

### E. B. Wilson (1856-1939)

ONE of the most distinguished of pioneer experimental embryologists, Edmund Beecher Wilson was born in Geneva, Illinois, a hundred years ago on October 19, 1856. He was educated at Antioch College, Ohio, at the Sheffield Scientific School, Yale, and at Johns Hopkins University, where he obtained the Ph.D. in 1881. In 1885 he became professor of biology at Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania. After spending a year in Europe, where he worked with Theodor Boveri at Munich and with Hans Driesch and C. Herbst at the Naples Zoological Station, Wilson was invited by Henry Fairfield Osborn in 1891 to take the post of adjunct professor in the newly established Department of Zoology at Columbia University, New York; he was appointed Da Costa professor of zoology there in 1914. In his first important work, "The Development of *Renilla*" (*Phil. Trans. Roy. Soc.*, 1883), he made skilled use of serial sections, which were just coming into practice. "The Cell Lineage of *Nereis*" (1892) aroused the interest of American workers in this field of research. In 1901 Wilson showed that accessory asters (T. H. Morgan's "cytasters") form in fertilized *Sphaerechinus* eggs under the influence of hypertonic sea water. From 1903 onwards he concentrated his attention on the chromosomes, particularly on their behaviour during the maturation of the germ-cells, and one of his graduate students, W. S. Sutton, pointed out that the manoeuvres of the chromosomes furnish the mechanism for Mendel's two laws of heredity. Wilson's book, "The Cell in Development and Heredity" (1896, third ed. 1925), rapidly became a classic. Of the numerous honours that he received it may be mentioned that he was a foreign member and Croonian Lecturer of the Royal Society, gold medallist of the Linnean Society, and president of the New York Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine. A scientist who combined to a remarkable degree artistic workmanship with balanced judgment, and a quiet, cultured gentleman, Wilson died on March 3, 1939, at the age of eighty-three.

### L. G. Groves Memorial Prizes and Award

THE L. G. Groves Memorial Prizes and Award, given annually from a grant of money placed at the disposal of the Air Ministry in 1946 by Major Keith Groves, J.P., and Mrs. Groves, of Maughold, Isle of Man, in memory of their son, Sergeant Louis Grimble Groves, a meteorological observer who lost his life on a weather flight in 1945, have been awarded this year as follows: *L. G. Groves Prize for Aircraft Safety*: Wing Commander F. Latham, of the R.A.F. Institute of Aviation Medicine, for research into the physiological factors involved in the abandonment of aircraft and in particular the effects of explosive ejection upon the human body; *L. G. Groves Prize for Meteorology*: F. H. Bushby, senior scientific officer, Meteorological Office, Dunstable, where as a member of the forecasting research team of the Napier Shaw Laboratory, Dunstable, he has worked with marked success on dynamical problems and especially on the applications of the equations of fluid dynamics to forecasting, using electronic computing machines; *L. G. Groves Award for Air Meteorological Observers*: Flight Sergeant J. D. Moyes, for meritorious work while serving as an air signaller on meteorological duties with No. 202 Squadron, having completed

some 220 meteorological flights totalling nearly 2,000 flying hours.

### Proposed Expansion of the La Jolla Campus of the University of California

AT a meeting of the Regents of the University of California, held in Berkeley last August, it was decided to expand the University's campus at La Jolla, near San Diego in southern California, including also the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at La Jolla which has been a part of the University since 1912. The Regents agreed that the expansion should take place gradually over a period of years and that it should be based on the growth of the existing facilities at La Jolla for undergraduate instruction and advanced work in mathematics, physics, chemistry and the earth and biological sciences. In this way it is hoped that the rapidly increasing human and material resources of the southernmost part of California will be more fully marshalled for the betterment not only of the University but also of the State of California and the United States generally. In welcoming the new plan, the director of the Scripps Institution, Dr. Roger Revelle, said that the expansion of the University's activities in the San Diego region can be expected to bring great material and cultural benefits to every part of the community; the development will necessarily have to be carried out carefully and slowly, and generous private endowments and ample public funds will be necessary.

