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*"To the solid ground
Of nature trusts the Mind that builds for aye."*—WORDSWORTH.

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3662	January 6	1-42
3663	" 13	43-80
3664	" 20	81-118
3665	" 27	119-160
3666	February 3	161-198
3667	" 10	199-236
3668	" 17	237-274
3669	" 24	275-318
3670	March 2	319-360
3671	" 9	361-398
3672	" 16	399-436
3673	" 23	437-474
3674	" 30	475-524
3675	April 6	525-562
3676	" 13	563-600
3677	" 20	601-638
3678	" 27	639-680
3679	May 4	681-718
3680	" 11	719-756
3681	" 18	757-794
3682	" 25	795-832
3683	June 1	833-870
3684	" 8	871-908
3685	" 15	909-946
3686	" 22	947-984
3687	" 29	985-1030

BIBLIOTEKA
 Instytutów Chemicznych
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 we WROCŁAWIU

Nr. Inw. 2166.

INDEX

NAME INDEX

- Abbe (Ernst), (1840-1905), The Origin of a Great Optical Industry, 89
- Abelin (Prof. I.), Thyroid Gland and Potassium Metabolism, 935
- Abraham (E. P.) and E. Adler, Two Distinct Diaphorases, 517
- Adam (Dr.) and Dr. Leloup, East Indian Gastropods, 229
- Adams (Dr. F. D.), The Birth and Development of the Geological Sciences (*Review*), 478
- Addison (Prof. H.), A Text-Book of Applied Hydraulics. Second edition (*Review*), 141
- Adler (E.), [E. P. Abraham and], Two Distinct Diaphorases, 517
- Adriance (G. W.) and Prof. F. R. Brison, Propagation of Horticultural Plants (*Review*), 762
- Agar (W. O.), [T. L. Eckersley, S. Falloon, F. T. Farmer and], Wireless Propagation and the Reciprocity Law, 222
- Aitken (Dr. A. C.), Statistical Mathematics (*Review*), 1010
- Albert (Prof. A. A.), Structure of Algebras (*Review*), 498
- Aldrich (J. W.) and D. C. Nutt, Birds of Newfoundland and Colour Modification, 352
- Alexander (Dr. R. A.), [J. H. Mason, J. D. W. A. Coles and], Cultivation of Bluetongue Virus in fertile Eggs produced on a Vitamin-deficient Diet, 1022
- Allechin (J. P.), [Dr. J. Newton Friend and], Blue Rock-salt, 266
- Allee (Prof. W. C.) and Prof. A. J. Finkel, Early Development of *Arbacia punctulata*, 560
- Allen (C. W.), Photometry of the Solar D Lines, 353; Electric Potential Gradient of the Lower Atmosphere, 903
- Allen (G. M.), Bats (*Review*), 811
- Allen (Prof. H. S.), The α , β Transformation of Quartz, 306; and R. S. Maxwell, A Text-Book of Heat. 2 parts (*Review*), 86
- Allsopp (Dr. C. B.), Photo-Oxides of Carcinogenic Hydrocarbons, 303
- Almy, Fuller and Kinzer, Fluorescence of Diacetyl, 468
- Alston (Mrs. G.), Gift to the Royal Aeronautical Society for a Peter Alston Memorial Prize, 931
- Amyot (Lt.-Col. J. A.), [death], 291
- Anderson (B. W.) and C. J. Payne, Kornerupine from Ceylon: a New Occurrence, 266
- Anderson (P. J.), Control of Tobacco Mildew, 786
- Andrews (H. I.), awarded the Herbert Jackson Prize of the L.M.S. Railway, 302
- Andross (Miss Mary), Cooking of Eggs, 789
- v. Angerer (Prof. E.), Wissenschaftliche Photographie: Eine Einführung in Theorie und Praxis. Zweite Auflage (*Review*), 142
- Angus (Dr. W. Rogie), Chemical Applications of Spectroscopy (*Review*), 568
- Appleyard (R.), The History of the Institution of Electrical Engineers (1871-1931). (*Review*), 914
- Arakawa (Dr. H.), [Dr. Y. Nishina, Y. Sekido, H. Simamura and], Cosmic Ray Intensities and Cyclones, 703
- Arber (Dr. Agnes), The Colouring of Sixteenth-Century Herbs, 803
- d'Arboville (Prof. R.), Lighting of Underground Traffic and Pedestrian Routes, 22
- Arctowski (Prof. H.), Work of, 544
- Ardlt (Prof. T.), Die Entwicklung der Kontinente und ihrer Lebewelt, ein Beitrag zur vergleichenden Erdgeschichte. Zweite auflage. Band I (*Review*), 497
- Armstrong (A. Leslie), Palaeolithic Man in the North Midlands (Wilde Memorial Lecture), 78
- Armstrong (Dr. E. F.), Sir Francis Goodenough, 178; Enzymes (*Review*), 204; Sir Gilbert T. Morgan, 252; Hydrocarbons (*Review*), 442; Evolution and Fats (*Review*), 839; Sir Jocelyn Thorpe, 1001
- Arnold (Nicholas), [death], 653
- Arrol (Dr. W. J.), Change of Ultra-Violet Transparency of Glass with Temperature, 861
- Aschoff (L.), E. Küster and W. J. Schmidt, Hundert Jahre Zellforschung (*Review*), 875
- Ashbridge (Sir Noel), Long-Distance Broadcasting, 194
- Ashby (Dr. M.), Tung Oil, 738
- Astbury (Dr. W. T.) and Florence O. Bell, Molecular Structure of the Collagen Fibres, 421
- Asundi (Prof. R. K.) and Dr. B. K. Vaidya, Flame and Arc Spectra of some Calcium and Strontium Salts, 224
- Atkins (O.), The Wild Dryland Blueberry (*Vaccinium vacillans* Kalm) and Soil Conservation, 458
- Attems (Dr. Graf), Myriapoda 3, Polydesmoidea II, Fam. Leptodesmidae, Platyhachidae, Oxydesmidae, Gomphodesmidae (*Review*), 87
- Attia (Rizk), Temperature of Grain Heaps, 711
- Audus (L. J.), Effect of Rubbing on Leaf Respiration, 555
- Aykroyd (Dr. W. R.), Nutritive Value of Rice, 522
- Ayres (Prof. Q. C.) and Prof. D. Scoates, Land Drainage and Reclamation. Second edition (*Review*), 815
- Azmy Pasha (S.) and A. F. Zanaty, Disease and Race, 98
- Bach (S. J.), Formation of Urea, 193
- Baddar (Fawzy Ghali), Benzantrones, 822
- Bagley (Dr. S. B.), elected President of the Society of Glass Technology, 666
- Bagster (Prof. L. S.), [death], 964
- Bailey (Dr. K.), A Crystalline Albumin Component of Skeletal Muscle, 934
- Baillie (Sir James), [death], 925
- Baird (Douglas Heriot), [obituary article], 133
- Baird (Prof. L.), Applied Aerodynamics. Second edition (*Review*), 686
- Baker (Sir Benjamin), Centenary of the Birth of; Work of, 505
- Baker (Prof. B. B.) and Prof. E. T. Copson, The Mathematical Theory of Huygens' Principle (*Review*), 531
- Balfe (W. P.), Mutarotation of Gelatin, 429
- Ball (E. Bruce), Influence of the Mechanical Mind on the Development of Irrigation through the Ages, 717
- Ball (Dr. J.), Geography of Egypt, 75
- Ball (W. W. Rouse), Mathematical Recreations and Essays. Eleventh edition, revised by Dr. H. S. M. Coxeter (*Review*), 444
- Banerjee (S.), P. B. Sen and Prof. B. C. Guha, Urinary Excretion of Combined Ascorbic Acid in Pulmonary Tuberculosis, 706
- Banerji (Prof. A. C.), Development of Galactic Dynamics and some Allied Problems, 469
- Banerji (Dr. S. K.), Seismological Data from India, 193
- Banks (Dr. T. E.), [Dr. R. S. Krishnan and], A new type of Disintegration produced by Deuterons, 777; Fission of Uranium and Thorium under Deuteron Bombardment, 860
- Banks (W. H.), [Dr. C. Ockrent and], Surface Potential Changes of Thin Films in the Transformation Liquid to Solid, 861

- Bárány (E.), [Prof. J. Runnström, E. Sperber and], Cozymase in Adrenalectomized Rats, 106
- Barber (D. R.), Sensitometry of Photographic Material used in Astronomy, 787
- Barker (Prof. A. F.), Undercoat of the Platypus, 186
- Barkley (Dr. F. A.), Keys to the Phyla of Organisms, including Keys to the orders of the Plant Kingdom (*Review*), 494
- Barlee (J. S.), [Prof. H. H. Dixon and], Transpiration into a Saturated Atmosphere, 352
- Barling, Bart. (Sir Gilbert), [obituary article], 735
- Barnes (Dr. H. F.), The Chrysanthemum Midge, 74
- Barrer (Dr. R. M.), Diffusion in Palladium, 898
- Barrett (Sir James), Scope and Limitations of Physical Anthropology, 261
- Barrois (Prof. Charles), [obituary article], 884
- Barton (Dr. A. W.), A Text Book on Light (*Review*), 141
- Bates (G. L.), [obituary article], 291
- Bates (Dr. G. R.), Growth Behaviour of Plants following Seed Treatment by Organic Mercury Compounds, 262
- Bates (Prof. L. F.), The Domain Theory of Magnetization (*Review*), 606; and J. C. Weston, Energy Changes Accompanying Magnetization, 188; Thermal Expansion of Invar, 550
- Bawden (Dr. F. C.), Plant Viruses and Virus Diseases (*Review*), 122; Virus Research (*Review*), 483; and N. W. Pirie, Purification of Insect-transmitted Viruses, 632
- Bawn (Dr. C. E. H.), The Hydrogen Bond, 846
- Bayon (Dr. H. P.), *Trotula* and the Ladies of Salerno, 507
- Beadle (D. G.), Depth of focus of Microscope Objectives, 1018
- Beadnell (Surgeon Rear-Admiral C. M.), The Mass of the Universe, 549
- Beare (Sir Thomas Hudson), [death], 925; [obituary article], 1002
- Beck (Prof. W. A.), and R. A. Joly, A Pigmented Nucleus, 226
- Becker (Prof. R.), and Dr. W. Döring, Ferromagnetism (*Review*), 606
- Beede (Prof. J. W.), [death], 542
- Beijerinck (W.), *Calluna*: a monograph on the Scottish Heather (*Review*), 1005
- Belinfante (F. J.), Theory of Heavy Quanta (*Review*), 500
- Bell (Florence O.), [Dr. W. T. Astbury and], Molecular Structure of the Collagen Fibres, 421
- Bell (G. H.), Making of Lantern Slides, 145
- van Bemmelen, Origin of Lake Toba, North Sumatra, 230
- Benedicks (Prof. C.), and P. Sederholm, First Benedicks Effect in Gas-free Mercury, as Influenced by the Mean Temperature, 148, 666
- Beneš (Dr. Eduard), Democracy: To-day and To-morrow (*Review*), 439
- Benfield (A. E.), Heat Flow in the Earth's Crust, 230
- Berenblum (I.), Dr. E. Chain and N. G. Heatley, Carbohydrate Metabolism of Tumours, 778
- Bergey (D. H.), R. S. Breed, E. G. D. Murray and A. P. Hitchens, *Bergey's Manual of Determinative Bacteriology*: a Key for the Identification of Organisms of the class Schizomycetes. Fifth edition (*Review*), 498
- Bertram (J.), [R. Maxted and], Daytime Lighting of Blacked-out Factories, 928
- Besredka (Prof. A.), [death], 542; [obituary article], 617
- Bessemans (Prof. A.), awarded the Jensen prize of the Paris Academy of Medicine, 66
- Best (R. J.), Some Effects of Salicylate on Plant Viruses, 627
- Betts (Miss A. D.), and D. Morland, Origin of the Frow Remedy for Acarine Disease of Honey Bees, 824
- Beutner (Prof. R.), Life's Beginning on the Earth (*Review*), 277
- Bhabha (Dr. H. J.), Classical Theory of Point Dipoles, 819
- Bhāradwāja (Prof. Y.), Aspects of the Myxophyceae, 519
- Bhatnagar (Prof. S. S.), appointed director of Scientific and Industrial Research by the Government of India, 968
- Białobrzeski (Prof. Czeslav), [death], 19; [obituary article], 132
- Bielschowsky (Prof. A.), [death], 492
- Bienfait (Dr. H.), Selective Oxidation of Aluminium Alloys, 190
- Biett (Dr. Laurent Théodore), centenary of the death of; work of, 342
- Biggs (B. S.), [A. H. White, W. S. Bishop, S. O. Morgan and], Molecular Rotation in Organic Crystals, 596
- Binns (Asa), elected president of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, 346
- Bishop (W. S.), [A. H. White, B. S. Biggs, S. O. Morgan and], Molecular Rotation in Organic Crystals, 596
- Biswas (Dr. K.), The Royal Botanic Garden, Calcutta, 959
- Bjerknes (Dr. J.), awarded the Symons gold medal of the Royal Meteorological Society; work of, 19
- Blackadder (Prof. W.), [death], 886; [obituary article], 925
- Blackett (Prof. P. M. S.), Guthrie Lecturer of the Physical Society; work of, 292; Cosmic Rays: Recent Developments (Guthrie lecture), 343
- Blackwell (Sir Ernley), elected an honorary member of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, 736
- Blackwood (Miss B.), Sir Hubert Murray, 453
- Blair (Dr. G. W. Scott), and F. M. V. Coppen, Subjective Judgments of 'Firmness' in Elastic and Viscous Materials, 425
- Blakeslee (Dr. A. F.), elected president of the American Association; work of, 341; [H. E. Warmke and], Doubling the Chromosomes of *Nicotiana*, 74
- Blanc (A. C.), Fossil Man of Monte Circeo, Italy, 631
- Blank (F.), [Prof. A. Frey-Wyssling and], Growth of Protoplasm and Nitrogen Migration in the coleoptile of *Zea Mays*, 974
- Blanshard (Prof. B.), *The Nature of Thought*. 2 vols. (*Review*), 798
- Blaschko (Dr. H.), Amine Oxidase and Benzedrine, 26
- Bleek (Miss Dorothea F.), More Rock-Paintings in South Africa: from the Coastal Belt between Albany and Piquetberg. Mainly copied by Joyce and Mollie van der Riet (*Review*), 992
- Blumenbach (Johann Friedrich), centenary of the death of; work of, 63
- Blyton (W. J.), *Brave New World Planning*, 966
- Boas (Prof. F.), *Race, Language and Culture* (*Review*), 951
- Bonacina (L. C. W.), *Landscape Meteorology and its Reflection in Art and Literature*, 22; *Snowfall in the Winter of 1939-40*, 554
- Bonhoff (Prof. H.), [death], 618
- Bonner (J.), [J. English, A. J. Haagen-Smit and], *Wound Hormones of Plants*, 353
- Booth (F.), [A. H. Wilson and], Large Cosmic Ray Showers and Mesons, 103
- Booth (H. S.), and F. C. Mericola, Thionyl Chlorofluoride, 786
- Børgesen (F.), *Algæ from the Iranian Gulf*, 674
- Bork (Prof. W. F.), [death], 1011
- Born (Prof. Max), Aspects of Theoretical Physics (*Review*), 528; Prof. Otto Toeplitz, 617; Relation between Breaking and Melting, 741; and K. Fuchs, The Mass Centre in Relativity, 587; 933
- Borst (Prof. Max), awarded the Goethe medal for Art and Science, 146
- Bosch (Dr. C.), [death], 695
- Bose (Prof. D. M.), and Miss Biva Chowdhry, Photographic Plates as Detectors of Mesotron Showers, 894
- Bose (Prof. S. R.), Moisture-relation as a determining factor in the transformation of the Basidia of certain Polyporaceae, 706; Effect of Inversion of a small piece from the Fruit-body of *Ganoderma lucidus* (Leys.) Karst. growing *in situ* on the trunk of *Casuarina equisetifolia*, 899
- Bottomley (A. C.), and Dr. S. J. Folley, Inactivation of Prolactin by treatment with Phenyl Isocyanate, 304
- Boulenger (Prof. C. L.), [death], 805; [obituary article], 962
- Bowie (R. M.), [R. S. Morse and], A New Ionization Gauge, 712

- Boylard (Dr. E.), The British Empire Cancer Campaign, 246; Metabolism of Tumours, 513; [Prof. A. C. Chibnall, M. W. Rees, E. F. Williams and], Glutamic Acid of Proteins, 311
- Boys (Sir Charles Vernon), Electric Clocks (*Review*), 326
- Boza-Barducci (Prof. T.), and R. M. Madoo, Relationship of *Gossypium Raimondii* Ulbr., 553
- Braddick (Dr. H. J. J.), Cosmic Rays and Mesotrons (*Review*), 141
- Brade-Birks (Rev. S. Graham), Systematics of Millipedes (*Review*), 87
- Bradford (D. C.), appointed seismologist at Pittsburgh University, 892
- Bradford (F. C.), [Prof. V. R. Gardner, H. D. Hooker, Jr. and], The Fundamentals of Fruit Production. Second edition (*Review*), 530
- Bradford (Dr. S. C.), Sir Charles Hagberg Wright, 491
- Bragg (Sir William), History of the Vacuum Flask, 408
- Brahma (Prof. N. K.), Causality and Science (*Review*), 1009
- Brahmachari (Sir Upendranath), Antimony Treatment of Kala-azar, 546; Chemistry of Urea Stibamine, 1021
- Brain (E. D.), Transverse distribution of Hormones in Plants, 316
- Branly (Prof. E.), [death], 492; [obituary article], 580
- Brash (J. G.), A Text-book of Agriculture: designed for use in East African Schools (*Review*), 1003
- Brauer (G.), Oxides of Niobium, 903
- Braun (W.), Development of Aristapedia, 902
- Breder, jun. (C. M.), [E. B. Gresser and], Eye of a Blind Cave Fish, 1025
- Brett (C. C.), [W. A. R. Dillon Weston and], Seed Disinfection, 824
- Breuil (Abbé H.), The Stone Age of Mount Carmel (*Review*), 837; translated by Miss M. E. Boyle, Bone and Antler Industry of the Choukoutien Sinanthropus Site, 904; Rock-Paintings in South Africa (*Review*), 992
- Briggs (A.), awarded the universities prize of the Royal Asiatic Society, 259
- Brightman (R.), Design in National Life (*Review*), 82; The Relation of Science to Democracy (*Review*), 439; Economic Warfare (*Review*), 724; Location of Industry (*Review*), 916
- Brimble (L. J. F.), A School Course of Biology: with suggestions for Practical and Field Work (*Review*), 205
- Brinton (H. P.), H. E. Seiffert and Elizabeth S. Frasier, Illness in Meat Packing Industry, 419
- Brison (Prof. F. R.), [G. W. Adriance and], Propagation of Horticultural Plants (*Review*), 762
- Brochant de Villiers (André-Jean Marie), centenary of the death of, 736
- Brode (Prof. W. R.), Chemical Spectroscopy (*Review*), 568
- Brogger (Prof. W. C.), [death], 414; [obituary article], 652
- de Broglie (Maurice, Duc), elected a foreign member of the Royal Society; work of, 851
- Bronk (Dr. D. W.), appointed managing editor of the *Journal of Cellular and Comparative Physiology*, 740
- Bröns (Dr. J.), The Blind Spot of Mariotte, 383
- Brooks (Dr. Matilda N.), Sulphanilamide and Glucose Antidote, 707
- Brown (Dr. G. Burniston), Fundamentals of Classical Electric and Magnetic Theory, 789
- Brown (Dr. H. Bates), Cotton: History, Species, Varieties, Morphology, Breeding, Culture, Diseases, Marketing and Uses. Second edition (*Review*), 280
- Brown (Dr. J. Coggin), Geological Research in China (*Review*), 169
- Brown (Prof. R. N. Rudmose), Mineral Resources, 232
- Brown (Dr. R. W.), A Fossil Link between North America and Asia, 751
- Bruce (A. K.), [T. Hornbuckle and], H. Akroyd Stuart and the Oil Engine, 97
- Bruce (Dr. G. M.), History of Artificial Eyes, 546
- Buchanan (Sir George), [death], 653
- Buchanan (J.), [Dr. E. G. V. Percival and], Carrageen Mucilage, 1020
- Buchler (Dr. J.), Charles Peirce's Empiricism (*Review*), 1010
- Bullard (Dr. E. C.), Geophysical Study of Submarine Geology, 764
- Bullen (K. E.), The Earth's Interior, 599
- Bullough (Dr. W. S.), and Dr. R. Carrick, Male Behaviour of the Female Starling (*Sturnus v. vulgaris*, L.) in Autumn, 629
- Bulman (Dr. O. M. B.), Graptolithina (*Review*), 1004
- Bunker (J. W. M.), R. S. Harris and L. M. Mosher, Irradiation of 7-Dehydrocholesterol, 865
- Burdon (Prof. K. L.), Medical Microbiology (*Review*), 813
- de Burgh (Prof. W. G.), Principles and Practice of Education (*Review*), 241
- Burington (Prof. R. S.), and C. C. Torrance, Higher Mathematics: with applications to Science and Engineering (*Review*), 659
- Burkill (I. H.), Notes on the Genus *Dioscorea* in the Belgian Congo (*Review*), 494
- Burnet (Dr. Etienne), made a Commander of the Legion of Honour, 183
- Burt (D. R. R.), appointed professor of zoology in Colombo University College; work of, 292
- Burton (Prof. E. F.), J. Hillier and A. Prebus, The Electron Microscope at Toronto, 942
- Burton (Dr. M.), [Prof. G. K. Rollefson and], Photochemistry and the Mechanism of Chemical Reactions (*Review*), 609
- Burt (late B. D.), A Field Key to the Savanna Genera and Species of Trees, Shrubs and Climbing Plants of Tanganyika Territory, 750
- Bush (Dr. Vannevar), Science and War, 143
- Busi (Prof. A.), [death], 179
- Buxton (Prof. P. A.), The Louse: an account of the Lice which Infest Man, their Medical Importance and Control (*Review*), 723
- Caclamano (D.), Nature in the Classics (*Review*), 641
- Cadman (C. H.), Graft Blight of Lilac, 230
- Calder (W. A. S.), [death], 60
- Callender (R.), Remagnetizing Magnets used in D.C. Meters, 903
- Camm (G. L.), Sun's Speed of Galactic Rotation, 230
- Campbell (Prof. J. W.), The Nature of Time, 426
- Candler (J. L.), Developments in Electric Surge Recording, 982
- Cansdale (J. H.), Development of the Battery Vehicle, 457
- Cardoso (H. T.), [H. I. Cole and], Chaulmoogra Oils, 310
- Carington (W. W.), and S. G. Soal, Experiments in Non-Sensory Cognition, 389
- Carpenter (Prof. G. D. Hale), Destruction of Cabbage White Butterflies by Birds, 900
- Carpenter (Sir Harold), awarded the Honda prize of the Japan Metallurgy Society, 509, 736
- Carrick (Dr. R.), [Dr. W. S. Bullough and], Male Behaviour of the Female Starling (*Sturnus v. vulgaris*, L.) in Autumn, 629
- Carrington (H.), Laboratory Investigations into Psychic Phenomena (*Review*), 501
- Carrington (N.), The Shape of Things: an introduction to Design in Everyday Life (*Review*), 82
- Carter (H. J.), [obituary article], 962
- Casson (S.), The Discovery of Man: the Story of the inquiry into Human Origins (*Review*), 809
- Cattell (Owen), [death], 735
- Caullery (Prof. M.), Les progrès récents de l'embryologie expérimentale (*Review*), 952
- Cave (C. J. P.), Chalk Landscape, 629
- Chabanaud (Dr. P.), Temporary Preservation of Animal Specimens, 397
- Chadwick (H. Munro), and N. Kershaw Chadwick, The Growth of Literature (*Review*), 761
- Chadwick (Prof. J.), [Dr. C. F. Powell, A. N. May, T. G. Pickavance and], Excited States of Stable Nuclei, 893
- Chadwick (N. Kershaw), [H. Munro Chadwick and], The Growth of Literature, Vol. 3 (*Review*), 761
- Chain (Dr. E.), [I. Berenblum, N. G. Heatley and], Carbohydrate Metabolism of Tumours, 778

- Chakravarti (S. N.), and others, Some Indian Origins in the Light of Astronomical Evidence, 38
- Chalklin (Dr. F. C.), conferment upon, of the title of reader in physics by London University, 523
- Chalmers (B.), The Physical Examination of Metals. Vol. 1 : Optical Methods (*Review*), 660
- Chambers (Prof. R. and E. L.), Arrest of the Fertilization of the Egg in *Arbacia*, 560
- Chambers (W.), Air Conditioning, 270
- Champion (H. G.), appointed professor of forestry in Oxford University; work of, 19
- Chapman (Prof. S.), Terrestrial Magnetism and Electricity (*Review*), 47; Lunar Tides in the Atmosphere, 257
- Chapman (Dr. V. J.), Practical Science in Schools, 1023
- Chatfield (Lord), Utilization of Scientific Research during War, 143; Planning of Research, 399
- Chatley (Dr. H.), Terminal Velocities, 64; Sirius and the Constellation of the Bow, 670
- Chatterjee (Dr. S. P.), Geography in National Planning, 471
- Chattopadhyay (K. P.), Measurement of the Nasion in the Living, 674
- Chaudhuri (Dr. H.), Nitrogen Fixation in the Rice-Field Soils of Bengal, 936
- Chen (Sicien H.), [Y. Zia and], Fruit Flies of Northern China, 595
- Chessum (A. S.), [death], 925
- Chibnall (Prof. A. C.), M. W. Rees, E. F. Williams and Dr. E. Boyland, Glutamic Acid of Proteins, 311
- Chick (A. C.), Recent Trends in Earthquake Insurance, 633
- Childe (Prof. V. Gordon), Archaeology in the U.S.S.R., 110
- Childs (Dr. W. H. J.), and Dr. H. A. Jahn, Infra-Red Spectra and the Structure of Molecules, 646
- Chopra (B.), Stomatopoda from the John Murray Expedition, 750
- Chopra (Col. Ram Nath), elected an honorary member of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, 736
- Chowdhry (Miss Biva), [Prof. D. M. Bose and], Photographic Plates as Detectors of Mesotron Showers, 894
- Christian (Dr. Jules), centenary of the birth of; work of, 415
- Christie (A. L. M.), Effect of X-rays on *Drosophila subobscura*, 113
- Chung (Pei Wen), The Upper Cave Industry of Choukoutien, 904
- Churcher (B. G.), and A. J. King, Limitation of Transformer Noise, 1029
- Cicardo (V. H.), and J. A. Moglia, Liberation of Potassium from Muscle by Acetylcholine, 551
- Ciucca (M.), Totaguina, 458
- Claremont (C. A.), Spanning Space (*Review*), 281
- Clark (Dr. Austin H.), The Eighth American Scientific Congress, 918
- Clark (A. M. S.), and G. Buckland Smith, Looking at Life : an Introduction to Biology (*Review*), 136
- Clark (D.), [H. M. Powell, Dr. A. F. Wells and], Crystal Structure of Phosphorus Pentachloride, 149; [H. M. Powell and], Crystal Structure of Phosphorus Pentabromide, 971
- Clark (J. D.), [H. B. S. Cooke and], Rostro-carinates in Africa, 902
- Clark (R. H.), Some Early Burrell Engines, 345
- Clark (Prof. W. E. Le Gros), The Relationship between Pithecanthropus and Sinanthropus, 70; The Nerve of the Pineal Gland, 349; The Phylogeny of Man, 981
- Clarke (R. W. B.), The Economic Effort of War (*Review*), 724
- Clarke (S. H.), and C. B. Pettifor, Influence of Cell Wall Composition on the Moisture Relations of Hardwood Timbers, 424
- de Cleene (Prof. N.), African Native Institutions and Christianity, 181
- Cleve (Per Theodor), centenary of the birth of; work of, 216
- Clifford (Miss), [Miss C. A. Simpson and], A Neolithic Trackway, 153
- Clouston (Sir Thomas Smith), centenary of the birth of; work of, 619
- Cluver (Dr. E. H.), appointed director of the South African Institute for Medical Research, 1015
- Coates (W. A.), Type Tests in Engineering, 597
- Cochrane (Dr. W.), [Prof. G. P. Thomson and], Theory and Practice of Electron Diffraction (*Review*), 367
- Coe (Prof. C. J.), Theoretical Mechanics : a Vectorial Treatment (*Review*), 141
- Coghlan (H. H.), Prehistoric Copper and some Experiments in Smelting, 310
- Cohen (Dr. J. L.), Relationship of Crime and Intelligence (*Review*), 876
- Cole (G. D. H.), J. A. Hobson, 770
- Cole (H. A.), Effect of the Severe Winter of 1939-40 on British Oyster Beds, 976
- Cole (H. I.), and H. T. Cardoso, Chaulmoogra Oils, 310
- Coleman (O. H.), [D. W. Robertson and], Linkage studies in Barley, 827
- Coles (J. D. W. A.), [J. H. Mason, Dr. R. A. Alexander and], Cultivation of Bluetongue Virus in fertile Eggs produced on a Vitamin-deficient Diet, 1022
- Colson (Dr. Barbara), appointed lecturer in botany in Reading University, 523
- Conant (Prof. J. B.), revised with the assistance of Dr. Max Tishler, The Chemistry of Organic Compounds : a Year's Course in Organic Chemistry (*Review*), 202
- Connelly (Dr. W.), E. S. Harkness, 253
- Conrad (G. M.), [W. K. Gregory and], Black and the Striped Marlin, 555
- Cook (Prof. J. W.), Cancer-producing Chemical Compounds, 335; Carcinogenic Colouring Matters, 672; Prof. E. L. Kennaway and N. M. Kennaway, Production of Tumours in Mice by Deoxycholic Acid, 627
- Cooke (H. B. S.), and J. D. Clark, Rostro-carinates in Africa, 902
- Coppen (F. M. V.), [Dr. G. W. Scott Blair and], Subjective Judgments of 'Firmness' in Elastic and Viscous Materials, 425
- Copson (Prof. E. T.), [Prof. B. B. Baker and], The Mathematical Theory of Huygens' Principle (*Review*), 531
- Corcoran (Prof. G. F.), [Prof. H. R. Reed and], Electrical Engineering Experiments : Theory and Practice (*Review*), 658
- Corder (P.), and Rev. Thomas Romans, Excavations at the Roman Town at Brough, 1937, 272
- Cornish (Dr. Vaughan), The Scenery of Sidmouth : its Natural Beauty and Historic Interest (*Review*), 1006
- Cosyns (M. G. E.), Barometric Co-efficient of Extensive Cosmic Ray Showers, 668
- Cott (Dr. H. B.), Adaptive Coloration in Animals, 949
- Cotter (Dr. G. de P.), Geology of India (*Review*), 88; The Indian Peninsula and Ceylon (Regionale Geologie der Erde, Band 1, Absch. 6) (*Review*), 725
- Cottingham (E. T.), [death], 492; [obituary article], 653
- Cotton (A. D.), [A. Grove and], A Supplement to *Elwes' Monograph of the genus Lilium*. Seven parts (*Review*), 913
- Coventry (A. F.), Conservation in Canada, 967
- Cowan (J. M.), A Rhododendron Complex, 978; Edinburgh Royal Botanic Garden, 1014
- Cox (Dr. L. R.), Life and Work of William Smith, Father of English Geology, 299
- Crabtree (Dr.), Substances which modify Carcinogenic Action, 785
- Craig (J.), elected president of the Iron and Steel Institute, 548
- Craik (K. J. W.), Origin of Visual After-Images, 512
- Crane (M. B.), and D. Lewis, Classification of Pears, 942
- Crawford and Balearres (Earl of), [obituary article], 413
- Crawford (O. G. S.), awarded the Victoria medal of the Royal Geographical Society, 665
- Crew (Prof. F. A. E.), awarded the Keith prize of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, 385
- Critchley (Dr. M.), The Language of Gesture (*Review*), 814
- Crompton (Col. R. E. B.), [death], 291; [obituary article], 377
- Crosby (J. L.), High Proportions of Homostyle Plants in Populations of *Primula vulgaris*, 672

