to bid on it, disposed of the whole to the American Museum in New York. If it had to go abroad, there was certainly no place so suitable, and recent publications show how valuable it has been to American students. In the collection were the type specimens of a number of subspecies of birds peculiar to the British Islands, their description resulting from the critical (some would say hair-splitting) studies of recent times. The authorities of the American Museum, to the gratification of all concerned, presented these British specimens to the British Museum.

In spite of these causes of discontent, Lord Rothschild, who came to greatly regret having parted with the birds, wished to associate himself with the British Museum, and when he died, willed the whole institution to that Museum, to be kept up as a research center for zoologists. There was some discussion as to the acceptance of this gift, with its necessary obligations, but most zoologists warmly supported the proposal and the trustees took on the Tring Museum as a branch of the British Museum of Natural History. The advantages are many. There are the buildings and the great collections, with excellent facilities for work. The situation, distant from London, avoids the dreadful fogs of the metropolis, and (as was not then thought of) the danger from enemy bombs. It is possible, at Tring, to work in peace, without the innumerable interruptions which are unavoidable at the British Museum. Thus the place is a veritable haven of refuge and will undoubtedly contribute more and more to zoological science.

In Rothschild's day, it was found difficult or impossible to publish the numerous papers resulting from the work of the museum in the ordinary scientific journals. There was accordingly established a periodical called Novitates Zoologicae, which has now reached the forty-second volume. I am glad to see that the British Museum is keeping this going, and a bulky part of 180 pages, dated October, 1940, is now before me. It consists entirely of a monographic revision of the Mexican water beetles of the family Elmidae, by Dr. H. E. Hinton, of the British Museum. It must be admitted that not many of us are vitally interested in Mexican water beetles, as such, but the work is of wider value than its title would suggest. For example, Hinton has specially investigated the internal anatomy of his beetles, something an entomologist hardly ever does. He finds that the internal organs throw considerable light on taxonomic problems. Thus the genus *Cylloepus* is found to consist of two very distinct groups, which are treated as different genera. The beetles, without dissection, are easily separated by the presence or absence of a certain patch of tomentum, but ordinarily this would not be thought of as a generic character. The larvae are also described at considerable length, and the larval characters contribute to the system of classification. There is an interesting discussion of the problem of description. It is pointed out that it is impracticable and undesirable to enumerate all the characters of an insect, but at the other extreme, too short descriptions, even if they suffice to separate the insects from other known species, may fail utterly when numerous new species are discovered. Thus there has to be a middle-of-the-road policy, and the successful describer is he who knows his group, and can judge of the characters likely to prove important. The Mexican Elmidae have been so little known that all the species seen by Hinton have been described by two men only, 14 by Dr. David Sharp and 23 by Hinton. Many more undoubtedly remain to be discovered.

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ALCAPTONURIA IN A NEGRO FAMILY

ALCAPTONURIA is an outward manifestation of a very rare anomaly of protein metabolism in which homogentisic acid is excreted in the urine. This defect in body chemistry is hereditary and appears to be a rare recessive character in the Mendelian sense. Its mode of incidence is remarkably similar to that of albinism. Its presence, however, is not as strikingly apparent as is that condition. The error in metabolism is present from birth and persists throughout life.[1]

Comparatively few instances of alcaptonuria have been reported in this country. Of approximately 122 cases in the literature in 1929, only 17 occurred in the United States, the majority having been reported from European countries.[2] At the present time only 21 of the total number of recorded cases were reported in this country. As the condition is most often recognized by accident, undoubtedly more alcaptonurics exist than the records show.

Alcaptonuria in the American Negro has never been reported. We know that albinism exists among Negroes. Nothing, however, is known of the existence in this race of the other, less obvious, inborn errors of metabolism.

It is the purpose of this article to report the occurrence of alcaptonuria in two children of a Negro family. Fig. 1 is a diagram of the members of the family investigated. None but the two children was affected. The girl (D), 8 years old, was recognized during a routine examination in the out-patient clinic as a probable alcaptonuric from the atypical reduction of Benedict's solution given by her urine. On

[1] A. E. Garrod, "Inborn Errors of Metabolism," 2nd Edition, London, 1923.

[2] E. S. Bagnall, *New Eng. Jour. Med.*, 201: 422, 1929.