### Siemens-Ediswan Research Laboratories

PLANS have recently been made for new Siemens-Ediswan Research Laboratories which will serve the research activities of Siemens Brothers and Co., Ltd., and of Edison Swan Electric Co., Ltd., the scope of the work being the whole field of telecommunications and various aspects of cable research. It has been decided to erect a group of buildings on a 3½-acre site at Harlow, at the junction of Edinburgh Way and No. 1 Avenue. The first stage of the building plan, which it is hoped to complete in two years, includes three single-story laboratories and one three-story block containing entrance hall, conference room, lecture room and library, as well as laboratories and offices. This will provide accommodation for a total staff of 100-150. Later stages are envisaged in which the three-story building will be increased to five stories, the single-story buildings will be increased to two, and at least three additional structures will be erected. It is not proposed to concentrate the whole of the research staff at Harlow. Sections of the Laboratories will continue to operate near the main factories at Woolwich, Sunderland and Lydbrook. Dr. G. W. Sutton, director of research and education, Siemens Brothers, Woolwich, has been appointed director of the new laboratories.

### Land Utilization of Cyprus

GEOGRAPHICAL Publications, Ltd., have published a Land Utilization Map of Cyprus in the World Land Use Survey, directed by Dr. L. D. Stamp. The map constitutes an excellent record of the use made of the Island's land about 1949 and, unless great changes are made quickly, it is likely to stand for several years more. The generalizations necessitated by the use of a short key and by the scale of the map (4 miles to 1 inch) tend to simplify the picture unduly, and it says much for the ingenuity displayed in the preparation of the map, for it is not an easy matter to determine the land use and plot the data from a study

of about 10,000 air photographs. Those who know Cyprus will be aware of the meaning to be attached to such mixed categories as "tree and other perennial crops with unimproved grazing land"; but those who do not are liable to draw incorrect conclusions unless they have been forewarned. The Island's land is about equally divided between crop land and unimproved grazing land and forest together, which says much for the persistence and patience of the Cypriots who cultivate the land, often with simple implements, and also for the work of the Forestry Department which has been enabled, by legislation and other methods, to do so much for the re-establishment of the forests. Changing age-old methods of cultivation and overcoming fragmentation of holdings makes the Agricultural Department's task more difficult. The map is well produced, and clearly printed so that detail can be seen without difficulty.

### Distribution of Mistletoe

A SHORT account of the way mistletoe is distributed is given by D. J. Cove in *The Starfish*, the journal of the Association of School Natural History Societies (No. 9; July 1956). The inquiries started in the Bishop's Stortford district and have now developed into a national survey. Tentative conclusions show that mistletoe is mainly found in old trees and indicate that man, rather than birds, is the chief agent in distribution. On the larger trees, mistletoe tends to grow near the apex of the crown, or towards the sides, where it is beyond the easy reach of man. One possible explanation for this, which does not involve man, is that the light is too weak in the centre of the tree for photosynthesis in mistletoe to take place. Another explanation is that the birds distributing the seeds tend to frequent the outer parts of the tree's canopy. It is evident from the records submitted that, although *Viscum* grows on a wide range of hosts, distribution through this range is very uneven. Of the thirteen families involved, the Rosaceae alone account for nearly 70 per cent of the infested plants; and apple trees are the commonest hosts by far (42 per cent). Records of host-plants which are particularly worth noting include *Parrotia*, silver fir and, in view of its association with mistletoe at the festive season, holly. In spite of all that one reads about the attention paid by Druids to mistletoe growing on oak, only a single case of an infested oak has been reported. The present survey has produced some circumstantial evidence in support of the existence of 'strains' differing in the range of hosts they infest. More records will be needed before firm conclusions can be made about the validity or otherwise of these 'strains'.