- Crowfoot (Dr. Dorothy), Crystalline Enzymes (*Review*), 990
- Crowther (Dr. C.), Live Stock Policy during War-time, 284
- Crowther (G.), The Sinews of War, 505; Economics of War Costs, 830
- Crowther (Prof. J. A.), Fun and Physics (*Review*), 567; The Progress of Physics (*Review*), 797
- Croxall (H. E.), and L. Ogilvie, Growth Hormones in Seed Dressings, 516
- Cruess (Prof. W. V.), Commercial Fruit and Vegetable Products (*Review*), 530
- Cruikshank (Dr. Ethel M.), Chemical Composition of the Egg, 788
- Curie-Joliot (Madame Irene), [Prof. F. Joliot and], awarded the Barnard gold medal of Columbia University, 666
- Curran (S. C.), and J. E. Strothers, Bombardment of Nitrogen and Oxygen with Protons, 224
- Dadswell (Mrs. I. W.), Plant Foods of Australian Aborigines, 966
- Dahlberg (Prof. G.), Statistical Methods: for Medical and Biological Students (*Review*), 1010
- Dakin (Prof. W. J.), Humpback Whales off West Australia, 783
- Daldy (Ysabel), Food Production without Artificial Fertilizers, 905
- Dale (W. M.), Effect of X-Rays on Carboxypeptidase, 977
- Damodaran (Dr. M.), and B. V. Ramachandran, Amino-Acids of Casein Phosphopeptide, 857
- Danby (C. J.), Photolysis of Acetaldehyde, 940
- Dannatt (Dr. C.), appointed professor of Electrical Engineering in Birmingham University, 1013
- Darby (H. C.), The Draining of the Fens (*Review*), 649; The Medieval Fenland (*Review*), 649
- Darken (L. S.), [B. Saxton and], Ionization Constants of Weak Acids, 979
- Darling (Dr. F. Fraser), A Naturalist on Rona: Essays of a Biologist in Isolation (*Review*), 810
- Darlington (Dr. C. D.), Sex-chromosomes in Cimex, 113; Pure Experiment (*Review*), 477; Irregular Division of the Centromere, 942; Linkage Group in the Sweet Pea, 1025
- Darwin (Dr. C. G.), Rutherford (*Review*), 314; Thermodynamics and the Lowest Temperatures (Kelvin Lecture), 954
- Das (Prof. B. K.), Air-breathing Fishes, 519
- David (Prof. W. T.), and B. Pugh, Latent Energy and Dissociation in Flame Gases, 896
- Davidson (Rev. Dr. M.), Can Christianity Survive? (*Review*), 329
- Davies (G. M.), Geology of London and South-East England (*Review*), 497
- Davies (Dr. W. L.), The Chemistry of Milk. Second edition (*Review*), 657
- Davis (S. J.), Filterable Viruses, 467
- Davis (T. W.), J. E. Ricci and C. G. Sauter, Solvent effect on Solubility, 310
- Davison (Dr. C.), [death], 695; [obituary articles], 805
- Davison (Dr. C. J.), Electron Diffraction (*Review*), 367
- Dawe (E. A.), Paper and Its Uses: a Treatise for Printers, Stationers and others. Vol. I. Fourth edition; Vol. 2: Samples of Papers and Boards (*Review*), 327
- Dawson (T. R.), B. D. Porritt, 340
- Day (Dr. H. G.), [Prof. E. V. McCollum, Dr. Elsa Orent-Keiles and], The Newer Knowledge of Nutrition. Fifth edition (*Review*), 816
- Day (M. F.), Neurosecretory Cells in the Ganglia of Lepidoptera, 264
- Deacon (Dr. G. E. R.), Carbon Dioxide in Arctic and Antarctic Seas, 250
- De Donder (Prof. T.), La Chimie Mathématique. Vol. I (*Review*), 528
- Deer (Dr. W. A.), [L. R. Wager and], Petrology of the Skaergaard Intrusion, Kangerdlugssuag, East Greenland, 197
- De La Warr (Earl), Evacuation and the Schools, 254
- Delf (Dr. M.), Relationships of the Fucals, 637
- Delsman (Dr. H. C.), Preliminary Plankton Investigations in the Java Sea, 41
- Dennison (Prof. S. R.), The Location of Industry and the Depressed Areas (*Review*), 916
- Deoras (P. J.), Comparative Morphology and Evolutionary Trends in Trichoptera, 976
- Desai (M. H.), [P. F. Garthwaite and, and others], Biology of Parasites of Teak Defoliators, 710
- Desch (Dr. C. H.), retirement from the National Physical Laboratory, 101; work of, 134
- Desgrez (Prof. A.), [death], 254; 735
- Deulofeu (Dr. V.), E. Duprat and R. Labriola, Acetyl content of Marinobufagin, Arenobufagin and Acetylmarinobufagin, 671
- Devine (Sir Hugh), acceptance of the honorary fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, 146
- Dhar (Prof. N. R.), Carbohydrate Manuring, 632
- Dickens (Dr. F.), and Dr. H. Weil-Malherbe, Carbohydrate Metabolism of Tumours, 779; Metabolism of Tumours, 512
- Dicker, (G. H. L.), Biology of Rubus Aphides, 978
- Dickson (Lovat), Half-Breed: the Story of Grey Owl (Wa-Sha-Quon-Asin) (*Review*), 165
- Diettert (R. A.), Interylary Cork, 34
- Dikshit (Rao Bahadur K. N.), Scope of Prehistoric and Anthropological work in India, 520
- Dillon (Prof. T.), and P. O'Colla, Acetolysis of Carrageen Mucilage, 749
- Dingemane (E.), A Colour Reaction of Diethylstilbœstrol (4,4' dihydroxy- α , β -diethylstilbene), 825
- Dingle (Prof. H.), Red-Shifts in Nebular Spectra and Scientific Practice, 224; The Nature of Time, 427; Relativity of Time, 626
- Dixon (Prof. H. H.), and J. S. Barlee, Transpiration into a Saturated Atmosphere, 352
- Dixon (Prof. S. M.), [death], 542
- Dixon (Dr. T. F.), Food Research, 451
- Dodds (Prof. E. C.), awarded the Cameron prize of Edinburgh University, 385
- Dodds (Prof. G. S.), The Essentials of Human Embryology. Second edition (*Review*), 569
- Dodge (B. O.), Genetical Investigation in Neurospora, 309
- Doke (Rev. C. M.), Bantu Lexicography, 192
- Dole (M.), and R. L. Slobod, Oxygen Isotopes in Rocks and Ores, 751
- Doljanski (Prof. L., and Dr. R. S. Hoffman), Cancer Cell and Growth-regulating System of the Body, 857
- Doniach (I.), and J. C. Mottram, Photodynamic Hemolysis by 3:4-Benzopyrene, 748
- Döring (Dr. W.), [Prof. R. Becker and], Ferromagnetismus (*Review*), 606
- van Dorp (Dr. D. A.), [Dr. H. G. K. Westenbrink and], Cause of the 'Activation' of the Carboxylase System by Free Aneurin, 465
- Dörpfeld (Prof. Wilhelm), [obituary article], 804
- Downie (R. A.), James George Frazer: the portrait of a Scholar (*Review*), 1004
- Dowson (J. E.), [death], 133
- Dowson (Dr. W. J.), Identity of the Bacterium causing Potato Blackleg, 263
- Doyle (Prof. J.), Gynospore Formation in *Sequoia sempervirens*, 900
- Drennan (Prof. M. R.), Prehistoric Peoples in South Africa, 394
- Drinkwater (J. W.), Sir Owen Richardson and W. E. Williams, Precision Measurements in the Hydrogen Spectrum, 1026
- Drumm (Dr. P. J.), and W. F. O'Connor, Pigments of Sponges, 425
- Drummond (D. G.), Anisotropy of Cellulose Sheet, 67
- Drummond (Prof. J. C.), Margarine, 53; 60; McCollum's Newer Knowledge of Nutrition (*Review*), 816
- Dry (Dr. F. W.), P. R. McMahon and J. A. Sutherland, A Mendelian situation in the Birthcoat of the New Zealand Romney Lamb, 390
- Duckworth (Dr. W. L. H.), elected Master of Jesus College, Cambridge; work of, 888
- Duclaux (Prof. Pierre Emile), centenary of the birth of; work of, 965

- Chakravarti (S. N.), and others, Some Indian Origins in the Light of Astronomical Evidence, 38
- Chalklin (Dr. F. C.), conferment upon, of the title of reader in physics by London University, 523
- Chalmers (B.), The Physical Examination of Metals. Vol. 1: Optical Methods (*Review*), 660
- Chambers (Prof. R. and E. L.), Arrest of the Fertilization of the Egg in *Arbacia*, 560
- Chambers (W.), Air Conditioning, 270
- Champion (H. G.), appointed professor of forestry in Oxford University; work of, 19
- Chapman (Prof. S.), Terrestrial Magnetism and Electricity (*Review*), 47; Lunar Tides in the Atmosphere, 257
- Chapman (Dr. V. J.), Practical Science in Schools, 1023
- Chatfield (Lord), Utilization of Scientific Research during War, 143; Planning of Research, 399
- Chatley (Dr. H.), Terminal Velocities, 64; Sirius and the Constellation of the Bow, 670
- Chatterjee (Dr. S. P.), Geography in National Planning, 471
- Chattopadhyay (K. P.), Measurement of the Nasion in the Living, 674
- Chaudhuri (Dr. H.), Nitrogen Fixation in the Rice-Field Soils of Bengal, 936
- Chen (Sicien H.), [Y. Zia and], Fruit Flies of Northern China, 595
- Chessum (A. S.), [death], 925
- Chibnall (Prof. A. C.), M. W. Rees, E. F. Williams and Dr. E. Boyland, Glutamic Acid of Proteins, 311
- Chick (A. C.), Recent Trends in Earthquake Insurance, 633
- Childe (Prof. V. Gordon), Archaeology in the U.S.S.R., 110
- Childs (Dr. W. H. J.), and Dr. H. A. Jahn, Infra-Red Spectra and the Structure of Molecules, 646
- Chopra (B.), Stomatopoda from the John Murray Expedition, 750
- Chopra (Col. Ram Nath), elected an honorary member of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, 736
- Chowdhry (Miss Biva), [Prof. D. M. Bose and], Photographic Plates as Detectors of Mesotron Showers, 894
- Christian (Dr. Jules), centenary of the birth of; work of, 415
- Christie (A. L. M.), Effect of X-rays on *Drosophila subobscura*, 113
- Chung (Pei Wen), The Upper Cave Industry of Choukoutien, 904
- Churcher (B. G.), and A. J. King, Limitation of Transformer Noise, 1029
- Cicardo (V. H.), and J. A. Moglia, Liberation of Potassium from Muscle by Acetylcholine, 551
- Ciuea (M.), Totauquina, 458
- Claremont (C. A.), Spanning Space (*Review*), 281
- Clark (Dr. Austin H.), The Eighth American Scientific Congress, 918
- Clark (A. M. S.), and G. Buckland Smith, Looking at Life: an Introduction to Biology (*Review*), 136
- Clark (D.), [H. M. Powell, Dr. A. F. Wells and], Crystal Structure of Phosphorus Pentachloride, 149; [H. M. Powell and], Crystal Structure of Phosphorus Pentabromide, 971
- Clark (J. D.), [H. B. S. Cooke and], Rostro-carinates in Africa, 902
- Clark (R. H.), Some Early Burrell Engines, 345
- Clark (Prof. W. E. Le Gros), The Relationship between Pithecanthropus and Sinanthropus, 70; The Nerve of the Pineal Gland, 349; The Phylogeny of Man, 981
- Clarke (R. W. B.), The Economic Effort of War (*Review*), 724
- Clarke (S. H.), and C. B. Pettifor, Influence of Cell Wall Composition on the Moisture Relations of Hardwood Timbers, 424
- de Cleene (Prof. N.), African Native Institutions and Christianity, 181
- Cleve (Per Theodor), centenary of the birth of; work of, 216
- Clifford (Miss), [Miss C. A. Simpson and], A Neolithic Trackway, 153
- Clouston (Sir Thomas Smith), centenary of the birth of; work of, 619
- Cluver (Dr. E. H.), appointed director of the South African Institute for Medical Research, 1015
- Coates (W. A.), Type Tests in Engineering, 597
- Cochrane (Dr. W.), [Prof. G. P. Thomson and], Theory and Practice of Electron Diffraction (*Review*), 367
- Coe (Prof. C. J.), Theoretical Mechanics: a Vectorial Treatment (*Review*), 141
- Coghlan (H. H.), Prehistoric Copper and some Experiments in Smelting, 310
- Cohen (Dr. J. I.), Relationship of Crime and Intelligence (*Review*), 876
- Cole (G. D. H.), J. A. Hobson, 770
- Cole (H. A.), Effect of the Severe Winter of 1939-40 on British Oyster Beds, 976
- Cole (H. I.), and H. T. Cardoso, Chaulmoogra Oils, 310
- Coleman (O. H.), [D. W. Robertson and], Linkage studies in Barley, 827
- Coles (J. D. W. A.), [J. H. Mason, Dr. R. A. Alexander and], Cultivation of Bluetongue Virus in fertile Eggs produced on a Vitamin-deficient Diet, 1022
- Colson (Dr. Barbara), appointed lecturer in botany in Reading University, 523
- Conant (Prof. J. B.), revised with the assistance of Dr. Max Tishler, The Chemistry of Organic Compounds: a Year's Course in Organic Chemistry (*Review*), 202
- Connelly (Dr. W.), E. S. Harkness, 253
- Conrad (G. M.), [W. K. Gregory and], Black and the Striped Marlin, 555
- Cook (Prof. J. W.), Cancer-producing Chemical Compounds, 335; Carcinogenic Colouring Matters, 672; Prof. E. L. Kennaway and N. M. Kennaway, Production of Tumours in Mice by Deoxycholic Acid, 627
- Cooke (H. B. S.), and J. D. Clark, Rostro-carinates in Africa, 902
- Coppen (F. M. V.), [Dr. G. W. Scott Blair and], Subjective Judgments of 'Firmness' in Elastic and Viscous Materials, 425
- Copson (Prof. E. T.), [Prof. B. B. Baker and], The Mathematical Theory of Huygens' Principle (*Review*), 531
- Corcoran (Prof. G. F.), [Prof. H. R. Reed and], Electrical Engineering Experiments: Theory and Practice (*Review*), 658
- Corder (P.), and Rev. Thomas Romans, Excavations at the Roman Town at Brough, 1937, 272
- Cornish (Dr. Vaughan), The Scenery of Sidmouth: its Natural Beauty and Historic Interest (*Review*), 1006
- Cosyns (M. G. E.), Barometric Co-efficient of Extensive Cosmic Ray Showers, 668
- Cott (Dr. H. B.), Adaptive Coloration in Animals, 949
- Cotter (Dr. G. de P.), Geology of India (*Review*), 88; The Indian Peninsula and Ceylon (Regionale Geologie der Erde, Band 1, Absch. 6) (*Review*), 725
- Cottingham (E. T.), [death], 492; [obituary article], 653
- Cotton (A. D.), [A. Grove and], A Supplement to Elwes' Monograph of the genus *Lilium*. Seven parts (*Review*), 913
- Coventry (A. F.), Conservation in Canada, 967
- Cowan (J. M.), A Rhododendron Complex, 978; Edinburgh Royal Botanic Garden, 1014
- Cox (Dr. L. R.), Life and Work of William Smith, Father of English Geology, 299
- Crabtree (Dr.), Substances which modify Carcinogenic Action, 785
- Craig (J.), elected president of the Iron and Steel Institute, 548
- Craik (K. J. W.), Origin of Visual After-Images, 512
- Crane (M. B.), and D. Lewis, Classification of Pears, 942
- Crawford and Balcarres (Earl of), [obituary article], 413
- Crawford (O. G. S.), awarded the Victoria medal of the Royal Geographical Society, 665
- Crew (Prof. F. A. E.), awarded the Keith prize of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, 385
- Critchley (Dr. M.), The Language of Gesture (*Review*), 814
- Crompton (Col. R. E. B.), [death], 291; [obituary article], 377
- Crosby (J. L.), High Proportions of Homostyle Plants in Populations of *Primula vulgaris*, 672

- Crowfoot (Dr. Dorothy), Crystalline Enzymes (*Review*), 990
- Crowther (Dr. C.), Live Stock Policy during War-time, 284
- Crowther (G.), The Sinews of War, 505; Economics of War Costs, 830
- Crowther (Prof. J. A.), Fun and Physics (*Review*), 567; The Progress of Physics (*Review*), 797
- Croxall (H. E.), and L. Ogilvie, Growth Hormones in Seed Dressings, 516
- Cruess (Prof. W. V.), Commercial Fruit and Vegetable Products (*Review*), 530
- Cruickshank (Dr. Ethel M.), Chemical Composition of the Egg, 788
- Curie-Joliot (Madame Irene), [Prof. F. Joliot and], awarded the Barnard gold medal of Columbia University, 666
- Curran (S. C.), and J. E. Strothers, Bombardment of Nitrogen and Oxygen with Protons, 224
- Dadswell (Mrs. I. W.), Plant Foods of Australian Aborigines, 966
- Dahlberg (Prof. G.), Statistical Methods: for Medical and Biological Students (*Review*), 1010
- Dakin (Prof. W. J.), Humpback Whales off West Australia, 783
- Dalby (Ysabel), Food Production without Artificial Fertilizers, 905
- Dale (W. M.), Effect of X-Rays on Carboxypeptidase, 977
- Damodaran (Dr. M.), and B. V. Ramachandran, Amino-Acids of Casein Phosphopeptide, 857
- Danby (C. J.), Photolysis of Acetaldehyde, 940
- Dannatt (Dr. C.), appointed professor of Electrical Engineering in Birmingham University, 1013
- Darby (H. C.), The Draining of the Fens (*Review*), 649; The Medieval Fenland (*Review*), 649
- Darken (L. S.), [B. Saxton and], Ionization Constants of Weak Acids, 979
- Darling (Dr. F. Fraser), A Naturalist on Rona: Essays of a Biologist in Isolation (*Review*), 810
- Darlington (Dr. C. D.), Sex-chromosomes in Cimex, 113; Pure Experiment (*Review*), 477; Irregular Division of the Centromere, 942; Linkage Group in the Sweet Pea, 1025
- Darwin (Dr. C. G.), Rutherford (*Review*), 314; Thermodynamics and the Lowest Temperatures (Kelvin Lecture), 954
- Das (Prof. B. K.), Air-breathing Fishes, 519
- David (Prof. W. T.), and B. Pugh, Latent Energy and Dissociation in Flame Gases, 896
- Davidson (Rev. Dr. M.), Can Christianity Survive? (*Review*), 329
- Davies (G. M.), Geology of London and South-East England (*Review*), 497
- Davies (Dr. W. L.), The Chemistry of Milk. Second edition (*Review*), 657
- Davis (S. J.), Filterable Viruses, 467
- Davis (T. W.), J. E. Ricci and C. G. Sauter, Solvent effect on Solubility, 310
- Davison (Dr. C.), [death], 695; [obituary articles], 805
- Davission (Dr. C. J.), Electron Diffraction (*Review*), 367
- Dawe (E. A.), Paper and Its Uses: a Treatise for Printers, Stationers and others. Vol. 1. Fourth edition; Vol. 2: Samples of Papers and Boards (*Review*), 327
- Dawson (T. R.), B. D. Porritt, 340
- Day (Dr. H. G.), [Prof. E. V. McCollum, Dr. Elsa Orent-Keiles and], The Newer Knowledge of Nutrition. Fifth edition (*Review*), 816
- Day (M. F.), Neurosecretory Cells in the Ganglia of Lepidoptera, 264
- Deacon (Dr. G. E. R.), Carbon Dioxide in Arctic and Antarctic Seas, 250
- De Donder (Prof. T.), La Chimie Mathématique. Vol. 1 (*Review*), 528
- Deer (Dr. W. A.), [L. R. Wager and], Petrology of the Skaergaard Intrusion, Kangerdlugssuag, East Greenland, 197
- De La Warr (Earl), Evacuation and the Schools, 254
- Delf (Dr. M.), Relationships of the Fucales, 637
- Delsman (Dr. H. C.), Preliminary Plankton Investigations in the Java Sea, 41
- Dennison (Prof. S. R.), The Location of Industry and the Depressed Areas (*Review*), 916
- Deoras (P. J.), Comparative Morphology and Evolutionary Trends in Trichoptera, 976
- Desai (M. H.), [P. F. Garthwaite and, and others], Biology of Parasites of Teak Defoliators, 710
- Desch (Dr. C. H.), retirement from the National Physical Laboratory, 101; work of, 134
- Desgrez (Prof. A.), [death], 254; 735
- Deulofeu (Dr. V.), E. Duprat and R. Labriola, Acetyl content of Marinobufagin, Arenobufagin and Acetylmarinobufagin, 671
- Devine (Sir Hugh), acceptance of the honorary fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, 146
- Dhar (Prof. N. R.), Carbohydrate Manuring, 632
- Dickens (Dr. F.), and Dr. H. Weil-Malherbe, Carbohydrate Metabolism of Tumours, 779; Metabolism of Tumours, 512
- Dicker, (G. H. L.), Biology of Rubus Aphides, 978
- Dickson (Lovat), Half-Breed: the Story of Grey Owl (Wa-Sha-Quon-Asin) (*Review*), 165
- Diettert (R. A.), Interxylary Cork, 34
- Dikshit (Rao Bahadur K. N.), Scope of Prehistoric and Anthropological work in India, 520
- Dillon (Prof. T.), and P. O'Colla, Acetolysis of Carrageen Mucilage, 749
- Dingemans (E.), A Colour Reaction of Diethylstilbæstrol (4,4' dihydroxy- α , β -diethylstilbene), 825
- Dingle (Prof. H.), Red-Shifts in Nebular Spectra and Scientific Practice, 224; The Nature of Time, 427; Relativity of Time, 626
- Dixon (Prof. H. H.), and J. S. Barlee, Transpiration into a Saturated Atmosphere, 352
- Dixon (Prof. S. M.), [death], 542
- Dixon (Dr. T. F.), Food Research, 451
- Dodds (Prof. E. C.), awarded the Cameron prize of Edinburgh University, 385
- Dodds (Prof. G. S.), The Essentials of Human Embryology. Second edition (*Review*), 569
- Dodge (B. O.), Genetical Investigation in Neurospora, 309
- Doke (Rev. C. M.), Bantu Lexicography, 192
- Dole (M.), and R. L. Slobod, Oxygen Isotopes in Rocks and Ores, 751
- Doljanski (Prof. L., and Dr. R. S. Hoffman), Cancer Cell and Growth-regulating System of the Body, 857
- Doniach (I.), and J. C. Mottram, Photodynamic Hæmolysis by 3:4-Benzopyrene, 748
- Döring (Dr. W.), [Prof. R. Becker and], Ferromagnetismus (*Review*), 606
- van Dorp (Dr. D. A.), [Dr. H. G. K. Westenbrink and], Cause of the 'Activation' of the Carboxylase System by Free Aneurin, 465
- Dörpfeld (Prof. Wilhelm), [obituary article], 804
- Downie (R. A.), James George Frazer: the portrait of a Scholar (*Review*), 1004
- Dowson (J. E.), [death], 133
- Dowson (Dr. W. J.), Identity of the Bacterium causing Potato Blackleg, 263
- Doyle (Prof. J.), Gynospore Formation in *Sequoia sempervirens*, 900
- Drennan (Prof. M. R.), Prehistoric Peoples in South Africa, 394
- Drinkwater (J. W.), Sir Owen Richardson and W. E. Williams, Precision Measurements in the Hydrogen Spectrum, 1026
- Drumm (Dr. P. J.), and W. F. O'Connor, Pigments of Sponges, 425
- Drummond (D. G.), Anisotropy of Cellulose Sheet, 67
- Drummond (Prof. J. C.), Margarine, 53; 60; McCollum's Newer Knowledge of Nutrition (*Review*), 816
- Dry (Dr. F. W.), P. R. McMahon and J. A. Sutherland, A Mendelian situation in the Birthcoat of the New Zealand Romney Lamb, 390
- Duckworth (Dr. W. L. H.), elected Master of Jesus College, Cambridge; work of, 888
- Duclaux (Prof. Pierre Emile), centenary of the birth of; work of, 965

- Dudding (Dr. B. P.), and W. J. Jennett, *Statistics and Engineering Practice*, 117
- Duddington (C. L.), *Predaceous Phycomycetes from Cotswold Leaf-mould*, 150
- Dudley (Earl of), re-elected president of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee, 460
- Dudley (H.), *The Vocoder*, 157
- Dufait (R.), [L. Massart and], *Action of Ions on Acetylcholinesterase*, 822
- Dunbar (Prof. C. O.), *The Permian System*, 786; [Prof. C. Schuchert and], *Outlines of Historical Geology*. Third edition (*Review*), 138
- Duncan (Prof. C. D.), *A Contribution to the Biology of North American Vespine Wasps* (*Review*), 657; and Prof. G. Pickwell, *The World of Insects* (*Review*), 1005
- Dunhill (Sir Thomas), admitted an honorary fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, 146
- Duprat (E.), [Dr. V. Deulofeu, R. Labriola and], *Acetyl content of Marinobufagin, Arenobufagin and Acetylmarinobufagin*, 671
- Durrant (Dr. P. J.), *General and Inorganic Chemistry* (*Review*), 51
- Dwyer (Sister Cecilia Marie), [Prof. J. R. Loofbourow and], *Effect of the Suspending Medium on the Production of Growth Factors by Injured Cells*, 185
- Dyson (D. G. A.), *Shining in Human Eyes*, 737
- Dyson (F.), *Principles of Mechanism*. Third edition (*Review*), 142
- Eales (Dr. N. B.), *Recent Advances in Marine Biology*, 1027
- Earle (W. R.), and C. Voegtlin, *Action of Methylcholanthrene on Normal Tissue Cultures*, 785
- Eastlick (Prof. H. L.), *Transplantation of Embryonic Limb Buds in Birds*, 560
- Eckersley (T. L.), *Scattering of Waves in Radio Transmission*, 317; S. Falloon, F. T. Farmer and W. O. Agar, *Wireless Propagation and the Reciprocity Law*, 222
- Eddington (Sir Arthur), *The Philosophy of Physical Science* (Tarnier lectures) (*Review*), 402; *The Mass of the Universe*, 549
- Eddy (C. E.), and T. H. Oddie, *Physical Aspects of Radium and Radon Therapy*. Second edition, 864
- Eden (Dr. A.), *Coprophagy in the Rabbit*, 36; *Origin of 'Night' Faeces*, 628
- van Eeden, Kent, Brandt and Partridge, *Mineral Deposits of the Murchison Range*, 193
- Egloff (Dr. G.), *Physical Constants of Hydrocarbons*. Vol. 1: *Paraffins, Olefins, Acetylenes, and other Aliphatic Hydrocarbons* (*Review*), 442
- Einstein (Prof. A.), *Considerations concerning the Fundaments of Theoretical Physics*, 920
- Einzig (Dr. P.), *Economic Warfare* (*Review*), 724
- Elazari-Volcani (Dr. B.), *Algæ in the Bed of the Dead Sea*, 975
- El-Helaly (Dr. A. F.), *Control of the Bean Rust Fungus*, 75
- Elliott (W. S.), and J. A. Ratcliffe, *Barkhausen-Kurz Oscillations with Positive Ions*, 265
- Ellis (Havelock), *My Life* (*Review*), 759
- Ellison (M. A.), *Use of Monochromatic Image in the Spectroheliograph*, 154; *An Auto-collimating Spectroheliograph*, 517; *Solar and Terrestrial Relationships of March 23-29, 1940*, 898
- Eloff (Dr. G.), *Chronological Sex-ratios in Drosophila*, 463
- Elvehjem (Prof. C. A.), [M. A. Lipton and], *Mechanism of the Enzymatic Phosphorylation of Thiamin*, 226
- van Emden (Dr. F.), *Larvæ of British Coleoptera*, 74
- Emerson (A.), awarded the Wakeham prize of the Institution of Naval Architects, 302
- Emerson (R.), *Life-cycle of Allomyces*, 1025; and D. L. Fox, *Carotenoids and the Metabolism of Reproduction*, 594
- Emich (Prof. F.), [death], 454
- Emmens (C. W.), and Dr. R. J. Ludford, *Action of Estrogens on the Female Genital Tract*, 746
- Emory (K. P.), *Mangarevan Archaeology*, 392
- English (J.), J. Bonner and A. J. Haagen-Smit, *Wound Hormones of Plants*, 353
- Ephraim (F.), *Inorganic Chemistry*. Third English edition, Dr. P. C. L. Thorne and Dr. A. M. Ward (*Review*), 294
- Eriksson-Quensel (I.-B.), [A. Tiselius and], *Hydrolysis of Proteins by Pepsin*, 193
- Errera (J.), and others, *Infra-Red OH Band and Association*, 942
- Eumorfopoulos (G.), [obituary article], 18
- Evans (D. S.), *Alpha Photometric Observations of the Solar Spectrum*, 787
- Evans (Capt. F.), *Problems of Evacuation*, 270
- Evans (Sir Geoffrey), *The Soya Bean* (*Review*), 48
- Evans (G. R.), [Prof. E. J. Williams and], *Transformation of Mesotrons into Electrons*, 818
- Evans (R. D.), [W. C. Schumb, J. L. Hastings and], *Age of a Meteorite*, 431
- Eve (Prof. A. S.), *Rutherford: Being the Life and Letters of the Rt. Hon. Lord Rutherford, O.M.* (*Review*), 324; *Radium Treatment*, 347
- Ewing (Irene R. and Dr. A. W. G.), *The Handicap of Deafness* (*Review*), 813
- Eyles (V. A.), *The History of Geology* (*Review*), 478
- Fairbrother (Dr. F.), *Chemical Action of γ -Radiation from ^{80}Br* , 307
- Falloon (S.), [T. L. Eckersley, F. T. Farmer, W. O. Agar and], *Wireless Propagation and the Reciprocity Law*, 222
- Fankuchen (Dr. I.), awarded the U.S.A. National Research Council fellowship in protein chemistry, 385
- Farmer (F. T.), [T. L. Eckersley, S. Falloon, W. O. Agar and], *Wireless Propagation and the Reciprocity Law*, 222
- Favilli (Prof. G.), *Mucolytic Effect of several Diffusing Agents and of a Diazotized Compound*, 866
- Fawcett (E.), H. W. Grimmett, G. F. Shotton and H. G. Taylor, *Practical Aspects of Earthing*, 357
- Fedden (Dr. A. H. R.), elected president of the Royal Aeronautical Society, 892
- Feldberg (Dr. W.), *The Function of the Adrenal Cortex* (*Review*), 404
- Fell (H. B.), *Economic Importance of the Australian Ant, *Chalcoponera metallica**, 707; *Origin of the Vertebrate Coelom*, 906
- Fenner (F. J.), *Scaphocephaly among Australian Aborigines*, 74
- Ference (M.), A. E. Shaw and R. J. Stephenson, *Magnetic Spectrograph Coils*, 596
- Ferguson (Prof. Allan), *Splashes, and What They Teach* (Alexander Pedler lecture), 508
- Ferguson (W. S.), A. H. Lewis and S. J. Watson, *Teart Disease in Cattle*, 941
- Fermi (E.), *Absorption of Hard Cosmic Rays and Mesotron Decay*, 903
- Field (J. O.), *Bronzes from Southern Nigeria*, 352
- Field (Miss M. J.), *New Shrines on the Gold Coast*, 864
- Fieser (L. F.), *Synthesis of Vitamin K₁*, 353
- Findlay (Prof. A.), *impending retirement of; work of*, 654
- Finkel (Prof. A. J.), [Prof. W. C. Allee and], *Early Development of *Arbacia punctulata**, 560
- Finsen (W. S.), and H. E. Wood, *Witwatersrand Local Tremors*, 428
- Firth (Prof. R.), *Primitive Polynesian Economy* (*Review*), 328; *The Work of the Gods in Tikopia*. Vol. 1, 435
- Fischer (Prof. M.), William B. Wherry, *Bacteriologist* (*Review*), 499
- Fisher (H. A. L.), [death], 653; [obituary article], 694; *Pages from the Past* (*Review*), 683
- Fisher (Prof. R. A.), and G. L. Taylor, *Scandinavian Influence in Scottish Ethnology*, 590
- Fleischmann (R.), and others, *Separation of Isotopes*, 711
- Fleming (Dr. A. P. M.), *The Institution of Electrical Engineers* (*Review*), 914; *Electricity as applied to Metallurgy* (Menelaus memorial lecture), 929
- Flint (W. P.), [Prof. C. L. Metcalf and], *Destructive and Useful Insects: Their Habits and Control*. Second Edition (*Review*), 405

- Floyd (W. F.), Inhibition of Respiration at Sub-optimum Substrate Concentrations, 592
- Flugel (Prof. J. C.), A Great Psychologist of Sex (*Review*), 759
- Fokker (Prof. A. D.), Mass Centre in Relativity, 933
- Folley (Dr. S. J.), [A. C. Bottomley and], Inactivation of Prolactin by Treatment with Phenyl Isocyanate, 304
- Foran (W. R.), Transport in Many Lands (*Review*), 295
- Forró (Dr. M.), Prof. C. Tangl, 454
- Fosdick (Dr. R. B.), The Rockefeller Foundation. A Review for 1939 (*Review*), 833
- Fotidar (A. N.), [Prof. A. C. Joshi and], Floral Anatomy of the Oleaceae, 354
- Fowler (Prof. A.), [death], 1011
- Fowler (Prof. R. H.), and Dr. E. A. Guggenheim, Statistical Thermodynamics: a Version of Statistical Mechanics for Students of Physics and Chemistry (*Review*), 239
- Fox (D. L.), [R. Emerson and], Carotenoids and the Metabolism of Reproduction, 594
- Fox (Prof. H. Munro), Function of Chlorocruorin in Sabella and of Hæmoglobin in Lumbricus, 781
- Fox (Dr. J. J.), elected president of the Institute of Chemistry, 382
- Foxon (G. E. H.), Stomatopoda from the John Murray Expedition, 750
- Françon (J.), translated by H. Eltringham, The Mind of the Bees (*Review*), 298
- Frasier (Elizabeth S.), [H. P. Brinton, H. E. Seiffert and], Illness in Meat Packing Industry, 419
- Frazer (Sir James George), The Native Races of America: a Copious Selection of Passages for the Study of Social Anthropology from the Manuscript Notebooks of, arranged and edited by R. A. Downie (*Review*), 242
- Freeman (H.), Mathematics for Actuarial Students. 2 parts (*Review*), 659
- Freny (M. R.), and M. Lipson, Effects of Concentrated Aqueous and certain Non-aqueous Solutions of Alkali upon Wool, 25
- Frey-Wyssling (Prof. A.), Optics of the Artificial Nylon Fibre, 821; and F. Blank, Growth of Protoplasm and Nitrogen Migration in the coleoptile of *Zea Mays*, 974
- Friend (Rev. Hilderic), [obituary article], 414
- Friend (Dr. J. Newton), The Corrosion of Ferrous Metals, 881; and J. P. Allchin, Blue Rocksalt, 266
- Fuchs (K.), [Prof. Max Born and], The Mass Centre in Relativity, 587; 933
- Fuller (Almy, Kinzer and), Fluorescence of Diacetyl, 468
- Furieux (W. S.), [obituary article], 886
- Fürth (Prof. R.), Relation between Breaking and Melting, 741
- Fyfe (Hamilton), The Illusion of National Character (*Review*), 1004
- Gabb (G. H.), History of the Vacuum Flask, 862
- Gaddum (Prof. J. H.), Circulation of the Blood (*Review*), 206
- Gallerani (Prof. G.), [death], 618
- Gamow (Prof. G.), Mr. Tompkins in Wonderland: or Stories of *c*, *G*, and *h* (*Review*), 567
- Gardiner (Prof. J. Stanley), The Origin of Life (*Review*), 277; Prof. Sydney J. Hickson, 338; The Fenland (*Review*), 649
- Gardner (Prof. A. D.), Bacteriology: for Medical Students and Practitioners. Second edition (*Review*), 293
- Gardner (Prof. Ernest A.), [obituary article], 17
- Gardner (Prof. V. R.), F. C. Bradford and H. D. Hooker, Jr., The Fundamentals of Fruit Production. Second edition (*Review*), 530
- Gardner (W. M.), [death], 179
- Garner (H. V.), and J. W. Weil, Malting Barley, 738
- Garnett (Dr. Maxwell), Knowledge and Character (*Review*), 241
- Garrett (S. D.), Utilization of Nitrogen by *Ophiobolus graminis*, 108
- Garthwaite (P. F.), and M. H. Desai, and others, Biology of Parasites of Teak Defoliators, 710
- Garwood (G. T.), Wood Pole Transmission Lines, 808
- Gaskin (L. J. P.), Catlin and his North American Indian Gallery and Museum, 158
- Gatenby (Prof. J. B.), The Golgi Apparatus (*Review*), 481
- Gates (Prof. R. R.), Genetics of Cotton (*Review*), 124
- Gatty (O.), [death], 925
- Gear (J. H. S.), [Dr. T. W. B. Osborn and], Possible relation between ability to synthesize Vitamin C and reaction to Tubercle Bacillus, 974
- Gellhorn (E.), Insulin Hypoglycæmia and the Central Nervous System, 516
- Germer (L. H.), and K. H. Storks, Aluminium Dust in Silicosis, 941
- Gesell (Dr. A.), and others, Biographies of Child Development: The Mental Growth Careers of Eighty-four Infants and Children: a Ten-year Study from the Clinic of Child Development at Yale University (*Review*), 140
- Ghosh (S. P.), [Prof. S. K. Mitra, Benoy B. Ray and], Cross-section of Atomic Oxygen for Elastic Collision with Electrons, and Region *F* Absorption, 1017
- Gilbert (Margaret Shea), Biography of the Unborn (*Review*), 814
- Gillman (J.), [Prof. C. J. van der Horst and], Mechanism of Ovulation and Corpus Luteum formation in Elephantulus, 974
- Gilmour (J. S. L.), Plant Personalities (*Review*), 608; and others, Phylogeny and Taxonomy, 636
- Gingrich, X-ray Diffraction of Liquid and Plastic Sulphur, 751
- Ginori-Conti (Prince Piero), [obituary article], 380
- Gioud (Prof. A.), L'Acide ascorbique dans la cellule et les tissus (*Review*), 294
- Githens (T. S.), [N. O'Connor Wolff and], Toxicity of Snake's Venom, 392
- Glass (L. C.), and D. H. Yost, Inheritance of Inability to Sweat, 353
- Glatzel (Dr. H.), Nahrung und Ernährung: Altbekanntes und Neuerforschtes vom Essen (*Review*), 816
- Glen (Lt. A. R.), awarded the Patron's medal of the Royal Geographical Society, 665
- Glover (Capt. C. W.), Civil Defence: a Practical Manual presenting with working drawings the Methods Required for Adequate Protection against Aerial Attack. Second edition (*Review*), 661
- Glover (Dr. E.), Psycho-analysis (*Review*), 662
- Glover (Dr. J. A.), Epidemiology of Evacuation, 583
- Glücksman (A.), The Cell Theory (*Review*), 875
- Goddard (E. P.), An Australian Aboriginal Artist, 699
- Godwin (H.), Post-Glacial Vegetation of English Fenland, 907
- Goodenough (Sir Francis), [obituary article], 178
- Goodhart (C. B.), and R. Harrison, Occurrence of some off-shore Amphipods in the Littoral Zone, 109
- Gordon (Seton), Bird Portraits (*Review*), 874
- Gordy and Stanford, Proton-attracting Properties of Liquids, 633
- Gorgé (C.), The International Relief Union, 808
- Gould (H. N.), Acadian French in Louisiana, 555
- Govaerts (Dr. J.), A Photographic Method of studying β -ray Absorption by ^{32}P , 624
- Grabowski (Prof. T.), [death], 542
- Graham (Prof. S. A.), Principles of Forest Entomology. Second edition (*Review*), 496
- Grahame (D. C.), [G. K. Rollefson and], High Temperature Photolysis of Acetaldehyde, 712
- de Gramont (A.), Problèmes de la vision (*Review*), 661
- Grant (Dr. J.), Paper (*Review*), 327
- Gravely (Dr. F. H.), and C. Sivaramamurti, Indian Sculpture and Architecture, 457
- Gray (E. G.), [Dr. M. Wilson, M. Noble and], Blind Seed Disease of Ryegrass, 783
- Gray (Dr. R. C.), Optical Anisotropy of Cellulose Sheet, 266
- Greaves (Dr. R. H.), and H. Wroughton, Practical Microscopical Metallography. Third edition (*Review*), 814
- Greaves (Prof. W. M. H.), Surface Temperatures of the Stars, 412
- Green (Col. C. T.), [obituary article], 770
- Green (T. L.), Practical Animal Biology (*Review*), 656
- Gregor (J. W.), Experimental Taxonomy, 392

- Gregory, Bart. (Sir Richard), Descriptive and Predictive Science (*Review*), 722; Religion in Science and Civilization, 872
- Gregory (T. C.), Uses and Applications of Chemical and Related Materials (*Review*), 7
- Gregory (W. K.), and G. M. Conrad, Black and the Striped Marlin, 555
- Gresser (E. B.), and C. M. Breder, junr., Eye of a Blind Cave Fish, 1025
- Gresson (Dr. R. A. R.), Presence of the Sperm Middle-piece in the Fertilized Egg of the Mouse (*Mus musculus*), 425
- Griffith (A. L.), [Rao Sahib S. Rangaswami and], 'Spike' Disease of Sandal, 754
- Grigoraki (Dr. L.), Work of Raymond Sabouraud, 968
- Grimmett (H. W.), [E. Fawcett, G. F. Shotton, H. G. Taylor and], Practical Aspects of Earthing, 357
- Grimminger (C.), and W. C. Haines, Meteorology of the Byrd Antarctic Expeditions, 34
- Gronier (Dr. M.), Population of Southern Algeria, 1013
- Grosheintz (J. M.), Oxidation with Lead Tetra-acetate, 353
- Gross (F.), [H. Pettersson, F. Koczy and], Large-scale Plankton Cultures, 698
- Grove (A.), and A. D. Cotton, A Supplement to Elwes' Monograph of the Genus *Lilium*. Seven parts (*Review*), 913
- Grüneberg (Dr. H.), and Prof. J. B. S. Haldane, Congenital Hyperglycaemia in Mice, 704
- Guggenheim (Dr. E. A.), [Prof. R. H. Fowler and], Statistical Thermodynamics: a Version of Statistical Mechanics for Students of Physics and Chemistry (*Review*), 239
- Guggenheimer (Dr. K. M.), Series in Nuclear Energy-Levels, 104
- Guha (Prof. B. C.), [S. Banerjee, P. B. Sen and], Urinary Excretion of combined Ascorbic Acid in Pulmonary Tuberculosis, 706
- Guibé (J.), Wing Dimorphism in a Dipterous Insect, 268
- Guilford (J. P.), General Psychology (*Review*), 298
- Gungikar (Prof. K. R.), An Introduction to the Calculus (*Review*), 812
- Gunther (E. R.), Unusual Ice Formation in Wiltshire, 428; [death], 886
- Gunther (Dr. R. T.), Early Science in Oxford. Vol. 11: Oxford Colleges and their Men of Science (*Review*), 282; [death], 414; [obituary article], 541
- Gupta (Dr. N. C. Sen), [Prof. J. N. Mukherjee and], Formation of Aggregates and Structures in Dilute Solutions of Hydrogen Bentonites, 971
- Gurney (Dr. R.), Bibliography of the Larvæ of Decapod Crustacea (*Review*), 494
- Gutenberg (B.), Tsunamis, 193; Structure of the Pacific Basin, 269
- Haagen-Smit (A. J.), [J. English, J. Bonner and], Wound Hormones of Plants, 353
- Haddon (Dr. A. C.), [death], 653; [obituary article], 848
- Hagiwara (T.), N. Miyabe, R. Takei and Y. Otuka, *Orgasima* (Japan) Earthquake of May 1, 34
- Hahn (Dr. L.), and Prof. G. Hevesy, Turnover Rate of Nucleic Acid, 549
- Haines (F. H.), Miss E. K. Pearce, 178
- Haines (Dr. R. B.), Preservation of Eggs, 788
- Haines (W. C.), [C. Grimminger and], Meteorology of the Byrd Antarctic Expeditions, 34
- Haldane (Prof. J. B. S.), Science and Everyday Life (*Review*), 201; Useless Mathematics (*Review*), 444; [Dr. H. Grüneberg and], Congenital Hyperglycaemia in Mice, 704
- Hale (C. W.), [D. McClean and], Mucinase and Tissue Permeability, 867
- Halifax (Viscount), International Affairs, 381; The Challenge to Liberty: an Address given at Oxford (*Review*), 834
- Hambly (W. D.), Age and Sex in New Guinea Skulls, 826
- Hampshire (Dr. C. H.), Pharmacopœia Revision, 583
- Hanbury-Tracy (J.), awarded the Cuthbert Peek grant of the Royal Geographical Society, 665
- Hanes (C. S.), Enzymic Synthesis of Starch from Glucose-1-Phosphate, 348
- Hanström (Prof. B.), Hormones in Invertebrates (*Review*), 763
- Haphey (Dr. F.), Volume Integration of Dosage for X- and γ -Radiation, 668
- Harden (Sir Arthur), [death], 964
- Hardy (Eric), Effects of Winter Frosts on Bird-life, 773
- Harington (Prof. C. R.), appointed a representative on the Governing Body of the Lister Institute, 1015
- Harker (late Dr. A.), Metamorphism: a Study of the Transformations of Rock-Masses. Second edition (*Review*), 644
- Harkness (E. S.), [obituary article], 253
- Harland (Dr. S. C.), The Genetics of Cotton (*Review*), 124
- Harley (Dr. D.), and Dr. G. R. Lynch, Blood-group Tests and Paternity, 889
- Harris (Dr. L. J.), Vitamin E (*Review*), 604
- Harris (R. S.), [J. W. M. Bunker, L. M. Mosher and], Irradiation of 7-Dehydrocholesterol, 865
- Harris (R. V.), Raspberry Mosaic, 556
- Harris (T. M.), Morellet's Tertiary Siphonous Algæ in the W. K. Parker Collection (*Review*), 810
- Harrison (Prof. D. C.), and Sir Edward Mellanby, Ionization of Calcium Phytate, 745
- Harrison (R.), [C. B. Goodhart and], Occurrence of some off-shore Amphipods in the Littoral Zone, 109
- Harrison (Prof. R. G.), elected a foreign member of the Royal Society; work of, 851
- Hartley (Sir Harold), appointed honorary adviser on the development of home-produced fuels, 505
- Hartmann (Prof.), P. and E. Mathes and F. Lazarus, An Acoustic Generator, 787
- Hartree (Prof. D. R.), The Differential Analyser, 807
- Hartree (Dr. E. F.), [Prof. D. Keilin and], Properties of Cytochrome c, 934
- Harvey (A.), [C. P. Mountford and], Australian Shell Ornaments, 74
- Harvey (Miss Ethel Browne), Role of the Nucleus and the Cytoplasm in *Arbacia* Eggs, 560
- Hastings (J. D.), [V. H. Wentworth and], Softening of Rubber, 34
- Hastings (J. L.), [W. C. Schumb, R. D. Evans and], Age of a Meteorite, 431
- Hatton (W.), Automatic Service of Long-distance Telephone Calls, 944
- Hawkes (Mrs. Jacquetta), The Archæology of the Channel Islands. Vol. 2: The Bailiwick of Jersey (*Review*), 684
- Hawkes (Dr. L.), Petrology of East Greenland, 197; Prof. A. G. Högbom, 769
- Hawkins (T. H.), Biology for Schools (*Review*), 205; Animal Hormones (*Review*), 763
- Hawley (M. S.), An Artificial Mastoid for Audiphone Measurements, 258
- Hayes (Sister Catherine), [Dr. Monica Taylor and], *Amœba lescheri* (= *Chaos lescheri*): a New Species of *Amœba*, 464
- Hayward (Prof. H. E.), The Structure of Economic Plants (*Review*), 293
- Heath (Sir Thomas), [death], 454; [obituary article], 578
- Heatley (N. G.), [I. Berenblum, Dr. E. Chain and], Carbohydrate Metabolism of Tumours, 778
- Hedin (Dr. Sven), translated by F. H. Lyon, The Wandering Lake (*Review*), 812
- Heesom (K. E.), [death], 340
- Heinrich (R. R.), Earthquakes in Missouri, 979
- Heitler (Dr. W.), Scattering of Mesons and the Magnetic Moments of Proton and Neutron, 29
- Hemery (H.), The Physiological Basis of the Art of Singing (*Review*), 816
- Hempel (Dr. E. H.), The Economics of Chemical Industries (*Review*), 137
- Henderson (Prof. D. K.), Psychopathic States (Thomas W. Salmon memorial lectures) (*Review*), 140
- Henderson (Dr. F. Y.), Timber: its Properties, Pests and Preservation (*Review*), 1003
- Henderson (Prof. Yandell), and J. McCullough Turner, Carbon Monoxide as a Hazard of Polar Exploration, 92

- Henkin and H. A. Taylor, Decomposition of Azomethane, 431
- Henriksen (K. J.), a revised Index of the Insects of Greenland, 112
- Henry (Dr. T. A.), The Plant Alkaloids. Third edition (*Review*), 243; presentation to, by the Wellcome Foundation; work of, 696
- Herbosa (M. M.), [A. G. Sison, H. Lara, A. A. Lozano and], Life Expectancy in the Philippines, 967
- Hering (Prof. H. E.), awarded the Goethe medal for art and science, 931
- Herns (Prof. W. B.), Medical Entomology: with Special Reference to the Health and Well-being of Man and Animals. Third edition (*Review*), 296
- Herrick (G.), Facsimile Transmission, 233
- Hestrin (S.), [Dr. J. Leibowitz and], Substrate Specificity of Yeast Zymase, 671
- Hettinger (Dr. J.), The 'Ultra-Perceptive' Faculty, 430
- Hevesy (Prof. G.), [Dr. L. Hahn and], Turnover Rate of Nucleic Acid, 549
- de Hevesy (P.), World Wheat Planning and Economic Planning in General (*Review*), 843
- Hibben (Dr. J. H.), The Raman Effect and its Chemical Applications. With a Theoretical Discussion by J. H. Hibben and Prof. E. Teller (*Review*), 406
- Hicks (J. R.), Économie théorique et statistique économique: Théorie mathématique de la valeur en régime de libre concurrence (*Review*), 8
- Hickson (Prof. S. J.), [death], 254; [obituary article], 338
- Higgs (H.), [obituary article], 1011
- Hilberry (N.), [B. Rossi, J. B. Hoag and], Absorption of Hard Cosmic Rays and Mesotron Decay, 903
- Hilditch (Prof. T. P.), The Chemical Constitution of Natural Fats (*Review*), 839
- Hildreth (H. M.), Cortical Localization of Intelligence, 829
- Hill (Prof. A. V.), elected a parliamentary representative of Cambridge University, 341; appointed a temporary assistant air attaché in Washington, 509
- Hill (Sir Leonard), Radium Treatment, 151; awarded the Harben gold medal of the Royal Institute of Public Health and Hygiene, 259
- Hill (Prof. W. C. Osman), Anthropological Nomenclature, 260
- Hillier (J.), [Prof. E. J. Burton, A. Prebus and], The Electron Microscope at Toronto, 942
- Hirsch (Dr. G. C.), Form- und stoffwechsel der Golgi-Körper (*Review*), 481
- Hirth (W.), translated by Naomi Heron Maxwell, The Art of Soaring Flight (*Review*), 142
- Hoag (J. B.), [B. Rossi, N. Hilberry and], Absorption of Hard Cosmic Rays and Mesotron Decay, 903
- Hoagland (Prof. D. R.), and Dr. F. C. Steward, Salt Absorption of Plants, 116
- Hoborski (Prof. A.), [death], 542
- Hobson (J. A.), [death], 542; [obituary article], 770
- Hoernlé (Prof. R. F. A.), South African Native Policy and the Liberal Spirit (Phelps-Stokes lectures), 564
- Hoffman (Dr. R. S.), [Prof. L. Doljanski and], Cancer Cell and Growth-regulating System of the Body, 857
- v. Hofmann (Dr. L.), awarded the Alfred Denker Foundation prize of the German Otorhinolaryngological Society, 302
- Hofmeyer (J. D. J.), Genetical Studies in *Carica Papaya*, 902
- Hogan (Prof. M. A.), Prof. S. M. Dixon, 694
- Högbom (Prof. A. G.), [death], 454; [obituary article], 769
- Hollom (P. D.), Black-Headed Gull Survey, 217
- Holmyard (Dr. E. J.), Islam's Contributions to Science (*Review*), 4
- Holtedahl (Prof. O.), Prof. W. C. Brøgger, 652
- Holweck (F.), [E. Wollman, Dr. S. Luria and], Effect of Radiations on Bacteriophage C_{18} , 935
- Homerberg (Prof. V. O.), [Prof. R. S. Williams and], Principles of Metallography. Fourth edition (*Review*), 660
- Hönigschmid (O.), Atomic Weight of Holmium, 633
- Hooker, Jr. (H. D.), [Prof. V. R. Gardner, F. C. Bradford and], The Fundamentals of Fruit Production. Second edition (*Review*), 530
- Hope-Jones (F.), Electrical Timekeeping (*Review*), 326
- Hopf (Prof. L.), [death], 133; [obituary article], 379
- Hopkinson (R. G.), Seeing at Night, 458
- Hopper (V. D.), [Prof. T. H. Laby and], The Electronic Charge, 932
- Hopwood (Dr. F. L.), [Dr. H. Loewenthal and], Serological Properties of Extracts of Hæmolytic Streptococci prepared by Ultrasonic Vibrations, 858
- Horgan (Dr. E. S.), and Dr. R. Kirk, Antimony Treatment of Kala-Azar, 228
- Hornbuckle (T.), and A. K. Bruce, H. Akroyd Stuart and the Oil Engine, 97
- Horney (Dr. K.), New Ways in Psychoanalysis (*Review*), 500
- van der Horst (Prof. C. J.) and J. Gillman, Mechanism of Ovation and Corpus Luteum formation in Elephantulus, 974
- Hosking (E. J.), and C. W. Newberry, Intimate Sketches from Bird Life (*Review*), 874
- Hosten (late H.), Travellers in Tibet, 710
- Houldin (Dr. J. E.), Radio Frequency Wave-Guides, 792
- Houstoun (Dr. R. A.), Foundations and Development of Heat (*Review*), 86
- Howard (H. W.), Genetics of Wood-Lice, 1026
- Hrdlička (Dr. A.), Neanderthal Man in Central Asia, 63; Removal of Front Teeth in Man, 631; Criminal Anthropology in the U.S.A., 738
- Hu (S. M. K.), Mosquitoes and Filariasis, 632
- Hubbard (H.), Forgotten Methods of Painting, 256
- Hubble (Dr. E.), awarded the gold medal of the Royal Astronomical Society; work of, 95
- Hudson (Prof. R. G.), The Engineers' Manual. Second edition (*Review*), 1006
- Hugger (C.), [J. Stebbins, A. Whitford and], Absorption within the Stellar System, 675
- Hughes (Dr. E. B.), elected president of the Society of Public Analysts and other Analytical Chemists, 416
- Hughes (Dr. L. E. C.), Electronic Music, 170
- Hulme (Dr. H. R.), Reality of Periodicities, 979
- Humby (S. R.), Electricity and Magnetism for Students (*Review*), 1008
- Hume (Capt. C. W.), resignation from the editorship of the *Proceedings of the Physical Society*; work of, 180
- Hunter (M. C.), Mechanical Integrity in the design of Electrical Circuit-Breakers, 1026
- Hurst (Sir Arthur), Euthanasia, 1014
- Hurst (D. G.), R. Latham and W. B. Lewis, Nuclear Reactions with Bismuth, 633
- Hurst (H.), Permeability of Insect Cuticle, 462
- Hurston (Zora), Voodoo Gods: an Inquiry into Native Myths and Magic in Jamaica and Haiti (*Review*), 49
- Hussey (E. R. J.), [Dr. C. K. Meek, Prof. W. M. Macmillan and], Europe and West Africa: some Problems and Adjustments (*Review*), 655
- Hutchinson (Dr. J.), The Flora of Madagascar, 448
- Huxley (Dr. J. S.), Science, War and Reconstruction, 289; 330
- Hyde (Dr. James Nevins), centenary of the birth of; work of, 926
- Hylander (Prof. C. J.), The World of Plant Life (*Review*), 136
- Hyman (L. H.), Turbellaria from Bermuda and the Sargassum, 750
- Il'inskij (A. P.), Vegetation of the World (Plant Geography, Vol. 3) (*Review*), 52
- Imms (Dr. A. D.), Air Transport, Insects and Disease, 76; Insect Pests of Crops in England and Wales, 359; The Louse and Louse-born Diseases (*Review*), 723
- Inge (Dean W. R.), Victorian Socialism (*Review*), 45; 152
- Ingleby (P.), [Dr. L. Jánossy and], Penetrating Cosmic Ray Showers, 511
- Ingles (Ll. C.), Concealing Coloration tested by a Sparrow Hawk, 902
- Inglis (J. Gall), An Easy Guide to the Constellations; with a Miniature Atlas of the Stars (*Review*), 656
- Ingold (Prof. C. K.), Molecular Structure and Raman Spectroscopy (*Review*), 406; The Chemical Bond (*Review*), 644

- Ingram (G. W.), Radio Interference Suppression (*Review*), 137
- Ingrams (Mr. and Mrs. Harold), awarded the Founder's medal of the Royal Geographical Society, 665
- Inouye (H.), Determination of Meteor Velocity from Zenith Attraction, 35
- Ives (Dr. H. E.), Measurement of Velocity with Atomic Clocks, 417
- Jacob (A.), and Prof. A. R. Todd, Cannabidiol and Cannabiol, Constituents of *Cannabis indica* Resin, 350
- Jacoby (H. J.), Analysis of Handwriting: an Introduction into Scientific Graphology (*Review*), 645
- Jacques (Dr. A. G.), [obituary article], 581
- Jahn (Dr. H. A.), [Dr. W. H. J. Childs and], Infra-Red Spectra and the Structure of Molecules, 646
- James (C. S.), Feet of Melanesians and Europeans, 153
- Jameson (Sir William), conferment upon, of an honorary doctorate by Aberdeen University, 599
- Janaki-Ammal (E. K.), Chromosome Numbers in *Sclerostachya fusca*, 464
- Jánossy (Dr. L.), and P. Ingleby, Penetrating Cosmic Ray Showers, 511
- Jaros (D. B.), A new Method of rendering a Poisonous Snake Harmless, 1025
- Jeffreys (Dr. H.), Theory of Probability (*Review*), 607
- Jeffs (Dr. H. B.), Demography of Canada, 24
- Jellinek (Prof. K.), Kurzes Lehrbuch der physikalischen Chemie. Heft 1 u. 2 (*Review*), 281
- Jenkins (Dr. H. O.), Degeneracy and Dissociation Constants, 149; Resonance in the Chloroacetic Acids, 625
- Jenness (D.), Canada's Indian Policy, 773
- Jennett (W. J.), [Dr. B. P. Dudding and], Statistics and Engineering Practice, 117
- Jerram (M. R. K.), Elementary Forest Mensuration; with a Chapter on the Measurement of Forests, by R. Bourne (*Review*), 496
- Johannsen (Prof. A.), A Descriptive Petrography of the Igneous Rocks. Vol. 1. Second edition (*Review*), 1007
- Johns (C. N.), Archæological Investigations in Jerusalem, 507
- Johnson (Dr. J.), New Supernovæ, 827
- Johnson (J. W. Haigh), Mason's A Catalogue of Yorkshire Fungi (*Review*), 810
- Johnson (T.), and Margaret Newton, Crossing Experiments with Rusts, 786
- Johnstone (Kathleen), Economic Status of Coloured Families in the Port of Liverpool, 268
- Joliot (Prof. F.), and Madame Irene Curie-Joliot, awarded the Barnard gold medal of Columbia University, 666
- Joly (R. A.), [Prof. W. A. Beck and], A Pigmented Nucleus, 226
- Jones (Prof. Bradley), Elements of Practical Aerodynamics. Second edition (*Review*), 496
- Jones (Prof. F. Wood), Life and Living (*Review*), 244
- Jones (G. Howard), Control of Loose Smut Disease, 34
- Jones (H. Humphreys), Pharmacists and the Food Problem, 927
- Jones (Dr. H. Spencer), Relative Gradients of 250 Stars Determined at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, 865
- Jones (Neville), Ancient Gold-working Site in Rhodesia, 430; Rostro-Carinate Stone Implement from Rhodesia, 467
- Jones (Prof. W. Nielson), Some Biological Aspects of Soil Fertility, 411
- Joos (Prof. G.), Lehrbuch der theoretischen Physik. Dritte auflage (*Review*), 528
- Jorissen (Prof. W. P.), retirement from the editorship of the *Chemisch Weekblad*; work of, 20
- Joshi (Prof. A. C.), and A. N. Fotidar, Floral Anatomy of the Oleaceæ, 354
- Jourdain (Rev. F. C. R.), [obituary article], 885
- Joyce (Capt. E. E. M.), [death], 735; [obituary article], 885
- Just (Dr. E. E.), Basic Methods for Experiments on Eggs of Marine Animals (*Review*), 494
- Kaberry (Dr. Phyllis M.), Aboriginal Woman, Sacred and Profane (*Review*), 493
- Kaempffert (Dr. W.), Science To-day and To-morrow (*Review*), 722
- Kalmus (Dr. H.), Diurnal Rhythms in the Axolotl Larva and in *Drosophila*, 72
- Kanai (K.), [K. Sezawa and], Microseisms and Transmission of Atmospheric Disturbances, 154
- Kanner (Dr. L.), Mistletoe, Magic and Medicine, 99
- Kantor (J. H.), [T. M. Little, B. A. Robinson and], Incompatibility in Cosmos, 979
- Kapur (P. L.), Does the Mesotron obey Bose-Einstein or Fermi-Dirac Statistics?, 69
- Karpman (Dr. B.), The Delinquent as a Type, 785
- Kassanis (B.), Intranuclear Inclusions in Virus-infected Plants, 632
- Kaufmann (B. P.), Heterochromatin in the Chromosomes of *Drosophila*, 33
- Kaye (Dr. G. W. C.), Protection of the Radiation Worker (Stanley Melville memorial lecture), 370
- Keeble (Sir Frederick), Science Lends a Hand in the Garden (*Review*), 403
- Keeler (C. E.), and H. C. Trimble, Inheritance of Instinct, 865
- Keesecker (W.), A Review of Educational Legislation: 1937 and 1938, 930
- Keesom (Prof. W. H.), and G. E. Macwood, Viscosities near Absolute Zero, 393
- Keilin (Prof. D.), and Dr. T. Mann, Some Properties of Laccase from the Latex of Lacquer Trees, 304; and Dr. E. F. Hartree, Properties of Cytochrome c, 934
- Keith (Sir Arthur), [T. D. McCown and], The Stone Age of Mount Carmel: the Fossil Human Remains from the Levalloiso-Mousterian. Vol. 2 (*Review*), 837
- Kellogg (R.), Whales, Giants of the Sea, 259
- Kelly (Isabel T.), Shamanism in the South-West United States, 941
- Kemp (Capt. R.), awarded the Buckston Browne prize, 183
- Kendall (Prof. J.), Young Chemists and Great Discoveries (*Review*), 123
- Kendall (M. G.), A Theory of Probability (*Review*), 607; and B. Babington Smith, Tables of Random Sampling Numbers (*Review*), 1010
- Kendrick (T. D.), Antiquities from the Sutton Hoo Ship-Burial, 231
- Kennaway (Prof. E. L.), [Prof. J. W. Cook, N. M. Kennaway and], Production of Tumours in Mice by Deoxycholic Acid, 627
- Kennaway (N. M.), [Prof. J. W. Cook, Prof. E. L. Kennaway and], Production of Tumours in Mice by Deoxycholic Acid, 627
- Kennedy (G. F.), Water-Power in Durham, 772
- Kennedy (J. W.), G. T. Seaborg and E. Segré, Nuclear Isomerism in Zinc, 269
- Kennedy (Dr. W. B.), Drug Addiction, 456
- Kennet of the Dene (Lord), Chalk Landscape, 466
- Kerbosch (Dr. M.), Cinchona Production in the Netherlands Indies, 738
- Kernig (Dr. Waldemar), centenary of the birth of; work of, 926
- Kerr (Sir John Graham), Binocular Vision, 901
- Kerr (T.), The Herring Material in the Perch Pituitary, 591
- Kerridge (Dr. Phyllis Tookey), [death], 1011
- Khan (M. A. R.), Observations of the Zodiacal Light, 393; Meteor Observations from India, 468
- King (A.), awarded the Gill memorial of the Royal Geographical Society, 665
- King (A. J.), [B. G. Churcher and], Limitation of Transformer Noise, 1029
- King (late Sir Truby), proposed monument to, 1015
- King (W. R.), [obituary article], 850
- Kingsbury (A. W. G.), Occurrence of Bismuthinite in Somerset, 351
- Kinnear (N. B.), G. L. Bates, 291
- Kinzer [Almy, Fuller and], Fluorescence of Diacetyl, 468
- Kipping (Dr. F. Barry), [Prof. F. Stanley Kipping and], Perkin and Kipping's Organic Chemistry. Part 3. Revised edition (*Review*), 495