### New Zealand Forest Service: Report for 1954-55

THE annual report of the Forest Department of New Zealand, covering the period April 1954-March 1955 (pp. 103. Wellington: N.Z. Forest Service, 1955), commences by commenting on the remaining indigenous forests of the country which, after being completely ignored during the great exotic coniferous campaign of the earlier years of this century, have been receiving attention for some years. They are sylviculturally necessary as an insurance against widespread devastation of the exotic forests by disease or fire, in addition to being a source of invaluable specialist timber. A long-term objective for this indigenous forest is to bring as much as possible as soon as possible into a state of greatest productivity. Until recently, it was considered that

conservation was best served by complete control of the indigenous cut. This has proved impracticable. The approach is now to be sylvicultural, and this is of considerable interest. The area is to be regenerated, artificially or naturally, with the main native forest timber species—the kauri, the podocarps and the beeches. Practice in Queensland, Australia, and research in New Zealand offer evidence that kauri can be artificially established as a productive crop. The good conifers have been subject to intensive study, and new management methods begun. The beech forest, so long neglected, shows great promise under management, and beech timbers are now widely used and respected. An interesting introduction is a Forest Biology Survey for the purpose of detecting population build-ups of any forest organism; thus outbreaks of insects or disease may be dealt with in their early stages.

### Zoological Nomenclature

THE International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature will start to vote, as from February 24, 1957, on the following cases involving the possible use of its plenary powers, full details of which have already been published (*Bull. Zool. Nom.*, 12, Pts. 6-8; August 24, 1956): (1) *alligator* Blumenbach, 1779 (*Lacerta*), suppression, to protect *mississippiensis* Daudin [1801-1802], (*Crocodilus*) (cl. Reptilia); (2) *Campsicnemus* Haliday, 1851, validation (cl. Insecta, order Diptera); (3) *Elaphella* Bezzi, 1913, and *Lophiotherium* Gervais, 1850, validation (cl. Mammalia); (4) *verrucosa* Sars, 1901 (*Alona*), validation (cl. Crustacea, order Cladocera); (5) *Candona* Baird, [1846], designation of type species for and *Herpetocypris* (emend. of *Erpetocypris*) Brady and Norman, 1899, validation (cl. Crustacea, order Ostracoda); (6) *Conchoecia* (emend. of *Conchaecia*) Dana, 1849, validation of and designation of type species for (cl. Crustacea, order Ostracoda); (7) *Anchisauripus* Lull, 1904, and *Otouphepus* and *magnificus* (*Otouphepus*), both of Cushman, 1904, suppression (cl. Reptilia Theropoda [Ichneutes]). Comments should be sent as soon as possible to the secretary to the Commission, Francis Hemming, 28 Park Village East, Regent's Park, London, N.W.1.

### Folk-Lore

THE note in *Nature* of September 8, p. 522, on *Gwerin*, the new journal of folk-lore, ends with the sentence: "There is, indeed, room for a journal devoted to folk-lore, and all will wish the new venture every success". It has been pointed out to the Editors that this might give the impression that *Gwerin* is the only periodical devoted to folk-lore. This, of course, is not the case, for the periodical *Folk-Lore*, the quarterly journal of the Folk-Lore Society (c/o University College, Gower Street, London, W.C.1), has been in existence since 1878 and is still an excellent publication (often referred to in *Nature*) which deals with every aspect of folk-belief, tradition, custom and folk-lore research both in Great Britain and elsewhere.

### Oversea Service Division, Colonial Office

THE following appointments have recently been made in the Oversea Service Division, Colonial Office: H. Bailey (agricultural officer, Gambia), agricultural officer, Northern Region, Nigeria; J. D. A. Harris (agricultural officer, Sierra Leone), senior agricultural officer, Western Region, Nigeria; H. P. Burgess (conservator of forests, Western Region, Nigeria),