- Kipping (Prof. F. Stanley), and Dr. F. Barry Kipping, Perkin and Kipping's Organic Chemistry. Part 3. Revised edition (*Review*), 495
- Kirk (Dr. R.), [Dr. E. S. Horgan and], Antimony Treatment of Kala-Azar, 228
- Klein (Major A. B.), Colour Cinematography. Second edition (*Review*), 142
- Klein (Prof. S.), [death], 964
- Knaggs (Dr. I. E.), Dr. K. Lonsdale, Dr. A. Müller and A. R. Ubbelohde, Anomalous X-Ray Reflections on Laue Photographs, 820
- Knower (Dr. H. M.), Lymphatic System of the Anura, 755
- Knox (Miss), Spores of Bryophyta, 978
- Knox (G. D.), The Bed of Procrustes, 585
- Koczy (F.), [H. Pettersson, F. Gross and], Large-Scale Plankton Cultures, 698
- Kon (Dr. S. K.), Nutritive Importance of Eggs in the Diet, 788
- Konikova (Dr. A.), Glutamic Acid of Proteins, 312
- Kostanecki (Prof. K.), [death], 542
- Krantz, Jun. (J. C.), [Ruth Musser and], The Friendship of Boyle and Wren, 182
- Krasny-Ergen (W.), Separation of Uranium Isotopes, 742
- Krishna (Dr. S.), Role of Chemistry in Forestry, 470
- Krishnan (Prof. K. S.), Landau Diamagnetism and the Fermi-Dirac Energy Distribution of the Metallic Electrons in Graphite, 31; Electronic Specific Heat of Graphite, 388; Diamagnetism of the Mobile Electrons in Aromatic Molecules, 470
- Krishnan (Dr. R. S.), and Dr. T. E. Banks, A New Type of Disintegration Produced by Deuterons, 777; Fission of Uranium and Thorium under Deuteron Bombardment, 860
- Kroeber (Prof. A. L.), Statistical Methods and Ethnographical Observations, 300
- Krunbein (W. C.), Manual of Sedimentary Petrography I: Sampling, Preparation for Analysis, Mechanical Analysis, and Statistical Analysis (*Review*), 85
- Kullenberg (B.), [Dr. H. Pettersson and], A Vacuum Core-Sampler for Deep-Sea Sediments, 306
- Küster (E.), [L. Aschoff, W. J. Schmidt and], Hundert Jahre Zellforschung (*Review*), 875
- Kynch (G. J.), E. H. Lloyd and Dr. W. G. Penney, Calculations on the Energies of Hydrocarbons, 777
- Labriola (R.), [Dr. V. Deulofeu, E. Duprat and], Acetyl Content of Marinobufagin, Arenobufagin and Acetylmarinobufagin, 71
- Laby (Prof. T. H.), J. J. McNeill, F. G. Nicholls, and A. F. B. Nickson, Study of Atmospherics, 517; and V. D. Hopper, The Electronic Charge, 932
- Lack (D.), The Releaser Concept in Bird Behaviour, 107
- La Flesche (late F.), Osage Warfare, 33
- de La Hire (Phillippe), Tercentenary of the birth of, 415
- Laidlaw (Sir Patrick), [death], 492; [obituary article], 580
- Laing (Dr. E. V.), A Century in the Forest Life of New Zealand, 943
- Lambert (M. R.), Biology for Junior Forms: with Instructions for Simple Practical Experiments (*Review*), 205
- Lambert (R. H.), [Dr. S. E. Sheppard, R. D. Walker and], Steric Influence in Optically Sensitizing Dyes, 386; Optical Sensitizing of Silver Halides by Dyes, 969
- Lamont (Dr. A.), First Use of Current-Bedding to Determine Orientation of Strata, 1016
- Lampitt (Dr. L. H.), Manufacture, Preservation and Distribution of Food, 807
- Lamprecht (H. A. K.), Seed Coat Colour in the Bean, 827
- Landsberg (H.), Density of Seismograph Stations, 675
- Lane (F. W.), Nature Parade (*Review*), 657
- Lang (Prof. W. H.), impending retirement of; work of, 543
- Langdon-Brown (Sir Walter), How do Drugs Act?, 273
- Langdon-Davies (J.), Science for a New Audience (*Review*), 201
- Langham (D. S.), Zea-Euchlæna Hybrids, 633
- Laporte (Prof. M.), Décharge électrique dans les gaz (*Review*), 500
- Lara (H.), [A. G. Sison, M. M. Herbosa, A. A. Lozano and], Life Expectancy in the Philippines, 967
- Lasnet (Inspector-General Dr. A.), Hygiene in South China, 100
- Laszt (Dr. L.), Intestinal Sugar Absorption and Phosphate Metabolism, 899
- Latham (R.), [D. G. Hurst, W. B. Lewis and], Nuclear Reactions with Bismuth, 633
- Laubeuf (Max), [death], 133
- Lawrence (Prof. E. O.), awarded the Duddell medal of the Physical Society; work of, 852
- Lawrence (Dr. J. H.), Some Biological Applications of Neutrons and Artificial Radioactivity, 125
- Lawrence (W. J. C.), The Genus Streptocarpus, 269
- Lawrie (W. B.), awarded, with W. T. Wilson, the Williams prize of the Iron and Steel Institute, 548
- Leach (E. R.), Kurds of the Rowanduz Area, Iraq, 710
- Leach (R.), Biological Control of a Fungus Disease, 153
- Leah (Dr. A. B.), Latent Energy and Dissociation in Explosions, 897
- Ledingham (G. F.), Interspecific Hybridization in Medicago Hybrids, 595
- Lee (Prof. J. S.), The Geology of China (*Review*), 169
- Lees (Prof. S.), [death], 179; [obituary article], 492
- Lehmann (Prof. B.), [death], 454
- Leibowitz (Dr. J.), and S. Hestrin, Substrate Specificity of Yeast Zymase, 671
- Leitch (D.), Applications of Statistics to Palæontology, 1026
- Lejeune (Prof. F.), appointed professor of the history of medicine and director of the Institute of the History of Medicine at Vienna, 24
- Leloup (Dr.), [Dr. Adam and], East Indian Gastropods, 229
- Levi (Dr. H.), Radio-Sulphur, 588
- Levisohn (Ida), [Dr. M. C. Rayner and], Production of Synthetic Mycorrhiza in the Cultivated Cranberry, 461
- Levy (Prof. H.), and others, Position of Science and Scientists in the War Situation, 61
- Lévy (Dr. J. C.), Malaria as an Occupational Disease, 853
- Lewis (A. H.), [W. S. Ferguson, S. J. Watson and], Teart Disease in Cattle, 941
- Lewis (D.), [M. B. Crane and], Classification of Pears, 942
- Lewis (D. T.), Relationship between the Critical Temperatures, Boiling Points, and the Parachor Values of Simple Molecules, 551
- Lewis (G. L.), and C. P. Smyth, Structures of Ozone and Some Compounds, 35
- Lewis (Prof. G. N.), elected a foreign member of the Royal Society; work of, 851
- Lewis (W. B.), [D. G. Hurst, R. Latham and], Nuclear Reactions with Bismuth, 633
- Lewis (W. V.), Cirque Formation, 269
- Liddell (Dr. E. G. T.), appointed Waynflete professor of physiology in Oxford University; work of, 292
- Limousine (Stanislas), a monument of, 385
- Lindemann (Prof. F. A.), conferment upon, of an honorary doctorate by Aberdeen University, 599; appointed a personal assistant to the Prime Minister, 817; 852
- Linnell (Dr. W. H.), The Plant Alkaloids (*Review*), 243
- Linstead (H. N.), and others, Economic Problems of Industrial Scientists, 715
- Lipson (M.), [M. R. Freney and], Effects of Concentrated Aqueous and Certain Non-aqueous Solutions of Alkali upon Wool, 25
- Lipton (M. A.), and Prof. C. A. Elvehjem, Mechanism of the Enzymatic Phosphorylation of Thiamin, 226
- Little (T. M.), J. H. Kantor and B. A. Robinson, Incompatibility in Cosmos, 979
- Ljunggren (B. W. L.), awarded the Andrew Carnegie silver medal of the Iron and Steel Institute, 548
- Lloyd (E. H.), [G. J. Kynch, Dr. W. G. Penney and], Calculations on the Energies of Hydrocarbons, 777
- Lloyd (Dr. J. W.), appointed acting head of the department of horticulture in the College of Agriculture, Illinois University, 740
- Lochhead (A. G.), The 'Rhizosphere', 711
- Lockley (R. M.), Some Experiments in Rabbit Control, 767

- Lockwood (E. H.), Algebra for Science and Engineering Students (*Review*), 1008
- Lockwood (W. H.), [D. P. Mellor and], A Magnetic Study of the Effect of Bond Angle Distortion, 862
- Loewenthal (Dr. H.), and Prof. F. L. Hopwood, Serological Properties of Extracts of Hæmolytic Streptococci Prepared by Ultrasonic Vibrations, 858
- Lomonosov (M. V.), (1711-1765), work of, 926
- Longcope (Dr. W. T.), elected president of the board of directors of the Rockefeller Institute of Medical Research, 302
- Lonsdale (Dr. Kathleen), Magnetism and the Structure of Matter, 57; Magnetic Anisotropy of Diphenyldiacetylene, 148; [Dr. I. E. Knaggs, Dr. A. Müller, A. R. Ubbelohde and], Anomalous X-Ray Reflections on Laue Photographs, 820
- Loofbourow (Prof. J. R.), and Sister Cecilia Marie Dwyer, Effect of the Suspending Medium on the Production of Growth Factors by Injured Cells, 185
- Lotz (Prof. F.), Steinsalz und Kalisalz : Geologie (*Review*), 279
- Löve (Åskell), Polyploidy in *Rumex acetosella* L., 351
- Love (Prof. A. E. H.), [death], 925
- Lovegrove (W. H.), [death], 179; 492
- Loveland (Dr. G. A.), [death], 964
- Lovell (Dr. B.), Science and Civilization (*Review*), 661
- Lowe (Dr. P. R.), National Collections in London or in the Country?, 889
- Lowenfeld (V.), translated by O. A. Oeser, The Nature of Creative Activity (*Review*), 662
- Lownds (A. G.), Economy in Education, 863
- Lozano (A. A.), [A. G. Sison, H. Lara, M. M. Herbosa and], Life Expectancy in the Philippines, 967
- Lubbock (D.), [Sir John Orr and], Feeding the People in War-Time (*Review*), 475
- Luckwill (L. C.), Seed Weight in the Tomato, 33
- Ludford (Dr. R. J.), [C. W. Emmens and], Action of Estrogens on the Female Genital Tract, 746
- Lundegårdh (Prof. H.), Salt Absorption of Plants, 114
- Luria (Dr. S.), [E. Wollman, F. Holweck and], Effect of Radiations on Bacteriophage C_{16} , 935
- Luthra (Prof. Jai Chand), Crop Production in India, 521
- Lynch (Dr. G. R.), [Dr. D. Harley and], Blood-group Tests and Paternity, 889
- Lynch (S. J.), The Papaya (*Caprica papaya* L.) in South Florida, 458
- Lynch (Prof. W. A.), Earth Tremors in New Jersey, 258
- Lyon (C. J.), Weather and Radial Growth of Trees, 595
- Lyon (Dr. R. A.), Development of International Health Organizations, 217
- McBain (Prof. J. W.), Colloidal Electrolytes, 702; and others, Surface of Solutions, 786
- McCance (Dr. A.), awarded the Bessemer gold medal of the Iron and Steel Institute, 548
- McCance (R. A.), and E. M. Widdowson, Chemical Composition of Foods, 664
- Machatschek (Prof. F.), Das Relief der Erde: Versuch einer regionalen Morphologie der Erdoberfläche. Band 1 (*Review*), 1007
- McClellan (D.), and C. W. Hale, Mucinase and Tissue Permeability, 867
- McClung (L. S.), [Elizabeth McCoy and], The Anaerobic Bacteria and their Activities in Nature and Disease: A Subject Bibliography. 2 Vols. (*Review*), 499
- McCollum (Prof. E. V.), Dr. Elsa Orent-Keiles and Dr. H. G. Day, The Newer Knowledge of Nutrition. Fifth edition (*Review*), 816
- McComb (H. E.), [J. H. Nelson and], The McComb-Romberg Seismometer, 159; New Seismographic Equipment in the United States, 419
- McCown (T. D.), and Sir Arthur Keith, The Stone Age of Mount Carmel: The Fossil Human Remains from the Levallois-Mousterian. Vol. 2 (*Review*), 837
- McCoy (Elizabeth), and L. S. McClung, The Anaerobic Bacteria and their Activities in Nature and Disease: A Subject Bibliography. 2 Vols. (*Review*), 499
- McDowall (Prof. R. J. S.), with the assistance of Lt.-Col. G. E. Malcomson and I. McWhan, The Control of the Circulation of the Blood (*Review*), 206
- McEntee (S.), Electrical Development in Ireland, 699
- MacGillavry (Carolina H.), Diffraction of Convergent Electron Beams, 189
- Macgregor (Dr. M.), Preservation of Geological Records, 576
- MacKenna (Sir James), [death], 581; [obituary article], 735
- Mackenzie (Lt.-Col. E. F. W.), Metropolitan Water Board: Thirty-third Annual Report, 830
- McKerrow (J. C.), Evolution without Natural Selection, 546
- Mackie (Dr. F. P.), Air Transport, Insects and Disease, 391
- Mackmurdo (A. H.), The Social Organism, 187
- McMahon (P. R.), [Dr. F. W. Dry, J. A. Sutherland and], A Mendelian Situation in the Birthcoat of the New Zealand Romney Lamb, 390
- Macmillan (Prof. W. M.), [Dr. C. K. Meek, E. R. J. Hussey and], Europe and West Africa: Some Problems and Adjustments (*Review*), 655
- MacNalty (Sir Arthur), Health of the School Child, 255; Public Health in War-time (Chadwick lecture), 315
- Macnaughton-Jones (H.), Hearing and Equilibrium (*Review*), 662
- McPetrie (Dr. J. S.), and J. A. Saxton, Characteristics within Optical Range of the Propagation of Radio Waves, 234; and Miss A. C. Stickland, Reflection Curves and Propagation Characteristics of Radio Waves Along the Earth's Surface, 234
- McWilliams (Prof. J. A.), Cosmology: A Text for Colleges. Second edition (*Review*), 816
- Macwood (G. E.), [Prof. W. H. Keesom and], Viscosities Near Absolute Zero, 393
- Madella (G. B.), Musical Pitch of Orchestras, 396
- Madoo (R. M.), [Prof. T. Boza-Barducci and], Relationship of *Gossypium Raimondii* Ulbr., 553
- Maggi (Leopoldo), centenary of the birth of, 736
- Maillieux (E.), Fossils from the Belgian Ordovician, 229
- Majundar (D. N.), Blood-groups and Castes, 1025
- Mangelsdorf (P. C.), and R. G. Reeves, Origin of Maize, 711
- Mann (Dr. F. G.), and Dr. B. C. Saunders, Introduction to Practical Organic Chemistry (*Review*), 202
- Mann (Dr. H. H.), Sir James MacKenna, 735
- Mann (Prof. John Dixon), centenary of the birth of; work of, 544
- Mann (Dr. P. J. G.), and Dr. J. H. Quastel, Vitamin B₁₂ and Acetylcholine Formation in Isolated Brain, 856
- Mann (Dr. T.), [Prof. D. Keilin and], Some Properties of Laccase from the Latex of Lacquer Trees, 304
- Mann (Dr. W. B.), The Cyclotron (*Review*), 1007
- Mapother (Prof. E.), [death], 492; [obituary article], 652
- Maragliano (Prof. E.), [death], 414; [obituary article], 886
- Marcovitch (S.), Cryolite as an Insecticide, 865
- Mardles (Dr. E. W. J.), Viscosity of Suspensions and the Einstein Equation, 970
- Marett (Dr. R. R.), Charity and the Struggle for Existence (Huxley memorial lecture), 37
- Margoliouth (Prof. D. S.), [death], 492; [obituary article], 542
- Marie (Prof. Pierre), [obituary article], 925
- Mark (Dr. H.), and R. Simha, Viscosity and Molecular Structure, 571
- Mark (Prof. K. L.), [Prof. J. F. Norris and], Laboratory Exercises in Inorganic Chemistry. Second edition (*Review*), 657
- Marks (P. L.), A Handbook on Ventilation, including Air Conditioning (*Review*), 501
- Marlière (Dr. R.), Fauna of the Belgian Cretaceous, 942
- Marsh (Dr. F.), Bilirubin in Urine, 782; Evulsion of Front Teeth in East Africa, 1013
- Marshall (A.), "Books in War-time," 977
- Marshall (Dr. F. H. A.), Human Embryology (*Review*), 569
- Marshall (S. M.), A. G. Nicholls and A. P. Orr, Growth and Feeding of Young Herring, 467
- Martin (Dr. Louis), elected president of the Paris Academy of Medicine, 346

- Martin (Prof. L. C.), Prof. F. K. Richtmyer, 215
 Marvin (F. S.), Mr. Fisher's Various Essays (*Review*), 683 ;
 H. A. L. Fisher, 694
 Marx (Prof. C. D.), [death], 380
 Mason (late F. A.), A Catalogue of Yorkshire Fungi
 (*Review*), 810
 Mason (J. H.), J. D. W. A. Coles and Dr. R. A. Alexander,
 Cultivation of Bluetongue Virus in Fertile Eggs pro-
 duced on a Vitamin-deficient Diet, 1022
 Mason (Dr. S. L.), [Prof. K. F. Mather and], A Source
 Book in Geology (*Review*), 478
 Massa (F.), [Dr. H. F. Olson and], Applied Acoustics.
 Second edition (*Review*), 138
 Massart (L.), and R. Dufait, Action of Ions on Acetyl-
 cholinesterase, 822
 Massengale (J. T.), [A. V. Morton, G. M. Richardson and],
 Mechanism of Wurtz Syntheses, 556
 Massey (Prof. H. S. W.), Prof. J. H. Michell, 616
 Massey (W. H.), [death], 805
 Masson (Dr. J. I. O.), The Universities and Research,
 855 ; Progress of the Royal Society (*Review*), 873
 Matagrín (A.), Le soja et les industries du soja : produits
 alimentaires, huile de soja, lécithine végétale, caséine
 végétale (*Review*), 48
 Mather (Dr. K.), Outbreeding and Separation of the Sexes,
 484 ; True and False Teleology, 705 ; Analysis of
 Field Trials, 945 ; Position of Chiasmata, 979
 Mather (Dr. K. F.), Future of Man as an Inhabitant of the
 Earth, 663 ; and Dr. S. L. Mason, A Source Book in
 Geology (*Review*), 478
 Matheson (C.), The Black Rat in Great Britain, 416
 Mathieu (J. P.), Raman Spectra of Co-ordination Com-
 pounds, 675
 Mathisson (Dr. M.), Prof. C. Bialobrzewski, 132
 Matthes (F. E.), New International Commission of Snow
 and Glaciers, 753
 Matthews (F. J.), Boiler Feed Water Treatment. Second
 edition (*Review*), 840
 Matthews (Z. K.), Marriage Customs Among the Baralong,
 South Africa, 268
 Maude (P.), Chromosome Members of British Plants, 865
 Maxim (Sir Hiram), centenary of the birth of ; work of,
 292
 Maxted (R.), and J. Bertram, Daytime Lighting of Blacked-
 out Factories, 928
 Maxwell (R. S.), [Prof. H. S. Allen and], A Text-Book of
 Heat. 2 Parts (*Review*), 86
 May (A. N.), [Dr. C. F. Powell, Prof. J. Chadwick, T. G.
 Pickavance and], Excited States of Stable Nuclei, 893
 Mayneord (Dr. W. V.), Total Energy Absorption in Bio-
 logical Objects, 972
 Mazillier (Dr. M.), Hygiene in Swimming Baths, 738
 Meade-King (Sir William), [death], 695
 Meek (Dr. C. K.), Prof. W. M. Macmillan and E. R. J.
 Hussey, Europe and West Africa : Some Problems
 and Adjustments (*Review*), 655
 Meitner (Prof. L.), Capture Cross-sections for Thermal
 Neutrons in Thorium, Lead and Uranium 238, 422
 Melin (G.), Japanese Anomura, 785
 Mellanby (Sir Edward), [Prof. D. C. Harrison and],
 Ionization of Calcium Phytate, 745
 Mellanby (Dr. Helen), Culture, Diet and Teeth, 966 ;
 Teeth of Finnish Lapps, 978
 Mellor (D. P.), and W. H. Lockwood, A Magnetic Study
 of the Effect of Bond Angle Distortion, 862
 Melmore (S.), The Generalized Kaleidoscope, 778
 Melsom (S. W.), Electric Cables and Fire Risks, 752
 Melville (Dr. H.), appointed professor of chemistry in
 Aberdeen University ; work of, 654
 Melville (Dr. H. W.), Photochemistry (*Review*), 609
 Melville (Dr. R.), Intergrading Among Plants in Relation
 to the Provenance of Forest Trees, 130
 Mendel (Prof. B.), Dorothy Mundell and Frida Strelitz,
 Action of Ions on Acetylcholinesterase, 822
 Mensinkai (S. W.), Cytological Investigations in Allium,
 353
 Mercer (F.), E. T. Cottingham, 653
 Mericola (F. C.), [H. S. Booth and], Thionyl Chlorofluoride,
 786
 Merton (Prof. Hugo), [obituary article], 924
 Metcalf (Prof. C. L.), and W. P. Flint, Destructive and
 Useful Insects : their Habits and Control. Second
 edition (*Review*), 405
 Mettenleiter (Dr. M. W.), Interferometric Serum Test for
 Cancer, 305
 Meyer (F.), Fluid Filling-Media for Electrical Apparatus,
 40
 Meyerhof and Perdigon, Glycolysis in Embryos, 631
 Michell (Prof. J. H.), [death], 340 ; [obituary article], 616
 Mieli (A.), avec quelques additions de H. Paul-Joseph
 Renaud, M. Meyerhof and J. Ruska, La science arabe
 et son rôle dans l'évolution scientifique mondiale
 (*Review*), 4
 Miescher (Dr. E.), and E. Rosenthaler, Rotational
 Analysis of the Band Spectrum of Boron Mono-
 bromide, 624
 Mikkola (Dr. E. M.), [obituary article], 380
 Mill (Dr. H. R.), Prof. Jules Schokalsky, 734 ; E. E. M.
 Joyce, 885
 Miller (A.), River Development in Southern Ireland, 75
 Miller (J.), Story of Newton's Inverse Square Law and
 His Use of a False Radius of the Earth, 158
 Miller (J. C.), Sweet Potato Breeding, 353
 Miller (Prof. J. W.), The Structure of Aristotelian Logic
 (*Review*), 815
 Miller (Prof. W. J.), Elements of Geology : with Reference
 to North America. Second edition (*Review*), 295
 Miller (Prof. W. S.), [death], 492
 Millikan (Prof. R. A.), Cosmic Rays (*Review*), 298
 Milne-Redhead and Schweickerdt, Leaf-growth as a
 Systematic Feature in Ammocharis, 229
 Milne-Thomson (Prof. L. M.), Applied Aerodynamics
 (*Review*), 686
 Milner (Prof. S. R.), impending retirement of ; work of,
 887
 Minakami (T.), Explosive Activities of a Japanese Vol-
 cano, 473
 von Mises (Prof. R.), translated by J. Neyman, D. Sholl,
 and E. Rabinowitsch, Probability, Statistics and
 Truth (*Review*), 167
 Mistretta (A. G.), and Prof. F. F. Nord, Gattermann
 Synthesis of Aldehydes, 387
 Mitchell (Dr. J. S.), Wave-length Effect in the Reaction of
 Human Skin to X- and Gamma-Radiation, 105
 Mitchell (Prof. Wesley C.), The Public Relations of Science,
 207
 Mitra (Prof. S. K.), Benoy B. Ray and S. P. Ghosh, Cross-
 section of Atomic Oxygen for Elastic Collision with
 Electrons, and Region *F* Absorption, 1017
 Miyabe (N.), [T. Hagiwara, R. Takei, Y. Otuka and],
 Orgasima (Japan) Earthquake of May 1, 34
 Moglia (J. A.), [V. H. Cicardo and], Liberation of Potas-
 sium from Muscle by Acetylcholine, 551
 Monacelli (Prof. M.), awarded the Ettore Marchiafava
 prize of Rome University, 586
 du Mond, Evaluation of *e*, *m* and *h*, 517
 Mondello (Prof. U.), [death], 179
 Montandon (Prof. G.), Paratypical Forms in Man's Line
 of Descent, 545
 Montet (Prof. E.), Discovery of a Royal Tomb in Egypt,
 300
 Montgomery (H. C.), Hearing Tests, 79
 Moore (Dr. F. J.), Revision Prepared by Prof. W. T. Hall,
 A History of Chemistry. Third edition (*Review*), 294
 Moore (W. C.), Shoot Wilt of *Prunus trilobà*, 153
 Morant (G. M.), with the assistance of B. L. Welch, A
 Bibliography of the Statistical and other Writings of
 Karl Pearson (*Review*), 1010
 Morellet (L. and J.), Tertiary Siphoneous Algæ in the
 W. K. Parker Collection, with Descriptions of Some
 Eocene Siphoneæ from England (*Review*), 810
 Morgan (A. E.), The Needs of Youth, 119
 Morgan (Sir Gilbert), [death], 215 ; [obituary article],
 252
 Morgan (L. V.), Translocation in the Somatic Tissue,
 309
 Morgan (S. O.), [A. H. White, W. S. Bishop, B. S. Biggs
 and], Molecular Rotation in Organic Crystals, 596

- Morgan (Prof. Winona L.), The Family Meets the Depression; A Study of a Group of Highly Selected Families (*Review*), 140
- Morgan (Prof. W. C.), [death], 454
- Morland (D.), [Miss A. D. Betts and], Origin of the Frow Remedy for Acarine Disease of Honey Bees, 824
- Morris (V. H.), C. R. Neiswander and J. D. Sayre; Neiswander and Morris, Toxicity of Selenium-containing Plants to Pests, 430
- Morse (R. S.), and R. M. Bowie, A New Ionization Gauge, 712
- Mortimer (Dr. C. H.), and Dr. E. B. Worthington, A New Application of Echo-Sounding, 212
- Morton (A. V.), J. T. Massengale and G. M. Richardson, Mechanism of Wurtz Syntheses, 556
- Morton (Dr. R. A.), Carotene and Allied Pigments, 286
- Mosher (L. M.), [J. W. M. Bunker, R. S. Harris and], Irradiation of 7-Dehydrocholesterol, 865
- Mott (Prof. N. F.), Properties of Matter in Bulk (*Review*), 239; Theories of the Liquid State, 801; Oxidation of Metals and the Formation of Protective Films, 996
- Mott (P.), awarded the Murchison grant of the Royal Geographical Society, 665
- Mottram (J. C.), 3:4-Benzopyrene, Paramecium and the Production of Tumours, 184; [I. Doniach and], Photodynamic Hemolysis by 3:4-Benzopyrene, 748; [Prof. F. Weigert and], Some Physico-Chemical Properties of 3:4, Benzopyrene, 895
- Mottram (Prof. V. H.), Food and the Housewife, 853
- Moulton (Dr. F. R.), American Association: Columbus Meeting, 288
- Mountford (C. P.), Psychology of the Initiate, 63; and A. Harvey, Australian Shell Ornaments, 74
- Muir (Surgeon Rear-Admiral J. R.), The Life and Achievements of Captain James Cook, R.N., F.R.S., Explorer, Navigator, Surveyor, and Physician (*Review*), 481
- Muirhead (Prof. J. H.), [death], 886
- Mukherjee (Prof. J. N.), and Dr. N. C. Sen Gupta, Formation of Aggregates and Structures in Dilute Solutions of Hydrogen Bentonites, 971
- Mukherji (S. M.), [K. R. Ramanathan and], The Quetta Earthquake of 1935, 393
- Müller (Dr. A.), [Dr. I. E. Knaggs, Dr. K. Lonsdale, A. R. Ubbelohde and], Anomalous X-Ray Reflections on Laue Photographs, 820
- Mulligan (B. O.), A New Species of Rose, 467
- Mundell (Dorothy), [Prof. B. Mendel, Frida Strelitz and], Action of Ions on Acetylcholinesterase, 822
- Mundkur (Dr. B. B.), Smut Fungi of the Sugar-Cane, 827
- Munroe (A. F.), Nitrogen Excretion and Metamorphosis, 268
- Murray (Sir Herbert), [obituary article], 453
- Musser (Ruth), and J. C. Krantz, Jun., The Friendship of Boyle and Wren, 182
- Myers (Prof. G. S.), Zoological Nomenclature, 264
- Myres (Prof. J. L.), Prof. Ernest A. Gardner, 17; Prof. Wilhelm Dörpfeld, 804
- Nachmansohn (Dr. D.), Action of Ions on Choline Esterase, 513
- Nagy (Istvan), Nomad Gypsies of Hungary, 192
- Nall (G. Herbert), [obituary article], 215
- Nannfeldt (J. A.), British Inoperculate Discomycetes, 113
- Napravnik (A.), [H. A. Smith and], Photochemical Oxidation of Hydrogen, 827
- Natividade (J. V.), Rooting of the Olive Tree, 632
- Neblette (C. B.), Photography, its Principles and Practice. Third edition (*Review*), 501
- Nedungadi (T. M. K.), [Sir C. V. Raman and], The α - β transformation of Quartz, 147
- Needham (C. H. Latimer), Aircraft Design. Vol. 1: Aerodynamics; Vol. 2: Aerostructures (*Review*), 368
- Needham (Dr. J.), Biological Nature of the Egg, 788
- Needham (Dr. P. R.), Trout Streams: Conditions that Determine their Productivity and Suggestions for Stream and Lake Management (*Review*), 50
- Nelson (J. H.), and H. E. McComb, The McComb-Romberg Seismometer, 159; New Seismographic Equipment in the United States, 419
- Nevill (E. N.), [obituary article], 339
- Newberry (C. W.), [E. J. Hosking and], Intimate Sketches from Bird Life (*Review*), 874
- Newbold (A. A.), Ice Formation in Worcestershire, 514
- Newcomb (Prof. R.), Outlines of the History of Architecture. Part 4: Modern Architecture, with particular reference to the United States (*Review*), 297
- Newcombe (Col. L.), Scientific and Technical Literature and Information, 109
- Newth (H. G.), [death], 291; [obituary article], 454
- Newton (H. C.), [death], 380
- Newton (Margaret), [T. Johnson and], Crossing Experiments with Rusts, 786
- Nicholls (A.), awarded the premium of the Institution of Naval Architects, 302
- Nicholls (A. G.), Sand-dwelling Copepods, 595
- Nicholls (A. G.), [S. M. Marshall, A. P. Orr and], Growth and Feeding of Young Herring, 467
- Nichols (J. T.), Young Caranx in the Western North Atlantic, 632
- Nicholson (A. J.), A. L. Tonnoir, 453
- Nielsen (E. S.), Distribution of Ceratium, 33
- Nier (Dr. A. O.), Nuclear Fission of Separated Uranium Isotopes, 736
- Nilakantan (P.), [Sir C. V. Raman and], Specular Reflection of X-Rays by High-frequency Sound Waves, 667; Reflection of X-rays with a Change of Frequency, 860
- Nilson (Prof. Lars Frederik), centenary of the birth of; work of, 216
- Nishina (Dr. Y.), Y. Sekido, H. Simamura and H. Arakawa, Cosmic Ray Intensities and Cyclones, 703
- Noble (M.), [Dr. M. Wilson, E. G. Gray and], Blind Seed Disease of Rye Grass, 783
- Nolf (Prof. Pierre), awarded the Franqui prize by the Franqui Foundation Committee, 968
- Noone (H. D.), Vital Statistics of the Lowland Sënoi (Sakai) of Perak, 97; New Neolithic site in Ulu Kelantan, Malaya, 112
- Nord (Prof. F. F.), [A. G. Mistretta and], Gattermann Synthesis of Aldehydes, 387
- Nordenmark (Dr. N. V. E.), and Dr. J. Nordstrom, The Achromatic Lens, 344
- Nordstrom (Dr. J.), [Dr. N. V. E. Nordenmark and], The Achromatic Lens, 344
- Norman (J. R.), Fishes of the John Murray Expedition, 978
- Norris (Prof. J. F.), and Prof. K. L. Mark, Laboratory Exercises in Inorganic Chemistry. Second edition (*Review*), 657
- Northrop (J. H.), Crystalline Enzymes: the Chemistry of Pepsin, Trypsin and Bacteriophage (*Review*), 990
- Northrup (Dr. E. F.), [death], 964
- Norton (Prof. A. E.), [death], 542
- Norton (A. P.), A Star Atlas and Reference Handbook (Epoch 1920-1950): for Students and Amateurs. Seventh edition (*Review*), 656
- Nowak (Prof. J.), [death], 542
- Nutt (D. C.), [J. W. Aldrich and], Birds of Newfoundland and Colour Modification, 352
- O'Brien (Dr. A. J. R.), [death], 454
- Ochoa (Dr. S.), 'Coupling' of Phosphorylation with Oxidation of Pyruvic Acid in Brain Tissue, 747
- Ockrent (Dr. C.), and W. H. Banks, Surface Potential Changes of Thin Films in the Transformation Liquid to Solid, 861
- O'Colla (P.), [Prof. T. Dillon and], Acetolysis of Carrageen Mucilage, 749
- O'Connor (W. F.), [Dr. P. J. Drumm and], Pigments of Sponges, 425
- Oddie (T. H.), [C. E. Eddy and], Physical Aspects of Radium and Radon Therapy. Second edition, 864
- O'Dea (W. T.), Electrical Invention and Re-Invention, 771
- Ogilvie (L.), [H. E. Croxall and], Growth Hormones in Seed Dressings, 516

- Ohlin (Dr. Per), Determination of h/e by the Method of Isochromats, 223
- Olbers (Heinrich Wilhelm Matthias), centenary of the death of; work of, 341
- Oliphant (Prof. M. L. E.), Physics in War, 299
- Olson (Dr. H. F.), and F. Massa, Applied Acoustics. Second edition (*Review*), 138
- Orent-Keiles (Dr. Elsa), [Prof. E. V. McCollum, Dr. H. G. Day and], The Newer Knowledge of Nutrition. Fifth edition (*Review*), 816
- Orr (A. P.), [S. M. Marshall, A. G. Nicholls and], Growth and Feeding of Young Herring, 467
- Orr (Sir John Boyd), Food Production and Food Control, 374; and D. Lubbock, Feeding the People in War-Time (*Review*), 475
- Orton (Prof. J. H.), Effect of the Severe Frost of the Winter of 1939-40 on the Fauna of the Essex Oyster Beds, 708
- Osborn (Dr. T. W. B.), [Ellen Radloff and], Malnutrition in South Africa, 22; and J. H. S. Gear, Possible Relation between ability to Synthesize Vitamin C and Reaction to Tubercle Bacillus, 974
- Otuka (Y.), [T. Hagiwara, N. Miyabe, R. Takei and], Ogasima (Japan) Earthquake of May 1, 34
- Ou (S. H.), A Beneficial Pathogen, 675; [S. C. Teng and], Mycology in China, 1025
- Overbeck (Prof. C. J.), New Physical Apparatus, 219
- Owen (A. D. K.), Problems of Evacuation, 270
- Page (W. M.), Life-histories of Coprophilous Fungi, 113
- Paget, Bt. (Sir Richard), The Study of Handwriting (*Review*), 645
- Pallis (Marietta), The General Aspects of the Vegetation of Europe (*Review*), 135
- Panikkar (N. Kesava), Osmotic Properties of the Common Prawn, 108
- Paramasivan (S.), Ancient Wall-Painting in Southern India, 195
- Paraskevopoulos (J. S.), [Dr. H. Shapley and], Nebulae and Star Clusters in the Southern Hemisphere, 596
- Parker (G. H.), Melanophores of the Cat Fish, 555
- Parr (A. E.), Quantitative Observations on the Pelagic Sargassum Vegetation of the Western North Atlantic, 559
- Parry (T. W.), Technique in Prehistoric Trephining, 594
- Partington (Prof. J. R.), A College Course of Inorganic Chemistry (*Review*), 51
- Partridge (G. W.), [death], 735
- Pathak (S. N.), Origin of Wheat, 827
- Pauling (Prof. L.), The Nature of the Chemical Bond and the Structure of Molecules and Crystals: an Introduction to Modern Structural Chemistry (*Review*), 644
- Payne (C. J.), [B. W. Anderson and], Kornerupine from Ceylon: a New Occurrence, 266
- Peach (F. E. R.), Birds of the Fenland, 459
- Peacock (H. A.), Elementary Microtechnique. Second edition (*Review*), 1005
- Pearce (Miss E. K.), [obituary article], 178
- Pearce (H. L.), Water-Culture of Apple Trees, 595
- Pearson (A. A.), New Descriptions of Agarics, 153
- Pedersen (Dr. K. O.), [Prof. The Svedberg and], The Ultracentrifuge (*Review*), 566
- Peel (A.), War-time Ventilation, 737
- Pei (Wen-Chung), An Attempted Correlation of Quaternary Geology, Palaeontology and Prehistory in Europe and China, 516
- Peierls (Prof. R.), The Theory of Nuclear Forces, 687
- Pellew (C.), Genetics of the Garden Pea, 751
- Penney (Dr. W. G.), [G. J. Kynch, E. H. Lloyd and], Calculations on the energies of Hydrocarbons, 777
- Percival (Dr. E. G. V.), and J. Buchanan, Carrageen Mucilage, 1020
- Percy (Lord Eustace), Peace-making After War, 610
- Perdigon [Meyerhof and], Glycolysis in Embryos, 631
- Peristiany (Dr. J. G.), The Social Institutions of the Kipsigis (*Review*), 877
- Petrović (A.), Gypsy Luck in Serbia, 229
- Pettersson (Dr. H.), Blue Rock Salt, 743; and B. Kullenberg, A Vacuum Core-Sampler for Deep-Sea Sediments, 306; F. Gross and F. Koczy, Large-scale Plankton Cultures, 698
- Pettifor (C. B.), [S. H. Clarke and], Influence of Cell Wall Composition on the Moisture Relations of Hardwood Timbers, 424
- Pettijohn (F. J.), Manual of Sedimentary Petrography, II: Shape Analysis, Mineralogical Analysis, Chemical Analysis, and Mass Properties (*Review*), 85
- Pettit (E.), Energy in the Solar Ultra-Violet, 1026
- Pfeiffer (Dr. H. H.), Experimentelle Cytologie (*Review*), 477
- Philp (J.), Maize Breeding, 556
- Philpot (H. P.), Instructions in Engineering Design. Vol. 2: Lattice Girder Bridge (*Review*), 658
- Philpot (J. St. L.), The Ultracentrifuge (*Review*), 566
- Piaggio (Prof. H. T. H.), Mathematical Methods in Economics (*Review*), 8; Huygens' Principle (*Review*), 531
- Pickard (Sir Robert), Work of the Institute of Chemistry, 382
- Pickavance (T. G.), [Dr. C. F. Powell, A. N. May, Prof. J. Chadwick and], Excited States of Stable Nuclei, 893
- Pickles (Dr. W. N.), Epidemiology in Country Practice (*Review*), 813
- Pickwell (Prof. G.), [Prof. C. D. Duncan and], The World of Insects (*Review*), 1005
- Pincus (G.), and C. H. Waddington, Induction of Polyploidy in Rabbit Ova, 595
- Pincus (S.), Offspring from Artificially Activated Ova, 33
- Pirie (J. H. Harvey), Listeria: Change of Name for a genus of Bacteria, 264
- Pirie (N. W.), [F. C. Bawden and], Purification of Insect-transmitted Viruses, 632
- Pledge (H. F.), Science since 1500: a Short History of Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology (*Review*), 570
- Plimmer (Mrs. Violet G.), Food Values at a Glance: and How to Plan a Healthy Diet. Second edition (*Review*), 1005
- Plugge (Capt. L. F.), elected chairman of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee at the House of Commons; work of, 20
- Plummer (Prof. H. C.), elected president of the Royal Astronomical Society, 259; Ordnance and Gunnery (*Review*), 443
- Pocock (R. I.), The Fauna of British India, including Ceylon and Burma: Mammalia. Vol. 1: Primates and Carnivora (in part), Families, Felidae and Viverridae (*Review*), 164
- Poisson (Siméon Denis), centenary of the death of; work of, 619
- Pollock (Dr. H. M.), Mental Disease in Peru, 144; Alcohol and Mental Disease, 902
- Polson (Dr. A.), Electrophoresis of Animal Viruses and their Neutralizing Antibodies in Low Concentrations, 27
- Ponsford (Dr. A. Phyllis), [W. Lyle Stewart and], Pining in Sheep not Curable by Cobalt Administration, 1023
- Popper (Dr. K. R.), Interpretation of Nebular Red-Shifts, 69, 701
- Porritt (B. D.), [death], 179; [obituary article], 340
- Porter (L. C.), Ultra-Violet and Infra-Red Radiations on the Farm, 257
- Portevin (G.), Ce qu'il faut savoir des insectes. Vol. 2: Coléoptères et hémiptères (*Review*), 811
- Potter (Prof. G. E.), Laboratory Outline for General Zoology (*Review*), 656
- Potter (R. D.), appointed science editor of the *American Weekly*, 968
- Powell (A. D.), awarded the Harrison lectureship medal of the Pharmaceutical Society, 66; Drug Standardization (Harrison memorial lecture), 96
- Powell (Dr. C. F.), Further Applications of the Photographic Method in Nuclear Physics, 155; A. N. May, Prof. J. Chadwick and T. G. Pickavance, Excited States of Stable Nuclei, 893
- Powell (Dr. F. C.), Relativity of Time, 626

- Powell (H. M.), and D. Clark, Crystal Structure of Phosphorus Pentabromide, 971; and Dr. A. F. Wells, Crystal Structure of Phosphorus Pentachloride, 149
- Powers (L.), Quantitative Characters, 154
- Pratt (J. Davidson), appointed an additional deputy director-general for chemical research, experiment and development in the Ministry of Supply, 931
- Prebus (A.), [Prof. E. F. Burton, J. Hillier and], The Electron Microscope at Toronto, 942
- Preiswerk (Prof. H.), [death], 653
- Prescott (Dr. F.), Intermediate Chemistry, Inorganic and Physical (*Review*), 51
- Preston (Lt.-Col. the Hon. R. M.), elected president of the Institute of Metals, 586
- Preston (W. M.), Absorption of the Hydrogen line 1215.7Å. by Air, 623
- Price (Ll. I.), [Prof. A. S. Romer and], The Oldest Vertebrate Egg, 516
- Price (Prof. T. Slater), impending retirement of; work of, 926
- Priestley (Dr. R.), Universities in War-time, 381
- Probert (Prof. F. H.), [death], 964
- Pruthi (Dr. Hem Singh), Ecology and Control of Insects, 520
- Pryor (Cadet S. R.), awarded the Howard prize of the Royal Meteorological Society, 1015
- Pugh (B.), [Prof. W. T. David and], Latent Energy and Dissociation in Flame Gases, 896
- Pullinger (Dr.), Cytology of Carcinogenesis, 864
- Pulver (Dr. R.), and Prof. F. Verzář, Connexion between Carbohydrate and Potassium Metabolism in the Yeast Cell, 823
- Punnett (Prof. R. C.), Linkage group in the Sweet Pea, 1025
- Purvis (Prof. F. P.), [obituary article], 414
- Purvis (Dr. O. N.), Vernalization of Fragments of Embryo Tissue, 462
- Puzanov (Prof. I. I.), Zoogeography (*Review*), 52
- Quaranta (F.), Ethiopia: an Empire in the Making (*Review*), 168
- Quarrell (Dr. A. G.), Oxide Films on Alloy Steels, 821
- Quastel (Dr. J. H.), [Dr. P. J. G. Mann and], Vitamin B₁ and Acetylcholine Formation in Isolated Brain, 856
- de Quervain (Prof. F.), [obituary article], 291
- Raaz (Dr. F.), und Dr. H. Tertsch, Geometrische Kristallographie und Kristalloptik und deren Arbeitsmethoden (*Review*), 812
- Raber (Dr. O.), [death], 581
- Radloff (Ellen), and T. W. B. Osborn, Malnutrition in South Africa, 22
- Rainey (F. G.), and I. Rouse, Prehistory in Haiti, 785
- Ramachandran (B. V.), [Dr. M. Damodaran and], Amino-Acids of Casein Phosphopeptide, 857
- Ramakrishnan (K. P.), Vertical Air Currents, 75; [K. R. Ramanathan and], General Circulation of the Atmosphere over India and its Neighbourhood, 471
- Raman (Sir C. V.), and T. M. K. Nedungadi, The α - β transformation of Quartz, 147; and P. Nilakantan, Specular Reflection of X-rays by High-frequency Sound Waves, 667; Reflection of X-rays with a Change of Frequency, 860
- Ramanathan (K. R.), and S. M. Mukherji, The Quetta Earthquake of 1935, 393; and K. P. Ramakrishnan, General Circulation of the Atmosphere over India and its Neighbourhood, 471
- Ramanujam (Dr. S.), An Apetalous Mutation in Turnip (*Brassica campestris* L.), 552
- Ramaswami (L. S.), Amphibian Anatomy, 467
- Ramsbottom (Dr. J.), A Book of Roses (*Review*), 136; Early Botany at Oxford, 993
- Randriamanana (Dr. F.), Demography of Madagascar, 98
- Ranganathan (S.), [Dr. H. K. Sen and], Uses of Lac (*Review*), 815
- Rangaswami (Rao Sahib S.), and A. L. Griffith, 'Spike' Disease of Sandal, 754
- Rao (Dr. K. R.), and M. G. Sastry, Structure of the OD Bands of Heavy Water, 778
- Rao (Prof. L. Rama), Upper Cretaceous and Lower Eocene Beds of India, with special reference to the Cretaceous-Eocene Boundary, 470
- Ratcliffe (J. A.), [W. S. Elliott and], Barkhausen-Kurz Oscillations with Positive Ions, 265
- Rathbone (Miss E. F.), The Case for the Immediate Introduction of a System of Family Allowances, etc., 696
- Raven (Rev. Canon Charles E.), The Gospel and the Church: a Study of Distortion and its Remedy (*Review*), 329
- Ray (Benoy B.), [Prof. S. K. Mitra, S. P. Ghosh and], Cross-section of Atomic Oxygen for Elastic Collision with Electrons, and Region F Absorption, 1017
- Rayleigh (Lord), Bending of Glass under Long-continued Stress, 29; History of the Vacuum Flask, 625; 940
- Raymont (T.), Graham Wallas: a Scientific Humanist (*Review*), 915
- Rayner (G.), Humpback Whales off West Australia, 784
- Rayner (Dr. M. C.), and Ida Levisohn, Production of Synthetic Mycorrhiza in the Cultivated Cranberry, 461
- Read (Prof. H. H.), Salt Deposits (*Review*), 279; Rock Metamorphism (*Review*), 644; Regional Geology of the Earth (*Review*), 953
- Read (Prof. J.), Youth on the Prow in Chemistry (*Review*), 123
- Redfarn (Dr. C. A.), Structure of Cellulose Acetate, 515
- Redgrove (H. S.), Carcinogenic Colouring Matters, 672
- Reed (Prof. C. E.), [Prof. T. K. Sherwood and], Applied Mathematics in Chemical Engineering (*Review*), 658
- Reed (Prof. H. R.), and Prof. G. F. Corcoran, Electrical Engineering Experiments: Theory and Practice (*Review*), 658
- Rees (M. W.), [Prof. A. C. Chibnall, E. F. Williams, Dr. E. Boyland and], Glutamic Acid of Proteins, 311
- Reeves (R. G.) [P. C. Mangelsdorf and] Origin of Maize, 711
- Reis (Dr. J.), [Prof. H. da Rocha-Lima, Dr. K. Silber-schmidt and], Methoden der Virusforschung (*Review*), 483
- Reith (Sir John), appointed Minister of Information; work of, 61
- Reynolds (J. H.), The Mohammedan Calendar and the First Visibility of the New Moon in Egypt, 751; Dr. W. E. Sumpner, 886
- Reynolds (Prof. S. R. M.), Physiology of the Uterus: with Clinical Correlations (*Review*), 762
- Ricci (J. E.), [T. W. Davis, C. G. Sauter and], Solvent effect on Solubility, 310
- Rich (J. L.), Erosion Surfaces in the Allegheny Plateau, 431
- Richards (C. H.), Dr. C. Davison, 805
- Richards (Dr. P. W.), Rain Forest of Southern Nigeria, 983
- Richardson (Dr. E. G.), Recent work in Experimental Phonetics, 841
- Richardson (G. M.), [A. V. Morton, J. T. Massengale and], Mechanism of Wurtz Syntheses, 556
- Richardson (Sir Owen), [J. W. Drinkwater, W. E. Williams and], Precision Measurements in the Hydrogen Spectrum, 1026
- Richardson (R. S.), [W. T. Skilling and], Astronomy (*Review*), 445
- Richerand (Baron Balthasar Anthelme), (1779-1840), work of, 134
- Richtmyer (Prof. F. K.), [obituary article], 215
- Rider (P. R.), An Introduction to Modern Statistical Methods (*Review*), 296
- Rist (Dr. E.), Tuberculosis and War, 506
- Ritchie (Prof. A. D.), A Defence of Vitalism (*Review*), 6; How we Think and Why (*Review*), 798
- Ritchie (Prof. J.), Scott's Wild Chorus (*Review*), 135; Upper Canine Teeth in the Indian Antelope (*Antilope cervicapra*), 859; W. S. Furneaux, 886; Prof. Hugo Merton, 924; Huxley's Teaching at Edinburgh, 965
- Ritchie (Dr. M.), [D. Taylor and], Demonstration of Thermal Diffusion in Liquids, 670

- Rivers (Dr. T. M.), Nature of Virus, 853
- Roaf (Dr. D.), Energies of β -Particles from Uranium-X₂, 223
- Roberts (Brian), awarded the Dr. W. S. Bruce memorial prize, 931
- Roberts (E. J.), The Rothamsted Experimental Station, 76; Science and Practice of Fodder Conservation (*Review*), 245
- Roberts (F. M.), [M. A. Watson and], Viruses and their Insect Vectors, 430
- Roberts (G. E.), [Prof. E. J. Williams and], Evidence for Transformation of Mesotrons into Electrons, 102; 151
- Roberts (Prof. J. A. Fraser), Surnames, Intelligence and Fertility, 939
- Roberts (Prof. W. H.), Activities of Analytical Chemists, 416; elected chairman of the conference on Atmospheric Pollution, 929
- Roberts (late W. R. Westropp), Elliptic and Hyper-Elliptic Integrals and Allied Theory (*Review*), 138
- Robertson (D. W.), and O. H. Coleman, Linkage Studies in Barley, 827
- Robertson (R. N.), Salt Accumulation and Plant Respiration, 937
- Robins (F. W.), The Story of the Lamp (and the Candle) (*Review*), 407
- Robinson (B. A.), [T. M. Little, J. H. Kantor and], Incompatibility in Cosmos, 979
- Robson (Dr. W. A.), Evacuation, Town Planning and War, 270
- da Rocha-Lima (Prof. H.), Dr. J. Reis und Dr. K. Silberschmidt, Methoden der Virusforschung (*Review*), 483
- Rocha e Silva (Dr. M.), Kallikrein and Histamine, 591
- Röder (H. L.), Rheology of Suspensions: a Study of Dilatancy and Thixotropy (*Review*), 499
- Rogozinski (Prof. F.), [death], 542
- Rollason (E. C.), Metallurgy for Engineers (*Review*), 814
- Rollefson (Prof. G. K.), and Dr. M. Burton, Photochemistry and the Mechanism of Chemical Reactions (*Review*), 609; and D. C. Grahame, High Temperature Photolysis of Acetaldehyde, 712
- Rolleston (Sir Humphry), admitted an honorary fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, 146
- Rolleston (Dr. J. D.), Prof. Alexandru Slatineanu, [obituary article], 380; Prof. Edoardo Maragliano, 886; Prof. Pierre Marie, 925; and Dr. G. W. Ronaldson, Acute Infectious Diseases: a Handbook for Practitioners and Students. Third edition (*Review*), 1009
- Rollin (B. V.), Exchange between a Metal and its Ions in Solution, 711
- Romans (Rev. Thomas), [P. Corder and], Excavations at the Roman town at Brough, 1937, 272
- Romer (Prof. A. S.), and Ll. I. Price, The Oldest Vertebrate Egg, 516
- Ronaldson (Dr. G. W.), [Dr. J. D. Rolleston and], Acute Infectious Diseases: a Handbook for Practitioners and Students. Third edition (*Review*), 1009
- Rooksby (H. P.), X-rays in Industry, 182
- Roonwal (Mithan Lal), Recent Advances in Insect Embryology, 674
- Rose (Prof. H. J.), Phenomenology of Literature (*Review*), 761
- Rosenthal (Dr. A. H.), Large-Screen Television Projection, 1028
- Rosenthaler (E.), [Dr. E. Miescher and], Rotational Analysis of the Band Spectrum of Boron Monobromide, 624
- Rossi (B.), N. Hilberry and J. B. Hoag, Absorption of Hard Cosmic Rays and Mesotron Decay, 903
- Rossiter (A. P.), The Growth of Science: an Outline History (*Review*), 814
- Rothschild (Lord), Rhythmical Impedance Changes in the Trout's Egg, 744
- Rous (Dr. F. P.), elected a foreign member of the Royal Society; work of, 851
- Rouse (I.), [F. G. Rainey and], Prehistory in Haiti, 785
- Rousseau (P.), Exploration du Ciel (*Review*), 445
- Rowland (Rev. J. P.), Aurora and Magnetic Storm of March 24-25, 625
- Roy (Prof. Bidhan Chunder), elected president of the Medical Council of India, 259
- Roy (Dr. D. N.), Influence of Spermathecal Stimulation on the Physiological Activities of *Anopheles subpictus*, 747
- Róžański (Prof. A.), [death], 542; [obituary article], 695
- de la Rüe (E. Aubert), Volcanism in French Somaliland, 828
- Runnström (Prof. J.), E. Sperber and E. Bárány, Cozymase in Adrenalectomized Rats, 106
- Rushton (W.), Habits and Habitats of Trout (*Review*), 50
- Russ (Prof. S.), Radium Treatment, 347
- Russell (Dr. Alexander), awarded the Faraday medal of the Institution of Electrical Engineers; work of, 180; Col. R. E. B. Crompton, 377
- Russell (Dr. A. S.), Dr. R. T. Gunther, 541
- Russell (Dr. E. S.), elected president of the Linnean Society of London, 854
- Russell (H.), [D. P. Stevenson and], Structures of Sulphuryl and Thiophosphoryl Fluorides, 393
- Russell (Sir John), Food from Gardens and Allotments, 11; Prof. V. R. Williams, 18; Profs. Jan Włodek and Adam Róžański, 695; Planned Wheat Production, 843
- Rutherford: being the Life and Letters of the Rt. Hon. Lord Rutherford, O.M., Prof. A. S. Eve (*Review*), 324
- Sabet (Y.), Mycorrhizal habit in the Date Palm (*Phoenix dactylifera* Linn.), 782
- Sabiely (H.), translated and revised by Dr. L. J. Comrie and Dr. H. O. Hartley, Modern Machine Calculation with the Facit Calculating Machine Model Lx (*Review*), 497
- Sadasivan (T. S.), Soil decomposition of Straw, 596
- Sahni (Prof. B.), The Inter-Trapezian Flora of the Deccan, 469
- Salaman (R. N.), Facial deformity in Anthropomorphic Pottery, 309
- Salle (Prof. A. J.), Fundamental Principles of Bacteriology: with Laboratory Exercises (*Review*), 659
- Salt (C. W.), Electrical Thawing, 218
- Samuel (Lord), awarded the Messel medal of the Society of Chemical Industry, 509
- Sand (Dr. H. J. S.), Electrochemistry and Electrochemical Analysis: a theoretical and practical treatise for students and analysts. Vol. 1: Electrochemical Theory (*Review*), 137
- Sandeman (C.), A Forgotten River: a book of Peruvian Travel and Botanical Notes (*Review*), 685
- Sansome (Mrs. E. R.), and Dr. F. W. Sansome, Genetical Sterility in *Pisum sativum*, 226
- Sansome (Dr. F. W.), Breeding Disease-resistant Plants, 690, [Mrs. E. R. Sansome and], Genetical Sterility in *Pisum sativum*, 226
- Sarfati (Dr. E.), Bacteriological Warfare, 621
- Sarkar (Dr. S. S.), Blood Groups of the Angami Nagas, 261
- Sastry (M. G.), [Dr. K. R. Rao and], Structure of the OD Bands of Heavy Water, 778
- Satō (Hayao), Japanese Gephyrea, 710
- Saunders (Dr. B. C.), [Dr. F. G. Mann and], Introduction to Practical Organic Chemistry (*Review*), 202
- de Saussure (Horace Bénédict), bicentenary of the birth of; work of, 254
- Sauter (C. G.), [T. W. Davis, J. E. Ricci and], Solvent effect on Solubility, 310
- Savage (Sir William), conferment upon, of the Smith award of the Royal Institute of Public Health and Hygiene, 259
- Saxton (B.), and L. S. Darken, Ionization Constants of Weak Acids, 979
- Saxton (J. A.), [Dr. J. S. McPetrie and], Characteristics within optical range of the propagation overland of Radio Waves, 234
- Sayers (Miss Dorothy L.), Begin Here: A War-time Essay (*Review*), 815
- Schaffer (Prof. Károly), [death], 414
- Schallamach (A.), Heat Conductivity of Rubber at low temperatures, 67
- Schapiro (Dr. R.), Trench Fever, 547

- Schiro (H. S.), [R. W. Vilter, Prof. T. D. Spies and], Effect of Synthetic Vitamin B₁₂ on the Hæmopoietic system of Human Beings, 388
- Schlenk (Prof. W.), Ausführliches Lehrbuch der organischen Chemie. Band 2 (*Review*), 202
- Schmeisser, Nitrogen Tribromide, 787
- Schmidt (W. J.), [L. Aschoff, E. Küster and], Hundert Jahre Zellforschung (*Review*), 875
- Schmidt-Nielsen (K.), Curious Nesting-place of Kittiwake, 864
- Schneider (E.), nominated an honorary member of the Iron and Steel Institute, 548
- Schnurmann (R.), Angle of repose of Snow on Solids, 553
- Shokalsky (Prof. Jules), [obituary article], 734
- Schrödinger (Dr. E.), Principles in Physical Science and Free Will (*Review*), 402; appointed professor of Theoretical Physics in the Royal Irish Academy, 544; New method in Quantum Mechanics, 712
- Schuchert (Prof. C.), and Prof. C. O. Dunbar, Outlines of Historical Geology. Third edition (*Review*), 138
- Schumb (W. C.), R. D. Evans and J. L. Hastings, Age of a Meteorite, 431
- Schweickerdt [Milne-Redhead and], Leaf-growth as a systematic feature in *Ammocharis*, 229
- Selare (Miss Rachel), Saliva Superstitions, 585
- Scotes (Prof. D.), [Prof. Q. C. Ayres and], Land Drainage and Reclamation. Second edition (*Review*), 815
- Scott (Peter), Wild Chorus (*Review*), 135
- Scott (Prof. W. Berryman), Some Memories of a Palæontologist (*Review*), 121
- Scott (Prof. W. R.), [death], 653
- Scourfield (D. J.), Microbiology of the 'Leaf Carpet', 785; The Oldest Known Fossil Insect, 799; presented with the Crisp Award and Medal of the Linnean Society, 806
- Seaber (W. M.), Carotene and Allied Pigments, 286
- Seaborg (G. T.), [J. W. Kennedy, E. Segré and], Nuclear Isomerism in Zinc, 269
- Sederholm (P.), [Prof. C. Benedicks and], First Benedicks effect in Gas-free Mercury, as influenced by the mean temperature, 148, 666
- Segré (E.), [J. W. Kennedy, G. T. Seaborg and], Nuclear Isomerism in Zinc, 269
- Seiffert (H. E.), [H. P. Brinton, Elizabeth S. Frasier and], Illness in Meat Packing Industry, 419
- Sekido (Y.), [Dr. Y. Nishina, H. Simamura, H. Arakawa and], Cosmic Ray Intensities and Cyclones, 703
- Seligman (Prof. C. G.), Dr. A. C. Haddon, 848
- Seligman (G.), awarded the Back grant of the Royal Geographical Society, 665
- Sen (Dr. H. K.), and S. Ranganathan, Uses of Lac (*Review*), 815
- Sen (P. B.), [S. Banerjee, Prof. B. C. Guha and], Urinary excretion of combined Ascorbic Acid in Pulmonary Tuberculosis, 706
- Seth-Smith (D.), The Mammals of India (*Review*), 164
- Sewell (Lt.-Col. R. B. Seymour), and others, Distribution of Marine Organisms, 732
- Seymour (A.), Photo-cell applications in the Foodstuffs Industries, 1014
- Sezawa (K.), and K. Kanai, Microseisms and transmission of Atmospheric Disturbances, 154
- Shapley (Dr. H.), and J. S. Paraskevopoulos, Nebulæ and Star Clusters in the Southern Hemisphere, 596
- Sharland (M. R. S.), Position of Thylacine or Tasmanian 'Wolf', 555
- Sharleman (M.), Zoogeography of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic (*Review*), 52
- Sharman (B. C.), Orchis Tubercles, 192
- Sharman (Marta), Incompatibility in Antirrhinum, 675
- Shaw (A. E.), [M. Ference, R. J. Stephenson and], Magnetic Spectrograph Coils, 596
- Shaw (Dr. H.), appointed acting director of the Science Museum, 817
- Shaw (Sir Napier), The Drama of Weather. Second edition (*Review*), 139
- Shelton (H. S.), The Theory and Practice of General Science (*Review*), 297
- Shendarkar (Dr. D. D.), Psychology and Educational Research, 522
- Shepherd (E. S.), Geochemistry of Fluorine, 596
- Sheppard (Dr. S. E.), R. H. Lambert and R. D. Walker, Steric influence in Optically Sensitizing Dyes, 386; Optical Sensitizing of Silver Halides by Dyes, 969
- Sheppard (late W. F.), Mathematical Tables. Vol. 7: The Probability Integral (*Review*), 139
- Sherborn (Dr. C. Davies), elected president of the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History, 259
- Sherwood (Prof. T. K.), and Prof. C. E. Reed, Applied Mathematics in Chemical Engineering (*Review*), 658
- Shotter (G. F.), [E. Fawcsett, H. W. Grimmett, H. G. Taylor and], Practical aspects of Earthing, 357
- Shutt (F. T.), [death], 179
- Siddiqi (Prof. M. Raziuddin), Lectures on Quantum Mechanics. Vol. 1 (*Review*), 528
- Siebel (Dr. C. W.), Helium Production in the United States, 257
- Siedlecki (Prof. M.), [death], 492; 542; [obituary article], 963
- Sihvonen (Prof. V. I.), [death], 618; [obituary article], 769
- Silberschmidt (Dr. K.), [Prof. H. da Rocha-Lima, Dr. J. Reis and], Methoden der Virusforschung (*Review*), 483
- Simamura (H.), [Dr. Y. Nishima, Y. Sekido, H. Arakawa and], Cosmic Ray Intensities and Cyclones, 703
- Simha (R.), [Dr. H. Mark and], Viscosity and Molecular Structure, 571
- Simpson (Miss C. A.), and Miss Clifford, A Neolithic Trackway, 153
- Simson (F. W.), and A. S. Strachan, Causation of Silicosis, 631
- Singer (K.), Fertility Cults in East and West, 750
- Singleton (W. R.), Pollination in Maize, 979
- Sison (A. G.), H. Lara, M. M. Herbosa and A. A. Lozano, Life Expectancy in the Philippines, 967
- Sitwell (Osbert), Escape with me! an Oriental Sketch-Book (*Review*), 809
- Sivaramamurti (C.), [Dr. F. H. Gravely and], Indian Sculpture and Architecture, 457
- Skilling (W. T.), and R. S. Richardson, Astronomy (*Review*), 445
- Slatineanu (Prof. Alexandru), [obituary article], 380
- Sleggs (G. F.), Theory of Differential Periodicity, 153
- Slobod (R. L.), [M. Dole and], Oxygen Isotopes in Rocks and Ores, 751
- Smart (Dr. W. M.), The Scorpio-Centaurus Cluster (The Southern Stream), 556; and T. R. Tannahill, Constants of the Star-Streams, 310
- Smith (B. Babington), [M. G. Kendall and], Tables of Random Sampling Numbers (*Review*), 1010
- Smith (Eng.-Capt. Edgar C.), Scientific Centenaries in 1940, 9; The First Twenty Years of Screw Propulsion, 1838-1858 (pt. 2), 181
- Smith (Sir Frank E.), appointed controller of telecommunications equipment by the Ministry of Aircraft Production, 931
- Smith (G. Buckland), [A. M. S. Clark and], Looking at Life: an Introduction to Biology (*Review*), 136
- Smith (H. A.), and A. Napravník, Photochemical Oxidation of Hydrogen, 827
- Smith (H. I.), [death], 254
- Smith (J. H.), Tests of Significance: What they Mean and How to Use Them (*Review*), 1010
- Smith (Prof. Philip E.), elected president of the American Association of Anatomists, 776
- Smith (Reginald A.), [death], 133; [obituary article], 290
- Smith (Roger), [death], 805
- Smith (Stanley F.), Aids to Organic Chemistry. Second edition (*Review*), 137
- Smith (T.), appointed superintendent of the new Department of Light at the National Physical Laboratory, 622
- Smith (Sir William Wright), The Genus *Lilium* (*Review*), 913
- Smoleński (Prof. J.), [death], 542
- Smyth (C. P.), [G. L. Lewis and], Structures of Ozone and some Compounds, 35
- Smyth (H. de Wolf), and Prof. C. W. Ufford, Matter, Motion and Electricity: a Modern Approach to General Physics (*Review*), 298

- Smythe (Dr. J. A.), A Lead Etching Effect, 704
 Soal (S. G.), [W. W. Carington and], Experiments in Non-Sensory Cognition, 389
 Sokolnikoff (Prof. I. S.), Advanced Calculus (*Review*), 1008
 Soler (Prof. E.), [death], 340
 Sommerfeld (Prof. A.), Atombau und Spektrallinien, Band 2. Zweite Auflage (*Review*), 528
 Somogyi (J. C.), [Prof. F. Verzár and], Liberation of Potassium from Muscle by Acetylcholine and Muscle Contraction and its Absence after Adrenalectomy, 781
 Sorsbie (Brig.-Genl. R. F.), Geology for Engineers. New edition (*Review*), 138
 Soutar (late Dr. G.), Nature in Greek Poetry: Studies partly comparative (*Review*), 641
 Southern (H. N.), Coprophagy in the Wild Rabbit, 262
 Spence (Dr. J.), Optical Anisotropy of Cellulosic Sheets, 515
 Sperber (E.), [Prof. J. Runnström, E. Bárány and], Cozymase in Adrenalectomized Rats, 106
 Sperry (Prof. R. W.), Functional Results of Muscle Transposition in the Hind Limb of the Rat, 560
 Spies (Prof. T. D.), [R. W. Vilter, H. S. Schiro and], Effect of Synthetic Vitamin B₆ on the Hemopoietic system of Human Beings, 388
 Spilsbury (R. S. J.), appointed superintendent of the electricity department of the National Physical Laboratory, 622
 Spolteholz (Prof. W.), [death], 492
 Spratt (Dr. E. R. and A. V.), Text-book of Biology. Second edition (*Review*), 810
 Squire (F. A.), Influence of the geology of the Virgin Islands on Local Agricultural Practices, 71
 Stabler (R. M.), Moulting in Snakes, 309
 Stalin (Joseph), elected an honorary member of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, 24
 Stamp (Dr. L. Dudley), Rural Life in Europe, 356; Aerial, Geological and Geophysical Survey of Northern Australia, 433; The Indian Fragment of Gondwanaland (*Review*), 725
 Stanford [Gordy and], Proton-attracting Properties of Liquids, 633
 Steavenson (Dr. W. H.), General Astronomy (*Review*), 445
 Stebbing (Prof. E. P.), Forest Management and Erosion, 713
 Stebbins (J.), C. Hugger and A. Whitford, Absorption within the Stellar System, 675
 Steber (C.), L'Asie centrale soviétique et le Kazakhstan (*Review*), 295
 Stensiö (E. A.:Son), A New Anaspid from the Upper Devonian of Scaumenac Bay in Canada, 674
 Stephenson (R. J.), [M. Ference, A. E. Shaw and], Magnetic Spectrograph Coils, 596
 Stevens (W. L.), Calculation of Linkage, 193
 Stevenson (A. G.), Maori Bowls, 229
 Stevenson (D. P.), and H. Russell, Structures of Sulphuryl and Thiophosphoryl Fluorides, 393
 Steward (Dr. F. C.), Dr. A. G. Jacques, 581; [Prof. D. R. Hoagland and], Salt Absorption of Plants, 116
 Steward (J. H.), Cultural Change among Shoshoni Indians, 192
 Stewart (T. Dale), Anthropometric Observations on the Eskimos and Indians of Labrador, 678
 Stewart (W. Lyle), and Dr. A. Phyllis Ponsford, Pining in Sheep not Curable by Cobalt Administration, 1023
 Stewart (Prof. W. W.), elected chairman and member of the board of the Rockefeller Foundation, 586
 Stickland (Miss A. C.), [Dr. J. S. McPetrie and], Reflection Curves and Propagation Characteristics of Radio Waves along the Earth's Surface, 234
 Stirling (M. W.), An Initial Series from Tres Zapotes, Vera Cruz, Mexico, 594
 Stockmans (F.), Flora of the Belgian Lower Devonian, 942
 Stocks (Dr. P.), War-time Mortality in London, 826
 Stoddard (S. E.), Inheritance of Bobbed Hair, 516
 Stodola (Prof. A.), Tests of a 4,000 kw. Gas-Turbine Set, 99
 Stoodley (L. G.), Radio Wave Reflections in the Troposphere, 743
 Stopes (Dr. Marie Carmichael), Prevention of Venereal Disease. Third edition (*Review*), 660
 Storks (K. H.), [L. H. Germer and], Aluminium Dust in Silicosis, 941
 Störmer (Prof. C.), A Notable Meteor, 195; Height of Mother of Pearl Clouds observed in Southern Norway during 1926-34, 221
 Stoughton (Prof. R. H.), Fruit Production and Preservation (*Review*), 530
 Strachan (A. S.), [F. W. Simson and], Causation of Silicosis, 631
 Stratton (Prof. F. J. M.), Total Solar Eclipse of October 1, 1940, 32; Astronomical Investigations of Horrox, 584
 Strelitz (Frida), [Prof. B. Mendel, Dorothy Mundell and], Action of Ions on Acetylcholinesterase, 822
 Strickland (C. F.), Instructional Films in India, 458
 Strong (Prof. C. A.), [death], 179
 Strothers (J. E.), [S. C. Curran and], Bombardment of Nitrogen and Oxygen with Protons, 224
 Stuart (Dr. H. A.), Elektrischer Kerr-Effekt (Elektrische Doppelbrechung), (*Review*), 294
 Stubbings (G. W.), Electricity Meters and Meter Testing (*Review*), 496
 Stubbings (H. G.), Stratification of Biological remains in Marine Deposits, 864
 Styring (A. H.), Applications of Photography to Engineering, 39
 Sucksmith (Dr. W.), appointed professor of physics in Sheffield University, 776; work of, 887
 Sugden (Dr. J. N.), Chemistry for Intermediate Examinations (*Review*), 51
 Summerbell (R. K.), and R. R. Umhoefer, Dioxadiene, 35
 Sumner, jun. (E. Lowell), Age of Wild Birds of Prey, 430
 Sumpner (Dr. W. E.), [obituary article], 886
 Sutcliffe (Dr. R. C.), Meteorology for Aviators (*Review*), 140
 Sutherland (J. A.), [Dr. F. W. Dry, P. R. McMahon and], A Mendelian situation in the Birthcoat of the New Zealand Romney Lamb, 390
 Sutherland (K. L.), Use of Adsorption Processes for the Detection of "Traces", 553
 Svedberg (Prof. The), Dr. K. O. Pedersen and others, The Ultracentrifuge (*Review*), 566
 Swaminathan (M.), Chemical Estimation of Vitamin B₆ in Foods by means of the Diazo Reaction and the Phenol Reagent, 780
 Swann (H. W.), and others, Fire Fighting Equipment for Electrical Installation, 358
 Swedin (Dr. B.), and Prof. H. Theorell, Dioximaleic Acid Oxidase Action of Peroxidases, 71
 Swinton (Lieut. W. E.), Science at the Royal Academy, 1940, 730
 Sykes (Dr. C.), appointed superintendent of the Department of Metallurgy and Metallurgical Chemistry of the National Physical Laboratory, 101; work of, 134
 Synge (P. M.), Plants with Personality (*Review*), 608
 Synge (R. L. M.), Separation of Amino-Acids in Protein Digests, 309
 Szegő (Prof. G.), Orthogonal Polynomials (*Review*), 139
 Tabor (Dr. D.), Effect of Temperature on Lubricant Films, 308
 Takei (R.), [T. Hagiwara, N. Miyabe, Y. Otuka and], Ogasima (Japan) Earthquake of May 1, 34
 Takliński (Prof. W.), [death], 542
 Talbat (G.), The Fauna of British India, including Ceylon and Burma. Butterflies, Vol. 1 (*Review*), 293
 Tallgren (Prof. A. M.), awarded the gold medal of the Society of Antiquaries; work of, 582
 Tandy (Brig. Sir Edward), Regional Organization during and after the War, 697
 Tangl (Prof. C.), [death], 291; [obituary article], 454
 Tannahill (T. R.), [Prof. W. M. Smart and], Constants of the Star-Streams, 310
 Taylor (D.), and Dr. M. Ritchie, Demonstration of Thermal Diffusion in Liquids, 670
 Taylor (D. B.), Mechanism of Catalysis by Enzymes, 423
 Taylor (Prof. E. G. R.), A National Atlas of Britain, 487

- Taylor (Prof. G. I.), awarded the James Alfred Ewing medal of the Institution of Civil Engineers; work of, 852
- Taylor (G. L.), R. R. Race, Aileen M. Prior and Elizabeth W. Ikin, Blood Groups and Racial Diagnosis, 415; [Prof. R. A. Fisher and], Scandinavian Influence in Scottish Ethnology, 590
- Taylor (H. A.), [Henkin and], Decomposition of Azomethane, 431
- Taylor (H. G.), [E. Fawcett, H. W. Grimmett, G. F. Shotton and], Practical Aspects of Earthing, 357
- Taylor (J. L.), Ethnological reconnaissance in New Guinea, 506
- Taylor (Dr. Monica) and Sister Catherine Hayes, *Amœba leschari* (= *Chaos lescheri*): a New Species of Amœba, 464
- Teng (K. L.), and S. C. Teng, Mycology in China, 1025
- Teng (S. C.), and S. H. Ou, and K. L. Teng, Mycology in China, 1025
- Tertsch (Dr. H.), [Dr. F. Raaz und] Geometrische Kristallographie und Kristalloptik und deren Arbeitsmethoden (*Review*), 812
- Theiler (late Sir Arnold), Memorial to, 557
- Theorell (Prof. H.), [Dr. B. Swedin and], Dioximaleic Acid Oxidase action on Peroxidases, 71
- Thiel (Prof. A.), Absolutkolorimetrie (*Review*), 141
- Thomas (Dr. H. A.), Theory and Design of Valve Oscillators: for Radio and other Frequencies (*Review*), 501
- Thomas (J. L.), Insulation Stresses in Transformers, 468
- Thomas (Roy C.), Bacteriophage and Plant Lysins, 468
- Thomason (Mrs. G. B.), retirement of, from the honorary general secretaryship of the British Empire Naturalists' Association, 739
- Thompson (Sir D'Arcy Wentworth), Sir Thomas Heath, 578
- Thompson (Prof. Homer C.), Vegetable Crops. Third edition (*Review*), 283
- Thompson (Prof. M. de Kay), Theoretical and Applied Electrochemistry. Third edition (*Review*), 811
- Thomsen (Dr. Ellen), Relation between Corpus Allatum and Ovaries in Adult Flies (Muscidæ), 28
- Thomson (Prof. G. P.), and Dr. W. Cochrane, Theory and Practice of Electron Diffraction (*Review*), 367
- Thomson (Dr. Hyslop), Tuberculosis and National Health (*Review*), 660
- Thordarson (Dr. O.), Hyperprothrombinemia during Pregnancy, 305
- Thorndike (E. L.), Studies of American Cities and States, 467
- Thornton (D. L.), Mechanics applied to Vibrations and Balancing (*Review*), 991
- Thorpe (Sir Jocelyn), Chemistry of Organic Compounds (*Review*), 202; [death], 925; [obituary article], 1001
- Thorpe (Prof. L. P.), Psychological Foundations of Personality: a Guide for Students and Teachers (*Review*), 140
- Tillett (A. W.), Herbert Spencer Betrayed: with some account of the Reputation of the "Descriptive Sociology" by his Trustees (*Review*), 493
- Tillotson (E.), The Earthquake in Turkey, 13; Dr. C. Davison, 805
- Tinbergen (Prof. J.), Économie théorique et statistique économique: Les fondements mathématiques de la stabilisation du mouvement des affaires (*Review*), 8
- Tincker (M. A. H.), and C. H. Unwin, Hormones and the Garden, 112
- Tiselius (A.), and I.-B. Eriksson-Quensel, Hydrolysis of Proteins by Pepsin, 193
- Todd (Prof. A. R.), [A. Jacob and], Cannabidiol and Cannabiol, constituents of *Cannabis indica* Resin, 350
- Todd (Dr. J. B.), Sir Thomas Hudson Beare, 1002
- Toeplitz (Prof. Otto), [obituary article], 617
- Tokumitsu (T.), Oxide Film on Stainless Steels, 589
- Toldt (Prof. Karl), centenary of the birth of; work of, 654
- Tolman (Prof. C. F.), Ground Water (*Review*), 295
- Toms (B. A.), Hydration of Stearanylid, 227; Hydration of Anilides of Normal Fatty Acids, 1019
- Tonnoir (A. L.), [obituary article], 453
- Tönsberg (E.), and Prof. L. Vegard, Origin of the Yellow Line in Twilight and the Night Sky Luminescence, 588
- Tornaiainen (M.), [Prof. A. I. Virtanen and], A Factor Influencing Nitrogen Excretion from Leguminous Root Nodules, 25
- Torrance (C. C.), [Prof. R. S. Burington and], Higher Mathematics: with Applications to Science and Engineering (*Review*), 659
- Town (Dr. B. W.), Glutamic Acid of Proteins, 312
- Trimble (H. C.), [C. E. Keeler and], Inheritance of Instinct, 865
- Tripp (Dr. E. H.), Town's Refuse as a Source of Soil Organic Matter, 56; The Place of Science in British Agriculture (*Review*), 366
- Trotter (Wilfred), [obituary article], 59
- True (Prof. R. H.), [death], 964
- Tschiffely (A. F.), This Way Southward: the account of a Journey through Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego (*Review*), 811
- Tucker (B. W.), Rev. F. C. R. Jourdain, 885
- Tulchin (S. H.), Intelligence and Crime: a Study of Penitentiary and Reformatory Offenders (*Review*), 876
- Turner (Dr. A. J.), appointed director of research of the Linen Industry Research Association, 806
- Turner (J. McCullough), [Prof. Yandell Henderson and], Carbon Monoxide as a Hazard of Polar Exploration, 92
- Turner (Prof. W. E. S.), Physics in the Glass Industry, 446
- Tynan-Byrd (D. J.), Transmission Lines on the French Grid, 772
- Ubbelohde (A. R.), Thermodynamics and the Structure of Matter, 488; [Dr. I. E. Knaggs, Dr. K. Lonsdale, Dr. A. Müller and], Anomalous X-ray Reflections on Laue Photographs, 820
- Ufford (Prof. C. W.), [D. de Wolf Smyth and], Matter, Motion and Electricity: a Modern Approach to General Physics (*Review*), 298
- Umhoefer (R. R.), [R. K. Summerbell], Dioxadiene, 35
- Ungerson (B.), Training Industrial Workers, 754
- Unna (P. J. H.), The Primus Stove at High Altitudes, 190
- Unwin (C. H.), [M. A. H. Tincker and], Hormones and the Garden, 112
- Unz (Dr.), A Sliding Rate Electrical Meter, 396
- Upcott (M.), Genetics of *Primula Kewensis*, 154
- Uvarov (Dr. B. P.), Biogeography in the U.S.S.R. (*Review*), 52
- Vaidya (Dr. B. K.), [Prof. R. K. Asundi and], Flame and Arc Spectra of some Calcium and Strontium Salts, 224
- Vegard (Prof. L.), The Atmospheric Layer from which the Yellow Line in Twilight originates, 623; [E. Tönsberg and], Origin of the Yellow Line in Twilight and the Night Sky Luminescence, 588
- Verblunsky (S.), An Introduction to the Theory of Functions of a Real Variable (*Review*), 296
- Verzár (Prof. F.), Die Funktion der Nebennierenrinde (*Review*), 404; and J. C. Somogyi, Liberation of Potassium from Muscle by Acetylcholine and Muscle Contraction and its Absence after Adrenalectomy, 781; [Dr. R. Pulver and], Connexion between Carbohydrate and Potassium Metabolism in the Yeast Cell, 823
- Vilbig (Dr. F.), Lehrbuch der Hochfrequenztechnik. Zweite Auflage; Schriftumsverzeichnis zum Lehrbuch der Hochfrequenztechnik. Zweite Auflage (*Review*), 137
- Ville (Prof. J.), Étude critique de la notion de collectif (*Review*), 139
- Vilter (R. W.), H. S. Schiro and Prof. T. D. Spies, Effect of Synthetic Vitamin B₆ on the Hæmopoietic System of Human Beings, 388
- Vincent (R. S.), Cohesion of Liquids, 970
- Virtanen (Prof. A. I.), Safety of; Conditions in Helsinki, 654; and M. Tornaiainen, A Factor Influencing Nitrogen Excretion from Leguminous Root Nodules, 25

- di Vivier de Streel (E.), Establishment of an Imperial Economy, 301
- Voegtlin (C.) [W. R. Earle and], Action of Methylcholanthrene on Normal Tissue Cultures, 785
- Vogel (Dr. A. I.), A Text-book of Quantitative Inorganic Analysis (*Review*), 495
- de Vos (P. J. G.), The Second Maximum in the Rossi Transition Curve for Copper, 387
- Waddington (Dr. C. H.), True and False Teleology, 705 ; The Principles of Development (*Review*), 952 ; [G. Pincus and], Induction of Polyploidy in Rabbit Ova, 595
- Wadia (D. N.), Geology of India. Second edition (*Review*), 88
- Wager (L. R.), Rocks of Mount Everest, 556 ; Epeirogenic Earth Movements in East Greenland and the Depths of the Earth, 938 ; and Dr. W. A. Deer, Petrology of the Skaergaard Intrusion, Kangerdlugssuag, East Greenland, 197
- Wakefield (Miss E. M.), Nomina generica conservanda, 113
- Walke (Dr. H. J.), [obituary article], 133
- Walker (E. P.), Night-Shining Eyes, 506
- Walker (R. D.), [Dr. S. E. Sheppard, R. H. Lambert and], Steric Influence in Optically Sensitizing Dyes, 386 ; Optical Sensitizing of Silver Halides by Dyes, 969
- Wallas (Graham), Men and Ideas : Essays (*Review*), 915
- Walmsley (Dr. T.), Broadcasting over Wires, 434
- Walter (A.), Meteorology in British East Africa, 418
- Warcollier (R.), edited and abridged by Prof. G. Murphy ; translated by Josephine B. Gridley, Experiments in Telepathy (*Review*), 206
- Ward (F. Kingdon), Plant Hunting through the Centuries, 574
- Wardlaw (Dr. C. W.), appointed Barker professor of cryptogamic botany in Manchester University, 523 ; work of, 543
- Warmke (H. E.), and A. F. Blakeslee, Doubling the Chromosomes of Nicotiana, 74
- Warren (Prof. F. L.), appointed professor of chemistry in the Natal University College, Pietermaritzburg, 420
- Warren (R. G.), Wright's Soil Analysis (*Review*), 1004
- Washburn (B.), New Kind of Museum Exhibit, 508
- Washburn (Prof. Margaret Floy), [death], 340
- Watkin (E. E.), Amphipod Bathyporeia in Tow-nettings, 711
- Watson (Sir Malcolm), Prevention of Malaria in India, Recent Advances, 878
- Watson (M. A.), and F. M. Roberts, Viruses and their Insect Vectors, 430
- Watson (Dr. S. J.), The Science and Practice of Conservation : Grass and Forage Crops. 2 Vols. (*Review*), 245 ; [W. S. Ferguson, A. H. Lewis and], Teart Disease in Cattle, 941
- Weaver (H. G.), Applications of Electricity in Iron and Steel Works, 868
- Weigert (Prof. F.), and J. C. Mottram, Some Physico-Chemical Properties of 3 : 4, Benzpyrene, 895
- Weil (J. W.), [H. V. Garner and], Malting Barley, 738
- Weil-Malherbe (Dr. H.), Mechanism of Enzymic Decarboxylation, 106 ; [Dr. F. Dickens and], Carbohydrate Metabolism of Tumours, 779
- Weiss (Dr. J.), Fluorescence and Oxidation in Conjugated Ring Systems, 744
- Weiss (P.), Principles of Development : a Text in Experimental Embryology (*Review*), 952
- Wells (Dr. A. F.), [H. M. Powell, D. Clark and], Crystal Structure of Phosphorus Pentachloride, 149
- Wells (A. Laurence), The Microscope Made Easy (*Review*), 293
- Wells (H. G.), The New World Order : Whether it is Attainable, how it can be attained, and what sort of world a World at Peace will have to be (*Review*), 45 ; "Victorian Socialism," 152
- Wentworth (V. H.), and J. D. Hastings, Softening of Rubber, 34
- Westenbrink (Dr. H. G. K.), and Dr. D. A. van Dorp, Cause of the 'Activation' of the Carboxylase System by Free Aneurin, 465
- Weston (J. C.), [Prof. L. F. Bates and], Energy Changes accompanying Magnetization, 188 ; Thermal Expansion of Invar, 550
- Weston (W. A. R. Dillon), and C. C. Brett, Seed Disinfection, 824
- Wheeler (Prof. A. S.), [death], 1011
- Wheeler (Dr. L. Richmond), Vitalism : its History and Validity (*Review*), 6
- Whitby (Dr. L. E. H.), awarded the John Hunter medal and triennial prize of the Royal College of Surgeons, 460
- White (A. H.), W. S. Bishop, B. S. Biggs and S. O. Morgan, Molecular Rotation in Organic Crystals, 596
- Whitehead (Prof. J. B.), Electricity and Magnetism : an Introduction to the Mathematical Theory (*Review*), 298
- Whitehead (Dr. S. B.), Everyday Fare for Fitness (*Review*), 499
- Whitfield (F. G. Sarel), Air Transport, Insects and Disease, 76
- Whitford (A.), [J. Stebbins, C. Hugger and], Absorption within the Stellar System, 675
- Whitman (W. G.), Household Physics. Third edition (*Review*), 1009
- Widdowson (E. M.), [R. A. McCance and], Chemical Composition of Foods, 664
- Wieland (Prof. G. R.), Lyell's Geological Texts, 227
- Wilk (Prof. A.), [death], 542
- Wilks (R. A. C.), A Decalcification Fluid, 671
- Willox (Sir William), elected an honorary member of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, 736
- Williams (E. F.), [Prof. A. C. Chibnall, M. W. Rees, Dr. E. Boyland and], Glutamic Acid of Proteins, 311
- Williams (Prof. E. J.), and G. E. Roberts, Evidence for Transformation of Mesotrons into Electrons, 102 ; 151 ; and G. R. Evans, Transformation of Mesotrons into Electrons, 818
- Williams (G. J.), Diamond Deposits of Tanganyika Territory, 393
- Williams (P. C.), Effect of Stilboestrol on the Ovaries of Hypophysectomized Rats, 388
- Williams (Prof. R. S.), and Prof. V. O. Homerberg, Principles of Metallography. Fourth edition (*Review*), 660
- Williams (S. E.), Absorption of Hydrogen Lyman Radiation by Atmospheric Gases, 68
- Williams (Prof. V. R.), [obituary article], 18
- Williams (W. E.), [J. W. Drinkwater, Sir Owen Richardson and], Precision Measurements in the Hydrogen Spectrum, 1026
- Wilson (Sir Arnold), reported by the War Office as missing, 931
- Wilson (A. H.), and F. Booth, Large Cosmic Ray Showers and Mesons, 103
- Wilson (Godfrey), Work of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, 255
- Wilson (Dr. M.), M. Noble and E. G. Gray, Blind Seed Disease of Rye Grass, 783
- Wilson (W. T.), awarded, with W. B. Lawrie, the Williams prize of the Iron and Steel Institute, 548
- Winkler (Dr. H. A.), Rock-Drawings of Southern Upper Egypt. I : Sir Robert Mond Desert Expedition, Season 1936-1937 : Preliminary Report (*Review*), 84
- Wintner (Dr. A.), Distributional Stability, 225
- Wishart (Dr. J.), Teaching of Statistics, 99 ; Field Trials : Their Lay-out and Statistical Analysis, 945
- Withers (Sir John), [death], 19
- Wittick (E. C.), The Development of Power (*Review*), 281
- Wlodek (Prof. Jan), [death], 542 ; [obituary article], 695
- Wohl (Prof. A.), [obituary article], 290
- Wohl (K.), Mechanism of Photosynthesis, 983
- Wolf (Prof. A.), A Skeleton History of Science (*Review*), 570
- Wolff (N. O'Connor), and T. S. Githens, Toxicity of Snake's Venom, 392
- Wolfson (A.), Bird Migration and Gonad Development, 826
- Wollman (E.), F. Holweck and Dr. S. Luria, Effect of Radiations on Bacteriophage C_{16} , 935

- Wolman (M.), Photodynamic Hæmolysis by Carcinogenic Hydrocarbons, 592
- Womersley (H.), Primitive Insects of South Australia, 967
- Woo (Prof. Po-leon), A Simple Rule for Evaluating Atomic Constants, 30
- Wood (H. E.), [W. S. Finsen and], Witwatersrand Local Tremors, 428
- Woodbridge (Prof. F. J. E.), [death], 1011
- Woodeson (W. A.), elected president of the North-East Coast Institution of Engineers and Shipbuilders, 701
- Woods (R. C.), Mine Rescue Telephone, 235
- Woodward (Sir A. Smith), Memories of a Palæontologist (*Review*), 121; presented with the Linnean medal of the Linnean Society, 806
- Woodworth (Prof. R. S.), Psychological Issues: Selected Papers of, with a Bibliography of his Writings (*Review*), 989
- Woolley (Sir Leonard), Indian Archæological Studies, 621
- Wooster (Dr. W. A.), Scientific Workers and the Armed Forces, 152; Government recruitment of Scientific Workers, 630; Relation of Working Period to Output, 1024
- Worthington (Dr. E. B.), [Dr. C. H. Mortimer and], A New Application of Echo-Sounding, 212
- Worthington (Dr. W. B.), [death], 60
- Wright (Sir Charles Hagberg), [obituary article], 491
- Wright (C. Harold), Soil Analysis: a Handbook of Physical and Chemical Methods. Second edition (*Review*), 1004
- Wright (J.), awarded the Neill prize of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, 385
- Wright (J. W.), Glaciology of North-West Greenland, 154
- Wright (Rev. W. Rees), An Altazimuth Mounting for Reflecting Telescopes, 353
- Wrighton (H.), [Dr. R. H. Greaves and], Practical Microscopical Metallography. Third edition (*Review*), 814
- Wrinch (Dr. Dorothy), The Cyclol Hypothesis, 669; Patterson Projection of the Skeletons of the Structure proposed for the Insulin Molecule, 1018
- Wynne-Jones (Prof. W. F. K.), Planning of Scientific Research, 417
- Wyse (Dr. A. B.), Spectrum of Nova Aquilæ (1918), 517
- Yamaguchi (S.), An Electron Diffraction Study of the surfaces of Alkali and Alkaline Earth Metals exposed to Air, 742
- Yang (E. F.), Ionization of Calcium Phytate, 745
- Yasuda (S.), Parthenocarpy, 826
- Yearian (H. J.), Diffraction of Protons by Vapours, 431
- Yerkes (Prof. R. M.), Observation of Chimpanzees, 890
- Yonge (Prof. C. M.), The Palao Tropical Biological Station, 16
- Yost (D. H.), [L. C. Glass and], Inheritance of Inability to Sweat, 353
- Young (Prof. E. Gordon), Native State of Proteins in Egg-white, 1021
- Young (Dr. Matthew), [obituary article], 1002
- Zachariassen (Prof. W. H.), Diffraction Maxima in X-Ray Photographs, 1019
- Zanaty (A. F.), [S. Azmy Pasha and], Disease and Race, 98
- Zia (Y.), and Sicien H. Chen, Fruit Flies of Northern China, 595
- Ziemann (Prof. Hans), [death], 19
- Zimmern (Sir Alfred), Spiritual Values and World Affairs (*Review*), 439
- Zubov (Prof. N. N.), The Drift of the Ice-breaker *Sedov*, 533
- Zuckerman (Dr. S.), Human Genera and Species, 510; work of, 582

TITLE INDEX

- Abbe, Ernst (1840-1905): The Origin of a great Optical Industry, 89
- Aberdeen University: conferment of honorary doctorates on Sir William Jameson and Prof. F. A. Lindemann, 599; impending retirement of Prof. A. Findlay; appointment of Dr. H. W. Melville as professor of chemistry in, 654
- Absolutkolorimetrie, Prof. A. Thiel (*Review*), 141
- Acadian French in Louisiana, H. N. Gould, 555
- Acetaldehyde: High Temperature Photolysis of, G. K. Rollefson and D. C. Grahame, 712; Photolysis of, C. J. Danby, 940
- Acetylcholine: Liberation of Potassium from Muscle by, V. H. Cicardo and J. A. Moglia, 551; Vitamin B₁ and, formation in Isolated Brain, Dr. P. J. G. Mann and Dr. J. H. Quastel, 856
- Acetylcholinesterase, Action of Ions on, L. Massart and R. Dufait; Prof. B. Mendel, Dorothy Mundell and Frida Strelitz, 822
- Acetyl Content of Marinobufagin, Arenobufagin and Acetylmariobufagin, Dr. V. Deulofeu, E. Duprat and R. Labriola, 671
- Achromatic Lens, Drs. N. V. E. Nordenmark and J. Nordstrom, 344
- Acids, Weak, Ionization Constants of, B. Saxton and L. S. Darken, 979
- Acoustic Generator, An, Prof. Hartmann, Peter and Elisabeth Mathes and F. Lazarus, 787
- Acoustics, Applied, Dr. H. F. Olson and F. Massa. Second edition (*Review*), 138
- Adaptive Coloration in Animals, Dr. H. B. Cott, 949
- Administration, Scientific Management in, 275
- Adrenal Cortex, The Function of the, Dr. W. Feldberg (*Review*), 404
- Advertising, [1870], 984
- Aerial, Geological and Geophysical Survey of Northern Australia, Dr. L. Dudley Stamp, 433
- Aerodynamics: Practical, Elements of, Prof. Bradley Jones. Second edition (*Review*), 496; Applied. Second edition, Prof. L. Bairstow; Prof. L. M. Milne-Thomson (*Review*), 686
- African: Studies: and the War, 180; International Co-operation and, 180; Native Institutions and Christianity, Prof. N. de Cleene, 181; Studies in War-time Paris, 928
- Agarics, New Descriptions of, A. A. Pearson, 153
- Agrarian Affairs, International Journal of*, No. 1, 145
- Agricultural Work for University Students, 854
- Agriculture: British, The place of Science in, Dr. E. H. Tripp (*Review*), 366; in the Twentieth Century: Essays on Research, Practice and Organization to be presented to Sir Daniel Hall (*Review*), 366; A Text-book of, designed for use in East African Schools, J. G. Brash (*Review*), 1003
- Air: Currents, Vertical, K. P. Ramakrishnan, 75; Transport, Insects and Disease, F. G. Sarel Whitfield; Dr. A. D. Imms, 76; Conditioning, W. Chambers, 270; Transport, Insects and Disease, Dr. F. P. Mackie, 391
- Aircraft: Design in (*Review*), 368; Design. Vol. 1: Aerodynamics; Vol. 2: Aerostructures, C. H. Latimer (*Review*), 368; Long-Range, Development of, 539; Production, Minister of, Sir Frank E. Smith appointed controller of telecommunications by the, 931
- Akiga's Story: The Tiv Tribe as seen by One of its Members. Translated and annotated by Dr. R. East (*Review*), 655
- Alchemical Manuscripts, 65
- Alcohol: Effects of, on the Human Body, [1870], 869; and Mental Disease, H. M. Pollock, 902
- Aldehydes, Gattermann Synthesis of, A. G. Mistretta and Prof. F. F. Nord, 387
- Algae from the Iranian Gulf, F. Børgesen, 674
- Algebra for Science and Engineering Students, E. H. Lockwood (*Review*), 1008
- Algebras, Structure of, Prof. A. A. Albert (*Review*), 498
- Algeria, Southern, Populations of, Dr. M. Gronier, 1013
- Alien Scientific Workers, Internment of, 796
- Alkali and Alkaline Earth Metals exposed to Air, An Electron Diffraction Study of the surfaces of, S. Yamaguchi, 742
- Allegheny Plateau, Erosion Surfaces in the, J. L. Rich, 431
- Allium, Cytological Investigations in, S. W. Mensinkai, 353
- Allomyces, Life-cycle of, R. Emerson, 1025
- Altazimuth Mounting for Reflecting Telescopes, Rev. W. Rees Wright, 353
- Aluminium Alloys, Selective Oxidation of, Dr. H. Bienfait, 190
- Amaryllidaceae, Taxonomy in the, 774
- American: Psychologists in War-time, 21; Universities and Colleges, 1939, Statistics of Registration in, 259; Vegetables (*Review*), 283; Association: Columbus Meeting, Dr. F. R. Moulton, 288; Dr. A. F. Blakeslee elected president of the, 341; Archaeology, Methods and Aims in, 437; Cities and States, Studies of, E. L. Thorndike, 467; Archaeology and Local Research, 546; 558; Investigations in Embryology, Recent, Prof. R. W. Sperry; Profs. W. C. Allee and A. J. Finkel, Miss Ethel Browne Harvey; Prof. R. and E. L. Chambers; Prof. H. L. Eastick, 560; Ethnology, Bureau of, Fifty-sixth annual report, 1938-39, 773; Association of Anatomists, Prof. Philip E. Smith elected president of the, 776; Scientific Congress, The Eighth, Dr. Austin H. Clark, 918
- American Weekly*, R. D. Potter appointed science editor of the, 968
- Amerindian Portraiture, Pioneers in, 255
- Amine Oxidase and Benzedrine, Dr. H. Blaschko, 26
- Amino-Acids: in Protein Digests, Separation of, R. L. M. Syngde, 309; of Casein, Phosphopeptone, Dr. M. Damodaran and B. V. Ramachandran, 857
- Ammocharis, Leaf-growth as a Systematic Feature in, Milne-Redhead and Schweickerdt, 229
- Amœba lescheri* (= *Chaos lescheri*): a New Species of Amœba, Dr. Monica Taylor and Sister Catherine Hayes, 464
- Amphibian Anatomy, L. S. Ramaswami, 467
- Amphipod Bathyporeia in Tow-nettings, E. E. Watkin, 711
- Amphipods, off-shore, in the Littoral Zone, Occurrence of some, C. B. Goodhart and R. Harrison, 109
- Anaerobic Bacteria, The, and their Activities in Nature and Disease: a Subject Bibliography, Elizabeth McCoy and L. S. McClung. 2 Vols. (*Review*), 499
- Anaspid, A New, from the Upper Devonian of Scaumenac Bay in Canada, with remarks on the other Anaspids, E. A. Son Stensjö, 674
- Angami Nagas, Blood Groups of the, Dr. S. S. Sarkar, 261
- Anglo-French Co-operation in Schools, 565

- Anglo-Soviet Journal*, No. 1, 301
- Anilides, Hydration of, of Normal Fatty Acids, B. A. Toms, 1019
- Animal: Viruses, Electrophoresis of, and their Neutralizing Antibodies in Low Concentrations, Dr. A. Polson, 27; Development, Organisers in, 98; Specimens, Temporary Preservation of, Dr. P. Chabanaud, 397; Biology, Practical, T. L. Green (*Review*), 656
- Annuaire pour l'an 1940, Publié par le Bureau des Longitudes. Avec des Notices scientifiques (*Review*), 498
- Annual Register, 1939. Edited by Dr. M. Epstein (*Review*), 1009
- Anomura, Japanese, G. Melin, 785
- Anopheles subpictus*, Influence of Spermathecal Stimulation on the Physiological Activities of, Dr. D. N. Roy, 747
- Antelope (*Antilope cervicapra*), Upper Canine Teeth in the Indian, Prof. J. Ritchie, 859
- Anthropological Nomenclature, Prof. W. C. Osman Hill, 260
- Anthropology, Physical, Scope and Limitations of, Sir James Barrett, 261
- Anthropomorphic Pottery, Facial Deformity in, R. N. Salaman, 309
- Antiquaries, Society of, award of the gold medal of the, to Prof. A. M. Tallgren, 582
- Antiquity*: a Sutton Hoo number, 585
- Antirrhinum, Incompatibility in, Marta Sharman, 675
- Anura, Lymphatic System of the, Dr. H. M. Knowler, 755
- Appetite, Excessive and Depraved, [1870], 869
- Apple Trees, Water Culture of, H. L. Pearce, 595
- Aquaria Societies, Difficulties of, 21
- Arabe, La science, et son rôle dans l'évolution scientifique mondiale, A. Mieli. Avec quelques additions de Henri-Paul-Joseph Renard, M. Meyerhof and J. Ruska (*Review*), 4
- Archaeological Discoveries of 1939 in Ireland, 21
- Archaeology: in the U.S.S.R., Prof. V. Gordon Childe, 110; the Writer of the Note, 111; American: Methods and Aims in, 437; Recent Researches in, 558
- Architecture, History of, Outlines of the, Part 4: Modern Architecture, with particular reference to the United States, Prof. R. Newcomb (*Review*), 297
- Aristapedia, Development of, W. Braun, 902
- Aristotelian Logic, The Structure of, Prof. J. W. Miller (*Review*), 815
- Armed Forces, Education in the, 526
- Army, Health of the, 968
- Aromatic Molecules, Diamagnetism of the Mobile Electrons in, Prof. K. S. Krishnan, 470
- Astronomy: W. T. Skilling and R. S. Richardson (*Review*), 445; General, Dr. W. H. Steavenson (*Review*), 445
- Atlas of Britain, A National, Prof. E. G. R. Taylor, 487
- Atmosphäre, Physik der, Herausgegeben von V. Conrad. Bearbeitet von J. Zenneck, R. Steinmaurer, P. Gruner, H. Landsberg and F. W. P. Götz (*Review*), 760
- Atmospheric: Disturbances, Microseisms and Transmission of, K. Sezawa and K. Kanai, 154; Pollution, Investigation of, Conference on, Prof. W. H. Roberts elected chairman of the, 929
- Atmospherics, Study of, Prof. T. H. Laby, J. J. McNeill, F. G. Nicholls and A. F. B. Nickson, 517
- Atombau und Spektrallinien, Prof. A. Sommerfeld. Band 2. Zweite Auflage (*Review*), 528
- Atomic: Constants, Evaluating, A Simple Rule for, Prof. Po-leon Woo, 30; Clocks, Measurement of Velocity with, Dr. H. E. Ives, 417; Oxygen, Cross-section of, for Elastic Collision with Electrons, and Region *F* Absorption, Prof. S. K. Mitra, Benoy B. Ray and S. P. Ghosh, 1017
- Atoms, Size of, [1870], 523
- Audiphone Measurements, An Artificial Mastoid for, M. S. Hawley, 258
- Aurora and Magnetic Storm of March 24-25, Rev. J. P. Rowland, 625
- Australia: and New Zealand, Electricity Supply in, 77; Setting-up of a Central Medical Co-Administrative Committee in, 420; Northern, Aerial, Geological and Geophysical Survey of, Dr. L. Dudley Stamp, 433; Census of Aborigines in, 586; Migration to, in 1939, 666; Chemical Research in, 700
- Australian: Aborigines, Scaphocephaly among, F. J. Fenner, 74; Shell Ornaments, C. P. Mountford and A. Harvey, 74; Aboriginal Artist, An, E. P. Goddard, 699; Mud-fish, New, [1870], 908; -New Zealand Cancer Conference, Tenth, 930; Aborigines, Plant Foods of, Mrs. I. W. Dadswell, 966
- Austrian Academy in Great Britain, Foundation of an, 664
- Axolotl Larva, Diurnal Rhythms in the, and in *Drosophila*, Dr. H. Kalmus, 72
- Azomethane, Decomposition of, Henkin and H. A. Taylor, 431
- β -Ray Absorption, A Photographic Method of Studying, by ^{32}P , Dr. J. Govaerts, 624
- Bacon, Curing of, Function of Nitrate, Nitrite, and Bacteria in the, 817
- Bacterial Warfare, [1870], 523
- Bacteriological Warfare, Dr. E. Sarfati, 621
- Bacteriology: for Medical Students and Practitioners, Prof. A. D. Gardner (*Review*), 293; Fundamental Principles of, with Laboratory Exercises, Prof. A. J. Salle (*Review*), 659
- Bacteriophage: and Plant Lysins, R. C. Thomas, 468; C_{16} , Effect of Radiations on, E. Wollman, F. Holweck, and Dr. S. Luria, 935
- Bantu Lexicography, Rev. C. M. Doke, 192
- Barkhausen-Kurz Oscillations with Positive Ions, W. S. Elliott and J. A. Ratcliffe, 265
- Barley: Malting, H. V. Garner and J. W. Weil, 738; Linkage Studies in, D. W. Robertson and O. H. Coleman, 827
- Barolong, South Africa, Marriage Customs among the, Z. K. Matthews, 268
- Basidia of certain Polyporaceæ, Moisture-relation as a Determining Factor in the Transformation of the, Prof. S. R. Bose, 706
- Bats, G. M. Allen (*Review*), 811
- Battery Vehicle, Development of the, J. H. Cansdale, 457
- Bean: Rust Fungus, Control of the, Dr. A. F. El-Helaly, 75; Seed Coat Colour in the, H. A. K. Lamprecht, 827
- Bees, The Mind of the, J. Françon, translated by H. Eltringham (*Review*), 298
- Begin Here: a War-time Essay, Miss Dorothy L. Sayers (*Review*), 815
- Belgian: Cretaceous, Fauna of the, Dr. R. Marlière, 942; Lower Devonian, Flora of the, F. Stockmans, 942
- Benedicks Effect in Gas-free Mercury, First, as influenced by the Mean Temperature, Prof. C. Benedicks and P. Sederholm, 148, 666
- Benzenanthrones, Fawzy Ghali Baddar, 822
- Benzedrine, Amine Oxidase and, Dr. H. Blaschko, 26
- 3:4-Benzopyrene: Paramecium and the Production of Tumours, J. C. Mottram, 184; Photodynamic Hemolysis by, I. Doniach and J. C. Mottram, 748; Some Physico-Chemical Properties of, Prof. F. Weigert and J. C. Mottram, 895
- Bergey's Manual of Determinative Bacteriology: a Key for the Identification of Organisms of the class Schizomycetes, D. H. Bergey, R. S. Breed, E. G. D. Murray and A. P. Hitchens. Fifth edition (*Review*), 498
- Bermuda Seismograph Station, 739
- Bilirubin in Urine, Dr. F. Marsh, 782
- Binocular Vision, Sir John Graham Kerr, 901
- Biochemistry: Annual Review of, Editor, J. M. Luck; Associate Editor, J. H. C. Smith (*Review*), 369; Progress in (*Review*), 369
- Biography in the U.S.S.R., Dr. B. P. Uvarov (*Review*), 52
- Biological Films, Some New, 890; Objects, Total Energy Absorption in, Dr. W. V. Mayneord, 972

- Biology: A School Course of, with suggestions for Practical and Field Work, L. J. F. Brimble (*Review*), 205; for Junior Forms: with instructions for Simple Practical Experiments, M. R. Lambert (*Review*), 205; for Schools, T. H. Hawkins (*Review*), 205; in Schools, 384; Textbook of, Dr. E. R. and A. V. Spratt. Second edition (*Review*), 810
- Bird: Behaviour, The Releaser Concept in, D. Lack, 107; Migration and Gonad Development, A. Wolfson, 826; Life, Intimate Sketches from, E. J. Hosking and C. W. Newberry (*Review*), 874; Portraits, Seton Gordon (*Review*), 874
- Birds: of Newfoundland and Colour Modification, J. W. Aldrich and D. C. Nutt, 352; of Prey, Wild, Age of, E. L. Sumner, jun., 430
- Birmingham University: War conditions in, 20; Progress of, 383; Dr. C. Dannatt appointed professor of electrical engineering, 1013
- Birth-rate in Chief Capitals, Annual, 666
- Bismuth, Nuclear Reactions with, D. G. Hurst, R. Latham and W. B. Lewis, 633
- Bismuthinite in Somerset, Occurrence of, A. W. G. Kingsbury, 351
- Bleeding, Control of, Preparation for the, 384
- Blind: Spot of Mariotte, The, Dr. J. Bröns, 383; Cave Fish, Eye of a, E. B. Gresser and C. M. Breder, jun., 1025
- Blood: Circulation of the, Prof. J. H. Gaddum (*Review*), 206; Circulation of the, The Control of the, Prof. R. J. S. McDowall, with the assistance of Lt.-Col. G. E. Malcomson and I. McWhan (*Review*), 206; Groups of the Angami Nagas, Dr. S. S. Sarkar, 261; Groups and Racial Diagnosis, G. L. Taylor, R. R. Race, Aileen M. Prior and Elizabeth W. Ikin, 415; -group Tests and Paternity, Dr. D. Harley and Dr. G. R. Lynch, 889; -groups and Castes, D. N. Majundar, 1025
- Bluetongue Virus in Fertile Eggs produced on a Vitamin-deficient Diet, Cultivation of, J. H. Mason, J. D. W. A. Coles and Dr. R. A. Alexander, 1022
- Boas, Prof. Franz (*Review*), 951
- Boiler: Feed Water Treatment, F. J. Matthews. Second edition (*Review*), 840; Water Treatment (*Review*), 840
- Bombay, Control of Spirit in, 420
- Bond Angle Distortion, A Magnetic Study of the Effect of, D. P. Mellor and W. H. Lockwood, 862
- Books in War-time, 719; A. Marshall, 977; 1013
- Boron: Monobromide, Band Spectrum of, Rotational Analysis of the, Dr. E. Miescher and E. Rosenthaler, 624; in Agricultural and Horticultural Practice, 766
- Bose-Einstein or Fermi-Dirac Statistics? Does the Mesotron Obey, P. L. Kapur, 69
- Botany, Early, at Oxford, Dr. J. Ramsbottom, 993
- Bow, The Constellation of the, Sirius and, Dr. H. Chatley, 670
- Boyle and Wren, Friendship of, Ruth Musser and J. C. Krantz, jun., 182
- Brain: Tissue, 'Coupling' of Phosphorylation with Oxidation of Pyruvic Acid in, Dr. S. Ochoa, 747; Intellect and Size of, [1870], 793; Isolated, Vitamin B₁ and Acetylcholine Formation in, Dr. P. J. G. Mann and Dr. J. H. Quastel, 856
(*Brassica campestris* L.), An Apetalous Mutation in Turnip, Dr. S. Ramanujam, 552
- Breaking and Melting, Relation between, Prof. R. Fürth; Prof. Max Born, 741
- Britain, A National Atlas of, Prof. E. G. R. Taylor, 487
- British: Association, the War and the, 61; and American Civil Engineers, 97; Museum (Natural History), Acquisitions of the, 181; Pharmacopœia: Proposed Innovations, 196; Empire Cancer Campaign, The, Dr. E. Boyland, 246; Empire, Mineral Resources of the, 258; India, including Ceylon and Burma, The Fauna of, Butterflies, G. Talbot. Vol. 1 (*Review*), 293; Museum (Natural History), Exhibition of Animals and Plants of use to Man, 300; Opening hours of the; acquisitions, 346; Museum, Annual Report for 1938, 383; East Africa, Meteorology in, A. Walter, 418; Museum (Natural History), Exhibits in the, 506; Association, Arrangements for the 1940 meeting of the, 619; Museum (Natural History), recent acquisitions, 698; Empire Naturalists' Association, retirement of Mrs. G. B. Thomason, 739; Museum, Sir Robert Mond bequest to the, 774; Museum (Natural History), presentation of specimens of Bravoite to the, 854; Pharmacopœia: Emergency Monographs, 889; Association, cancellation of the 1940 Conference, 892; Pharmaceutical Conference, chairman's address of H. Humphreys Jones, 927
- Broadcasting: Long-distance, Sir Noel Ashbridge, 194; over Wires, Dr. T. Walmsley, 434
- Bronzes from Southern Nigeria, J. O. Field, 352
- Browne, Buckston, prize, award of the, to Capt. R. Kemp, 183
- Bruce, Dr. W. S., Memorial Prize award of the, to Brian Roberts, 931
- Bryophyta, Spores of, Miss Knox, 978
- Buddha, Relics of the, 343
- Bulletin Analytique, the, 965
- Burrell Engines, Some early, R. H. Clark, 345
- Byrd Antarctic Expeditions, 1928-30 and 1933-35, Meteorology of the, C. Grimminger and W. C. Haines, 34
- Cabbage White Butterflies, Destruction of, by Birds, Prof. G. D. Hale Carpenter, 900
- Calcium Phytate, Ionization of, E. F. Yang; Prof. D. C. Harrison and Sir Edward Mellanby, 745
- Calculus, An Introduction to the, Prof. K. R. Gungikar (*Review*), 812; Advanced, Prof. I. S. Sokolnikoff (*Review*), 1008
- California University, Grant from the Rockefeller Foundation for a Cyclotron, 776
- Calluna: a Monograph on the Scotch Heather, W. Beijerinck (*Review*), 1005
- Cambridge: University: Prof. A. V. Hill elected a parliamentary representative of, 341; Natural Science at, [1870], 561; Dr. W. L. H. Duckworth elected Master of Jesus College, 888
- Camouflage in Modern Warfare, 949
- Canada: Demography of, Dr. H. B. Jeffs, 24; National Research Council of, Awards, 740; Conservation in, A. F. Coventry, 967
- Canada's Indian Policy, D. Jenness, 773
- Canadian: Mineral Industry in 1938, 700; Polar Year Expeditions, 1932-33, 774
- Cancer: Campaign, The British Empire, Dr. E. Boyland, 246; Interferometric Serum Test for, Dr. M. W. Mettenleiter, 305; the role of Surgery, Radium and X-rays in its Treatment, 321; -producing Chemical Compounds, Prof. J. W. Cook, 335; Cell and Growth-regulating System of the Body, Prof. L. Doljanski and Dr. R. S. Hoffman, 857; Conference, Australian-New Zealand, Tenth, 930
- Cannabidiol and Cannabol, Constituents of *Cannabis indica* Resin, A. Jacob and Prof. A. R. Todd, 350
- Cannabis indica* Resin, Cannabidiol and Cannabol, constituents of, A. Jacob and Prof. A. R. Todd, 350
- Cannabol, Cannabidiol and, Constituents of *Cannabis indica* Resin, A. Jacob and Prof. A. R. Todd, 350
- Canoe-making in Ancient Hawaii, Translated and edited by K. P. Emory and Mary Pukui, 352
- Caranx, Young, in the Western North Atlantic, J. T. Nichols, 632
- Carbohydrate Manuring, Prof. N. R. Dhar, 632
- Carbon: Monoxide as a hazard of Polar Exploration, Prof. Yandell Henderson and J. McCullough Turner, 92; Dioxide in Arctic and Antarctic Seas, Dr. G. E. R. Deacon, 250
- Carboxylase System, Cause of the 'Activation' of the, by Free Aneurin, Dr. H. G. K. Westenbrink, and Dr. D. A. van Dorp, 465
- Carboxypeptidase, Effect of X-Rays on, W. M. Dale, 977
- Carcinogenesis, Cytology of, Dr. Pullinger, 864

- Carcinogenic: Hydrocarbons, Photo-Oxides of, Dr. C. B. Allsopp, 303; Colouring Matters, H. S. Redgrove; Prof. J. W. Cook, 672; Action, Substances which Modify, Dr. Crabtree, 785
- Carica Papaya*, Genetical Studies in, J. D. J. Hofmeyer, 902
- Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland, Report of the, 700
- Carotene and Allied Pigments, Dr. R. A. Morton; W. M. Seaber, 286
- Carrageen Mucilage, Acetolysis of, Prof. T. Dillon and P. O'Colla, 749; Dr. E. G. V. Percival and J. Buchanan, 1020
- Casein Phosphopeptone, Amino-Acids of, Dr. M. Damodaran and B. V. Ramachandran, 857
- Catalysis, Mechanism of, by Enzymes, D. B. Taylor, 423
- Cat Fish, Melanophores of the, G. H. Parker, 555
- Catlin and his North American Indian Gallery and Museum, L. J. P. Gaskin, 158
- Causality and Science, Prof. N. K. Brahma (*Review*), 1009
- Cave: Faunas, 234; Man in Colorado, 384
- Cell Theory, The, A. Glücksmann (*Review*), 875
- Cellular and Comparative Physiology, Journal of*, Dr. D. W. Bronk appointed editor of the, 740
- Cellulose: Sheet: Anisotropy of, D. G. Drummond, 67; Optical Anisotropy of, Dr. R. C. Gray, 266; Acetate, Structure of, Dr. C. A. Redfarn, 515; Sheets, Optical Anisotropy of, Dr. J. Spence, 515
- Central European Observer*, 258
- Central Register of Specialists (Section for Scientific Research), 176
- Centromere, Irregular Division of the, Dr. C. D. Darlington, 942
- Ceratium, Distribution of, E. S. Nielsen, 33
- Cereals for Spring Sowing, Varieties of, 183
- Cerebro-Spinal Fever, Memorandum on, 586
- Chalcoptera metallica*, Economic Importance of the Australian Ant, H. B. Fell, 707
- Chalk Landscape, Lord Kennet of the Dene, 466; C. J. P. Cave, 629
- Channel: Railways: Projected, [1870], 118; 637; Islands, The Archæology of the, Vol. 2: The Bailiwick of Jersey, Mrs. Jaquetta Hawkes (*Review*), 684
- Charity and the Struggle for Existence, Dr. R. R. Marett (Huxley Memorial Lecture), 37
- Chaulmoogra Oils, H. I. Cole and H. T. Cardoso, 310
- Chemical: A Use for Every (*Review*), 7; Industries, The Economics of, Dr. E. H. Hempel (*Review*), 137; Society, New departure of the, [1870], 160; Industry, Society of, Lord Samuel awarded the Messel medal of the, 509; Bond, The, Prof. C. K. Ingold (*Review*), 644; Bond, The Nature of the, and the Structure of Molecules and Crystals: an Introduction to Modern Structural Chemistry, Prof. L. Pauling (*Review*), 644; Engineering, Applied Mathematics in, Prof. T. K. Sherwood and Prof. C. E. Reed (*Review*), 658; Society, Advisory Research Council of the, Activities of the, 771
- Chemicals and Related Materials, Uses and Applications of, compiled and edited by T. C. Gregory (*Review*), 7
- Chemie: Organischen, Ausführliches Lehrbuch der, Prof. W. Schlenk. Band 2 (*Review*), 202; physikalischen, Kurzes Lehrbuch der, Prof. K. Jellinek. Heft 1 u. 2 (*Review*), 281; analytischen, Physikalischen methoden der, herausgegeben von W. Bottger. Teil 3 (*Review*), 495
- Chemisch Weekblad*, Retirement of Prof. W. P. Jorissen from the editorship of the, 20
- Chemistry: for Intermediate Examinations, Dr. J. N. Sugden (*Review*), 51; General and Inorganic, Dr. P. J. Durrant (*Review*), 51; Inorganic, A College Course of, Prof. J. R. Partington (*Review*), 51; Intermediate, Inorganic and Physical, Dr. F. Prescott (*Review*), 51; Youth on the Prow in, Prof. J. Read (*Review*), 123; Organic, Aids to, Stanley F. Smith (*Review*), 137; of Organic Compounds, Sir Jocelyn Thorpe (*Review*), 202; of Organic Compounds: The, a Year's Course in Organic Chemistry, Prof. J. B. Conant, revised with the assistance of Dr. Max Tishler (*Review*), 202; Organic, Practical, Introduction to, Dr. F. G. Mann and Dr. B. C. Saunders (*Review*), 202; Physical, A course of (*Review*), 281; A History of, Dr. F. J. Moore, revision prepared by Prof. W. T. Hall. Third edition (*Review*), 294; Inorganic, F. Ephraim. Third English edition, by Dr. P. C. L. Thorne and Dr. A. M. Ward (*Review*), 294; Institute of, work of the, Sir Robert Pickard; Dr. J. J. Fox elected president, 382; in Forestry, Role of, Dr. S. Krishna, 470; Organic, Perkin and Kipping's, Prof. F. Stanley Kipping and Dr. F. Barry Kipping. Part 3. Revised edition (*Review*), 495; Inorganic, Laboratory Exercises in, Prof. J. F. Norris and Prof. K. L. Mark. Second edition (*Review*), 657
- Chemists: Young, and great Discoveries, Prof. J. Kendall (*Review*), 123; Analytical, Activities of, Prof. W. H. Roberts, 416
- Chiasmata, Position of, K. Mather, 979
- Child Development: Biographies of, the Mental Growth Careers of Eighty-four Infants and Children; a Ten-year Study from the Clinic of Child Development at Yale University. Part 1, Dr. A. Gesall; Part 2, Dr. Catherine S. Amatruza, Dr. B. M. Castner and Dr. Helen Thompson (*Review*), 140
- Chimie Mathématique, La, Prof. T. De Donder. Vol. 1 (*Review*), 528
- Chimpanzees, Observation of, Prof. R. M. Yerkes, 890
- China: South, Hygiene in, Inspector-Genl. Dr. A. Lasnet, 100; Geological Research in, Dr. J. Coggin Brown (*Review*), 169; The Geology of, Prof. J. S. Lee (*Review*), 169; Northern, Fruit Flies of, Y. Zia and Sicien H. Chen, 595; Early Man in, Bone and Stone Industries of, 904; Mycology in, S. C. Teng and S. H. Ou; S. C. Teng and K. L. Teng, 1025
- Chinese Art, Exhibition of, at Leeds, 509
- Chloroacetic Acids, Resonance in the, H. O. Jenkins, 625
- Chloroaurin in Sabella, Function of, and of Hæmoglobin in Lumbricus, Prof. H. Munro Fox, 781
- Choline Esterase, Action of Ions on, Dr. D. Nachmansohn, 513
- Choukoutien: Sinanthropus Site, Bone and Antler Industry of the, Dr. H. Breuil, translated by Miss M. E. Boyle, 904; The Upper Cave Industry of, Pei Wen Chung, 904
- Christianity Survive?, Can, Rev. Dr. M. Davidson (*Review*), 329
- Chromosome Numbers of British Plants, P. Maude, 865
- Chrysanthemum Midge, Dr. H. F. Barnes, 74
- Ciel, Exploration du, P. Rousseau (*Review*), 445
- Cimex, Sex-chromosomes in, Dr. C. D. Darlington, 113
- Cinchona production in the Netherlands Indies, Dr. M. Kerbosch, 738
- Cinematography, Colour, Major A. B. Klein. Second edition (*Review*), 142
- Circuit-Breakers, Miniature, 548
- Circumlocution, [1870], 946
- Cirque Formation, W. V. Lewis, 269
- Civil: Defence: a Practical Manual presenting with working drawings the methods required for Adequate Protection against Aerial Attack, Capt. C. W. Glover. Second edition (*Review*), 661; Engineers, Institution of, award of the James Alfred Ewing medal to Prof. G. I. Taylor, 852
- Civilization and the Rights of Man, 237
- Clocks, Electric, Sir Charles Vernon Boys (*Review*), 326
- Coal, Deep Mining for, [1870], 198
- Coelom, Vertebrate, Origin of the, H. B. Fell, 906
- Cognition, Non-Sensory, Experiments in, W. W. Carington and S. G. Soal, 389
- Cold, Catching, [1870], 198
- Coleoptera, British, Larvæ of, Dr. F. van Emden, 74
- Collagen Fibres, Molecular Structure of the, Dr. W. T. Astbury and Florence O. Bell, 421
- Collectif, notion de, Étude critique de la, Prof. J. Ville (*Review*), 139
- Colliery, Dismantling an old, 23
- Colombo University College, D. R. R. Burt appointed professor of zoology in, 292

- Colonial: Office appointments, 101; 259; 420; 622; 776; 931; Development: and Scientific Research, 342; and Research, 364; Advancement, Co-operation in, 563; Policy and Scientific Research, 853; Development and Allied Co-operation, 888
- Colour Printing, Modern 344
- Coloured Families in the Port of Liverpool, Economic Status of, Kathleen Johnstone, 268
- Columbia University, award of the Barnard gold medal to Prof. F. Joliot and Madame Irene Curie-Joliot, 666
- Concealing Coloration tested by a Sparrow Hawk, Ll. C. Ingles, 902
- Conflict, The, 795
- Conjugated Ring Systems, Fluorescence and Oxidation in, Dr. J. Weiss, 744
- Conservation: The Science and Practice of, Grass and Forage Crops, Dr. S. J. Watson. 2 Vols. (*Review*), 245
- Constellations, An Easy Guide to the, J. Gall Inglis (*Review*), 656
- Cook: Capt. James, R.N., F.R.S., The Life and Achievements of, Explorer, Navigator, Surveyor and Physician, Surgeon Rear-Admiral J. R. Muir (*Review*), 481
- Cooper Union for the advancement of Science and Art, Eightieth annual report of the, 420
- Copepods, Sand-dwelling, A. G. Nicholls, 595
- Copper: Prehistoric, and some Experiments in Smelting, H. H. Coghlan, 310; Rossi Transition Curve for, The Second Maximum in the, P. J. G. de Vos, 387; Conductivity of, [1870], 474
- Coprophagy in the Rabbit, Dr. A. Eden, 36
- Cork, Interxylary, R. A. Diettert, 34
- Corpus Callosum, Origin of the, 271
- Cosmic: Ray Showers, Large, and Mesons, A. H. Wilson and F. Booth, 103; Rays: and Mesotrons, Dr. H. J. J. Braddick (*Review*), 141; Prof. R. A. Millikan (*Review*), 298; Recent Developments, Prof. P. M. S. Blackett (Guthrie lecture of the Physical Society), 343; Ray Showers: Penetrating, Dr. L. Jánossy and P. Ingleby, 511; Extensive, Barometric Coefficient of, M. G. E. Cosyns, 668; Intensities and Cyclones, Dr. Y. Nishina, Y. Sekido, H. Simamura and H. Arakawa, 703; Rays, Hard, Absorption of, and Mesotron Decay, B. Rossi, N. Hilberry and J. B. Hoag; E. Fermi, 903
- Cosmology: a Text for Colleges, Prof. J. A. McWilliams. Second edition (*Review*), 816
- Cosmos, Incompatibility in, T. M. Little, J. H. Kantor and B. A. Robinson, 979
- Cotton: The Genetics of, Dr. S. C. Harland; Prof. R. R. Gates (*Review*), 124; The American Outlook on (*Review*), 280; History, Species, Varieties, Morphology, Breeding, Culture, Diseases, Marketing and Uses, Dr. H. Bates Brown. Second edition (*Review*), 280
- Cozymase in Adrenalectomized Rats, Prof. J. Runnström, E. Sperber and E. Bárány, 106
- Cracow University, German Activities at, 20
- Cranberry, Cultivated, Production of Synthetic Mycorrhiza in the, Dr. M. C. Rayner and Ida Levisohn, 461
- Creative Activity, The Nature of, V. Löwenfeld, translated by O. A. Oeser (*Review*), 662
- Crime and Intelligence, Relationship of, Dr. I. Cohen (*Review*), 876
- Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society, 621
- Cryolite as an Insecticide, S. Marcovitch, 865
- Crystalline Enzymes: the Chemistry of Pepsin, Trypsin and Bacteriophage, J. H. Northrup; Dr. Dorothy Crowfoot (*Review*), 990
- Crystals, Organic, Molecular Rotation in, A. W. White, W. S. Bishop, B. S. Biggs and S. O. Morgan, 596
- Cultural Relations of France and Britain, 757
- Culture, Diet and Teeth, Dr. Helen Mellanby, 966
- Cyclol Hypothesis, The, Dr. Dorothy Wrinch, 669
- Cyclotron, The, Dr. W. B. Mann (*Review*), 1007
- Cytochrome *c*, Properties of, Prof. D. Keilin and Dr. E. F. Hartree, 934
- Cytologie, Experimentelle, Dr. H. H. Pfeiffer (*Review*), 477
- Dalai Lama, Tibetan Ceremonial and the, 256
- Date-Palm (*Phoenix dactylifera* Linn.), Mycorrhizal Habit in the, Y. Sabet, 782
- Dead Sea, Algæ in the bed of the, Dr. B. Elazari-Volcani, 975
- Deafness, The Handicap of, Irene R. and Dr. A. W. G. Ewing (*Review*), 813
- Decalcification Fluid, A, R. A. C. Wilks, 671
- Decarboxylation, Enzymic, Mechanism of, Dr. H. Weilmalherbe, 106
- Deccan, Inter-Trappean Flora of the, Prof. B. Sahni, 469
- Deep-Sea Sediments, a Vacuum Core-Sampler for, Dr. H. Pettersson and B. Kullenberg, 306
- Degeneracy and Dissociation Constants, Dr. H. O. Jenkins, 149
- γ -Dehydrocholesterol, Irradiation of, J. W. M. Bunker, R. S. Harris and L. M. Mosher, 865
- Delinquent as a Type, The, Dr. B. Karpman, 785
- Democracy: For; edited by the "People and Freedom" Group (*Review*), 439; The Relation of Science to, R. Brightman (*Review*), 439; To-day and To-morrow, Dr. E. Beneš (*Review*), 439
- Democratic Unity, International, 947
- Demography of England and Wales, 459
- Deoxycholic Acid, Production of Tumours in Mice by, Prof. J. W. Cook, Prof. E. L. Kennaway and N. M. Kennaway, 627
- Design in National Life, R. Brightman (*Review*), 82
- Development: Commissioners, Twenty-ninth Report of the, 547; Principles of, a Text in Experimental Embryology, P. Weiss; Dr. C. H. Waddington (*Review*), 952
- Diacetyl, Fluorescence of, Almy, Fuller and Kinzer, 468
- Diamond: in Europe, First, [1870], 198; Deposits of Tanganyika Territory, G. J. Williams, 393
- Diaphorases, Two Distinct, E. P. Abraham and E. Adler, 517
- Diet in Health and Disease, edited by Sir Humphry Rolleston and Dr. A. A. Moncrieff (*Review*), 813
- Diethylstilbæstrol: (4,4' dihydroxy- α,β -diethylstilbene), A Colour Reaction of, E. Dingemans, 825
- Differential: Periodicity, Theory of, G. F. Sleggs, 153; Analyser, The, Prof. D. R. Hartree, 807
- Diffusing Agents, Mucolytic Effect of Several, and of a Diazotized Compound, Prof. G. Favilli, 866
- Dioscorea, genus, in the Belgian Congo, Notes on the, I. H. Burkill (*Review*), 494
- Dioxadiene, R. K. Summerbell and R. R. Umhoefer, 35
- Dioxi-maleic Acid Oxidase Action of Peroxidases, Dr. B. Swedin and Prof. H. Theorell, 71
- Diphenyldiacetylene, Magnetic Anisotropy of, Dr. Kathleen Lonsdale, 148
- Diphtheria, Prevention of, by Immunization, 345
- Disease: and Race, S. Azmy Pasha and A. F. Zanaty, 98; -Resistant Plants, Breeding, Dr. F. W. Sansome, 690
- Disintegration Produced by Deuterons, A New Type of, Dr. R. S. Krishnan and T. E. Banks, 777
- Dissociation Constants, Degeneracy and, Dr. H. O. Jenkins, 149
- Dropsy, Epidemic, in India, 594
- Drosophila: Chromosomes of, Heterochromatin in the, B. P. Kaufmann, 33; Diurnal Rhythms in the Axolotl Larva and in, Dr. H. Kalmus, 72; *subobscura*, Effect of X-rays on, A. L. M. Christie, 113; Chronological Sex-Ratios in, Dr. G. Eloff, 463
- Drug: Standardization (Harrison memorial lecture), A. D. Powell, 96; Activity, Mechanism of, 273; Addiction, Dr. W. B. Kennedy, 456; Standards for India, 716
- Drugs Act?, How do, Sir Walter Langdon-Brown, 273
- Duggan-Cronin Bantu Gallery, Kimberley, 598
- Dyes, Optically Sensitizing, Steric influence in, Dr. S. E. Sheppard, R. H. Lambert and R. D. Walker, 396
- e, m* and *h*, Evaluation of, Du Mond, 517
- Early Man in Upper Egypt (*Review*), 84
- Earth: Tremors: in Belgium, 100; in Scotland, 219; in New Jersey, Prof. W. A. Lynch, 258; Rotundity of the, [1870], 561; Regional Geology of the, Prof. H. H. Read (*Review*), 953

- Earthing, Practical aspects of, E. Fawcett, H. W. Grimmett, G. F. Shotton and H. G. Taylor, 357
- Earth's : Crust, Heat Flow in the, A. E. Benfield, 230 ; Interior, The, K. E. Bullen, 599
- Earthquake : in Turkey, The, E. Tillotson, 13 ; in Central America, 24 ; The Ogasima (Japan), of May 1, 34 ; in Turkey, The, 62 ; 96 ; recorded on Magnetograph, 220 ; in Turkey, After-shocks of the, 259 ; Quetta, of 1935, K. R. Ramanathan and S. M. Mukherji, 393 ; Great Turkish, Aftershocks of the, 586 ; Recordings, Recent, 622 ; Insurance, Recent Trends in, A. C. Chick, 633 ; of Missouri, R. R. Heinrich, 979 ; during May, 1015
- Earthquakes : Recent, 62 ; 143 ; in Greece, 219 ; Recent, 220 ; January, registered at Kew, 301 ; in Turkey, 346 ; during February, 1940, 460 ; near Great Dams, 508 ; Recent, 666 ; 701 ; in the United States and Italy, 817 ; Recent, 817 ; in Peru, 854 ; Recent, 892
- East African People, An (*Review*), 877
- Echo-Sounding, A New Application of, Dr. C. H. Mortimer and Dr. E. B. Worthington, 212
- Economic : Warfare and National Effort, 361 ; Effort of War, The, R. W. B. Clarke (*Review*), 724 ; Warfare, Dr. P. Einzig ; R. Brightman (*Review*), 724
- Economics : Mathematical Methods in, Prof. H. T. H. Piaggio (*Review*), 8 ; of War-time Export Trade, 472
- Economy of a Primitive People (*Review*), 328
- Edinburgh : University : Instruction for Women Students of Anatomy in, [1870], 160 ; award of the Cameron prize to Prof. E. C. Dodds, 385 ; Royal Botanic Garden, J. M. Cowan, 1014
- Education : Principles and Practice of, Prof. W. G. de Burgh (*Review*), 241 ; in the Armed Forces, 526 ; in World Citizenship, 676 ; Economy in, A. G. Lowndes, 863
- Educational Policy, Science and, 119
- Egg : as Food, The, 788 ; Biological Nature of the, Dr. J. Needham, 788 ; Chemical Composition of the, Dr. Ethel M. Cruickshank, 788
- Eggs : in the Diet, Nutritive Importance of, Dr. S. K. Kon, 788 ; Preservation of, Dr. R. B. Haines, 788 ; Cooking of, Miss Mary Andross, 789
- Egypt : Geography of, J. Ball, 75 ; Southern Upper, Rock-drawings of, I : Sir Robert Mond Desert Expedition, Season 1936-1937 ; Preliminary Report, Dr. H. A. Winkler (*Review*), 84 ; Discovery of a Royal Tomb in, Prof. E. Montet, 300 ; Medical Research in, 739
- Egyptian Royalty, Ancient, Relics of, 382
- Einstein Equation, Viscosity of Suspensions and the, Dr. E. W. J. Mardles, 970
- Elastic and Viscous Materials, Subjective Judgments of 'Firmness' in, Dr. G. W. Scott Blair and F. M. V. Coppen, 425
- Electric : Motor, Industrial Use of an, [1870], 360 ; Discharge Lamps, Colorimetry of, 547 ; Cables and Fire Risks, S. W. Melsom, 752 ; and Magnetic Theory, Classical, Fundamentals of, Dr. G. Burniston Brown, 789 ; Potential Gradient of the Lower Atmosphere, C. W. Allen, 903 ; Surge Recording, Developments in, J. L. Candler, 982
- Electrical Engineers, Institution of, award of the Faraday medal to Dr. Alexander Russell, 180 ; Thawing, C. W. Salt, 218 ; Timekeeping, F. Hope-Jones (*Review*), 326 ; Installation, Fire Fighting Equipment for, H. W. Swann and others, 358 ; Meter, A Sliding Rate, Dr. Unz, 396 ; Engineering Experiments : Theory and Practice, Prof. H. R. Reed and Prof. G. F. Corcoran (*Review*), 658 ; Development in Ireland, S. McEntee, 699 ; Invention and Re-Invention, W. T. O'Dea, 771 ; Engineers, The Institution of : Dr. A. P. M. Fleming (*Review*), 914 ; The History of the (1871-1931), R. Appleyard (*Review*), 914 ; Association, Incorporated Municipal, Activities of the, 929 ; Circuit-Breakers, Mechanical Integrity in the design of, M. C. Hunter, 1026
- Electricity : Supply in Australia and New Zealand, 77 ; and Gas Inspection Services in Ottawa, 159 ; and Magnetism : an Introduction to the Mathematical Theory, Prof. J. B. Whitehead (*Review*), 298 ; Meters and Meter Testing, G. W. Stubbings (*Review*), 496 ; in Iron and Steel Works, Applications of, H. G. Weaver, 868 ; as applied to Metallurgy, Dr. A. P. M. Fleming (Menelaus memorial lecture), 929 ; and Magnetism for Students, S. R. Humby (*Review*), 1008
- Electrochemistry : and Electrochemical Analysis : a Theoretical and Practical Treatise for Students and Analysts, Dr. H. J. S. Sand. Vol. 1 : Electrochemical Theory (*Review*), 137 ; Theoretical and Applied, Prof. M. de Kay Thompson. Third edition (*Review*), 811
- Electrolytes, Colloidal, Prof. J. W. McBain, 702
- Electron : Beams, Convergent, Diffraction of, Caroline H. MacGillavry, 189 ; Diffraction, Theory and Practice of, Prof. G. P. Thomson and Dr. W. Cochrane ; Dr. C. J. Davison (*Review*), 367 ; Microscope at Toronto, The, Prof. E. F. Burton, J. Hillier and A. Prebus, 942
- Electronic : Music, Dr. L. E. C. Hughes, 170 ; Charge, The, Prof. T. H. Laby and V. D. Hopper, 932
- Electrons : Mesotrons into, Evidence for transformation of, Prof. E. J. Williams and G. E. Roberts, 102 ; 151
- Elephantulus, Mechanism of, Ovulation and Corpus luteum formation in, Prof. C. J. van der Horst and J. Gillman, 974
- Elliptic and Hyper-elliptic Integrals and Allied Theory, late W. R. Westropp Roberts (*Review*), 138
- Elwes' Monograph of the genus *lilium*, A Supplement to, A. Grove and A. D. Cotton. Seven parts (*Review*), 913
- Embryo Tissue, Vernalization of Fragments of, Dr. O. N. Purvis, 462
- l'Embryologie expérimentale, Les progrès récents de, Prof. M. Caullery (*Review*), 952
- Embryology : Recent American Investigations in, Prof. R. W. Sperry ; Prof. W. C. Allee and A. J. Finkel ; Miss Ethel Browne Harvey ; Prof. R. and E. L. Chambers ; Prof. H. L. Eastlick, 560 ; Human : Dr. F. H. A. Marshall (*Review*), 569 ; The Essentials of, Prof. G. S. Dodds. Second edition (*Review*), 569
- Enamel Paints, Fluorescent, 585
- Engineering : Applications of Photography to, A. H. Styring, 39 ; Practice, Statistics and, Dr. B. P. Dudding and W. J. Jennett, 117 ; Social Studies in (*Review*), 281 ; Physics and, New Units in, Suggestions for, 597 ; Type Tests in, 597 ; Design, Instructions in, Vol. 2 : Lattice Girder Bridge, H. P. Philpot (*Review*), 658
- Engineer's : Manual, Prof. R. G. Hudson. Second edition (*Review*), 1006 ; Year-book of Formulae, Rules, Tables, Data and Memoranda for 1940, 46th annual issue, revised under the direction of L. St. L. Pendred (*Review*), 1006
- England to India Cable completed, [1870], 1030
- Entomology : Medical, with special reference to the Health and Well-being of Man and Animals, Prof. W. B. Herms. Third edition (*Review*), 296 ; Economic (*Review*), 405
- Enzymes : Dr. E. F. Armstrong (*Review*), 204 ; from Many Aspects (*Review*), 532
- Enzymforschung, Ergebnisse der, Herausgegeben von F. F. Nord und R. Weidenhagen. Band 8 (*Review*), 532
- Epeirogenic Earth Movements in East Greenland and the Depths of the Earth, L. R. Wager, 938
- Epidemiology in Country Practice, Dr. W. N. Pickles (*Review*), 813
- Erde, Regionale Geologie der, Herausgegeben von K. Andrée, H. A. Brouwer und W. H. Bucher. Band 2 : Paläozoische Tafeln und Gebirge. Abschnitt 2 : Northwestern Europe Caledonides. Prof. E. B. Bailey and Prof. O. Holtedahl. Abschnitt 3 : Mittel- und West-europa. Prof. H. Becker (*Review*), 953 ; Das Relief der, Versuch einer regionalen Morphologie der Erdoberfläche, Prof. F. Machatschek. Band 1 (*Review*), 1007
- Escape with Me!, an Oriental Sketch-Book, O. Sitwell (*Review*), 809
- Ėskimo of Labrador, 678

- Eskimos and Indians of Labrador, Anthropometric Observations on the, T. Dale Stewart, 678
- Essex Oyster Beds, Effect of the Severe Frost of the Winter of 1939-40 on the Fauna of the, Prof. J. H. Orton, 708
- Ethiopia: an Empire in the Making, F. Quaranta (*Review*), 168; Development in (*Review*), 168
- Eton College, gift of a telescope to, [1870], 41
- Eumorfopoulos Collections, Antiquities from the, 892
- Europe: Reconstruction in, 1; Vegetation of, The General Aspects of the, Marietta Pallis (*Review*), 135; Rural Life in, Dr. L. Dudley Stamp, 356; Sea Fisheries of, 432; and West Africa: Some Problems and Adjustments, Dr. C. K. Meek, Prof. W. M. Macmillan and E. R. J. Hussey (*Review*), 655
- Euthanasia, Sir Arthur Hurst, 1014
- Evacuation: and the Schools, Earl De La Warr, 254; Problems of, A. D. K. Owen; Capt. F. Evans; Dr. W. A. Robson, 270; of Schoolchildren, 382; Epidemiology of, Dr. J. A. Glover, 583; Problems of, 1028
- Everest, Mount, Rocks of, L. R. Wager, 556
- Evolution without Natural Selection, J. C. McKerron, 546
- Experiment, Pure, Dr. C. D. Darlington (*Review*), 477
- Explosions, Latent Energy and Dissociation in, Dr. A. S. Leah, 897
- Exports in War, 472
- Eyes: Night-shining, E. P. Walker, 506; Artificial, History of, Dr. G. M. Bruce, 546
- Facsimile Transmission, G. Herrick, 233
- Factory Hours for Women and Young Persons, 619
- Family: Meets the Depression: The, a Study of a group of Highly Selected Families, Prof. Winona L. Morgan (*Review*), 140; Allowances, Miss E. F. Rathbone, 696
- Fare, Everyday, for Fitness, Dr. S. B. Whitehead (*Review*), 499
- Fats: Evolution and, Dr. E. F. Armstrong (*Review*), 839; Natural, The Chemical Constitution of, Prof. T. P. Hilditch (*Review*), 839
- Feeding the People in War-time, Sir John Orr and D. Lubbock (*Review*), 475
- Fenland: The, Prof. J. Stanley Gardiner (*Review*), 649; The Medieval, H. C. Darby (*Review*), 649; English, Post-Glacial Vegetation of, H. Godwin, 907
- Fens, The draining of the, H. C. Darby (*Review*), 649
- Fermente und ihre Wirkungen, Die, Prof. C. Oppenheimer. Supplement Band 1 u. 2; Bibliography (1924-1938) (*Review*), 204
- Fermi-Dirac: Energy Distribution of the Metallic Electrons in Graphite, Landau Diamagnetism and the, Prof. K. S. Krishnan, 31; Bose-Einstein or, Statistics? Does the Mesotron obey, P. L. Kapur, 69
- Ferromagnetismus, Prof. B. Becker and Dr. W. Döring (*Review*), 606
- Ferrous Metals, The Corrosion of, Dr. J. Newton Friend, 881
- Fertility Cults in East and West, K. Singer, 750
- Field Trials: Analysis of, Dr. K. Mather, 945; Their Lay-out and Statistical Analysis, Dr. J. Wishart, 945
- Filariasis, Mosquitoes and, S. M. K. Hu, 632
- Filling-media, Fluid for Electrical Apparatus, F. Meyer, 40
- Films, Instructional, in India, C. F. Strickland, 458
- Finland and the U.S.S.R., 456
- Finney, Howell Research Foundation, Awards of the, 930
- Fire Fighting Equipment for Electrical Installation, H. W. Swann and others, 358
- Fisheries Research in the Atlantic, International, 943
- Fisher's, Mr., Various Essays, F. S. Marvin (*Review*), 683
- Fishes, Air-breathing, Prof. B. K. Das, 519
- Fizeau's Experiments on "Newton's Rings", [1870], 908
- Flame Gases, Latent Energy and Dissociation in, Prof. W. T. David and B. Pugh, 896
- Flies: Adult (Muscidae), Relation between Corpus allatum and Ovaries in, Dr. Ellen Thomsen, 28
- Flora of Madagascar, Dr. J. Hutchinson, 448
- Fluorine, Geochemistry of, E. S. Shepherd, 596
- Fodder Conservation, Science and Practice of, E. J. Roberts (*Review*), 245
- Food: from Gardens and Allotments, Sir John Russell, 11; Rationing: Special Diets, Appointment of an advisory committee on, 101; Production and Food Control, Sir John Boyd Orr, 374; Investigation Board, Report of the, for the year 1938, 451; Research, Dr. T. F. Dixon, 451; Policy, War-time, 475; in War-time, edited by W. H. White, 665; Manufacture Preservation and Distribution of, Dr. L. H. Lampitt, 807; and the Housewife, Prof. V. H. Motttram, 853; Production without Artificial Fertilizers, Yeabel Daldy, 905; Policy, National, Co-ordination in, 910; Values at a Glance and How to Plan a Healthy Diet, Mrs. Violet G. Plimmer. Second edition (*Review*), 1005
- Foods, The Chemical Composition of, R. A. McCance and E. M. Widdowson, 664
- Foraminifera in Marine Deposits, Stratification of, H. G. Stubbings, 864
- Forest: Trees, Provenance of, Intergrading among Plants in relation to the, Dr. R. Melville, 130; Entomology, Principles of, Prof. S. A. Graham. Second edition (*Review*), 496; Mensuration, Elementary, M. R. K. Jerram; with a Chapter on the Measurement of Forests by R. Bourne (*Review*), 496; Management and Erosion, Prof. E. P. Stebbing, 713; Products Research Board, Report for 1938, 829; Life of New Zealand, A Century in the, Dr. E. V. Laing, 943
- Forestry, Role of Chemistry in, Dr. S. Krishna, 70
- Fossil: Man of Monte Circeo, Italy, A. C. Blanc, 631; Link between North America and Asia, R. W. Brown, 751; Insect, The Oldest Known, D. J. Scourfield, 799
- Fossils from the Belgian Ordovician, E. Maillieux, 229
- France: The Birthrate in, 146; and England, Communication between, [1870], 236
- Franklin Institute, Biochemical Research Foundation of the, Reports of the, Vol. 5, 1938-1939 (*Review*), 811
- Franqui prize, Award of the, to Prof. P. Nolf, 968
- Frazer: James George, the portrait of a Scholar, R. A. Downie (*Review*), 1004
- Frazer's, Sir James, Notebooks (*Review*), 242
- Freedom," "This, 833
- French Grid, Transmission Lines on the, D. J. Tynan-Byrd, 772
- Fruit: and Vegetable Products, Commercial, Prof. W. V. Cruess (*Review*), 530; Production: and Preservation, Prof. R. H. Stoughton (*Review*), 530; The Fundamentals of, Prof. V. R. Gardner, F. C. Bradford and H. D. Hooker, Jr. (*Review*), 530; Flies of Northern China, Y. Zia and Scien H. Chen, 595
- Fucales, Relationships of the, Dr. M. Delf, 637
- Fuel in Science and Practice, Completion of its eighteenth volume, 344
- Fuels, Imported, Survey of Substitutes for, 505
- Fungi: Coprophilous, Life-histories of, W. M. Page, 113; Yorkshire, A Catalogue of, late F. A. Mason. Completed from the records of the late A. Clarke by Dr. J. Grainger (*Review*), 810
- Fungus Disease, Biological Control of a, R. Leach, 153
- γ -Radiation from ^{89}Br , Chemical action of, Dr. F. Fairbrother, 307
- γ -Radiation, X- and, Volume Integration of dosage for, Dr. F. Happey, 668
- Galactic: Rotation, Sun's Speed of, G. L. Camm, 230; Dynamics, Development of, and some Allied Problems, Prof. A. C. Banerji, 469
- Gamma-Radiation, X- and, Wave-length Effect in the Reaction of Human Skin to, Dr. J. S. Mitchell, 105
- Ganoderma lucidus* (Leyss.) Karst. Effect of inversion of a small piece from the Fruit-body of, Growing *in situ* on the Trunk of *Casuarina equisetifolia*, Prof. S. R. Bose, 899
- Garden, Science Lends a Hand in the, Sir Frederick Keeble (*Review*), 403

- Gardening, Talks About (*Review*), 403
 Gas-Turbine Set, Tests of a 4,000 kw., Prof. A. Stodola, 99
 Gastropods, East Indian, Drs. Adam and Leloup, 229
 Gattermann Synthesis of Aldehydes, A. G. Mistretta and Prof. F. F. Nord, 387
 Gaz, Décharge électrique dans les, Prof. M. Laporte (*Review*), 500
 Gelatin, Mutarotation of, M. P. Balfe, 429
 Geological : Time, Measurement of, [1870], 274 ; 360 ; Calculus, The, [1870], 436 ; Sciences, The Birth and Development of the, Dr. F. D. Adams (*Review*), 478 ; Records, Preservation of, Dr. M. Macgregor, 576 ; Survey of Great Britain, Summary of Progress of the, 1936 and 1937, 790
 Geology : of India, D. N. Wadia. Second edition ; Dr. G. de P. Cotter (*Review*), 88 ; for Engineers, Brig.-Genl. R. F. Sorsbie. New edition (*Review*), 138 ; Historical, Outlines of, Prof. C. Schuchert and Prof. C. O. Dunbar. Third edition (*Review*), 138 ; Elements of, with reference to North America, Prof. W. J. Miller. Second edition (*Review*), 295 ; A Source Book in, Prof. K. F. Mather and Dr. S. L. Mason (*Review*), 478 ; The History of, V. A. Eyles (*Review*), 478 ; of London and South-East England, G. M. Davies (*Review*), 497 ; Submarine, Geophysical Study of, Dr. E. C. Bullard, 764 ; in Great Britain : Reports for 1936 and 1937, 790
 Gephyrea, Japanese, H. Satô, 710
 Gerland's Beiträge zur Geophysik, Supplement Band 4. Ergebnisse der Kosmischen Physik, Band 4 : Physik der Hydro- und Lithosphäre, Herausgegeben von V. Conrad (*Review*), 760
 German : Otorhinolaryngological Society, award of the Alfred Denker foundation prize of the, to Dr. L. v. Hofmann, 302 ; Universities, foreign students in, 740
 Germany : Science Education in, [1870], 398 ; Marriages in, Jan. to June 1939, 460
 Gesture, The Language of, Dr. M. Critchley (*Review*), 814
 Glass : Bending of, under Long Continued Stress, Lord Rayleigh, 29 ; Industry, Physics in the, Prof. W. E. S. Turner, 446 ; Technology, Society of, Dr. S. B. Bagley elected president of the, 666 ; Ultra-Violet Transparency of, Change of, with Temperature, Dr. W. J. Arrol, 861
 Glutamic Acid of Proteins, Prof. A. C. Chibnall, M. W. Rees, E. F. Williams and Dr. E. Boyland, 311 ; Dr. A. Konikova ; Dr. B. W. Town, 312
 Glycolysis in Embryos, Meyerhof and Perdigon, 631
 Goethe medal for art and science, award of the : to Prof. Max Borst, 146 ; to Prof. H. E. Hering, 931
 Gold Coast : New Shrines on the, Miss M. J. Field, 864 ; Alluvial Gold Dredging in the, 891
 Golgi : Apparatus, The, Prof. J. B. Gatenby (*Review*), 481 ; -Körper, Form- und Stoffwechsel der, Dr. G. C. Hirsch (*Review*), 481
 Gondwanaland, The Indian Fragment of, Dr. L. Dudley Stamp (*Review*), 725
 Gospel, The, and the Church : a Study of Distortion and its Remedy, Rev. Canon Charles E. Raven (*Review*), 329
Gossypium Raimondii Ulbr., Relationship of, Prof. T. Boza-Barducci and R. M. Madoo, 553
 Grain Heaps, Temperature of, R. Attia, 711
 Graphite : Fermi-Dirac Energy Distribution of the Metallic Electrons in, Landau Diamagnetism and the, Prof. K. S. Krishnan, 31 ; Electronic Specific Heat of, Prof. K. S. Krishnan, 388
 Graptolithina, Dr. O. M. B. Bulman (*Review*), 1004
 Grassland, Additional, Ploughed-up, in England and Wales, 854
 Great Britain, Location of Industry in, 601
 Greek Poetry : Nature in, Studies partly Comparative, late Dr. G. Soutar (*Review*), 641
 Greenland : Insects of, A Revised Index of the, K. J. Henriksen, 112 ; North-West, Glaciology of, J. W. Wright, 154 ; East : Petrology of, Dr. L. Hawkes, 197 ; Petrology of the Skaergaard Intrusion, Kangerdlugssuag, L. R. Wager and Dr. W. A. Deer, 197 ; Epeirogenic Earth Movements in, and the Depths of the Earth, L. R. Wager, 938
 Greenwich : Royal Observatory, Annual Report of the Astronomer Royal, 980
 Grey Owl : Naturalist (*Review*), 165
 Growth Factors, Effect of the Suspending Medium on the Production of, by Injured Cells, Prof. J. R. Loofbourow and Sister Cecilia Marie Dwyer, 185
 Gull, Black-headed, Survey, P. D. Hollom, 217
 Gypsies, Nomad, of Hungary, Istvan Nagy, 192
 Gypsy Luck in Serbia, A. Petrovič, 229
 Hæmoglobin in Lumbricus, Function of, and of Chlorocruorin in Sabella, Prof. H. Munro Fox, 781
 Hæmolytic Streptococci, Serological Properties of Extracts of, prepared by Ultrasonic Vibrations, Dr. H. Loewenthal and Prof. F. L. Hopwood, 858
 Hæmopoietic System of Human Beings, Effect of Synthetic Vitamin B₆ on the, R. W. Vilter, H. S. Schiro and Prof. T. D. Spies, 388
 Hair, Bobbed, Inheritance of, S. E. Stoddard, 516
 Haiti : Jamaica and, Myths and Magic in (*Review*), 49 ; Prehistory in, F. G. Rainey and I. Rouse, 785
 Half-Breed - the Story of Grey Owl (Wa-Sha-Quon-Asin), Lovat Dickson (*Review*), 165
 Handwriting : Analysis of, an Introduction into Scientific Graphology, H. J. Jacoby (*Review*), 645 ; The Study of, Sir Richard Paget, Bt. (*Review*), 645
 Hardwood Timbers, Moisture Relations of, Influence of Cell Wall Composition on the, S. H. Clarke and C. B. Pettifor, 424
 Haulage Precautions in Mines, 315
 Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Annual Report, 1938-39, 383
 Health : Education, Handbook of Suggestions of, 346 ; Investigations, International, 518
 Hearing : Tests, H. C. Montgomery, 79 ; and Equilibrium, H. Macnaughton-Jones (*Review*), 662
 Heart, Human, Force of the, [1870], 41
 Heat : a Text-book of, Prof. H. S. Allen and R. S. Maxwell. 2 parts (*Review*), 86 ; Foundations and Development of, Dr. R. A. Houstoun (*Review*), 86 ; Units, [1870], 599
 Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Extension of the, 622
 Helium Production in the United States, Dr. C. W. Siebel, 257
 Helmholtz, Prof., elected to the Paris Academy of Sciences, [1870], 80
 Herbals, Sixteenth-Century Colouring of, Dr. Agnes Arber, 803
 Hereditary Genius, [1870], 436
 Heriot-Watt Technical College, impending retirement of Prof. T. Slater Price, 926
 Herring, Young, Growth and Feeding of, S. M. Marshall, A. G. Nicholls and A. P. Orr, 467
 Higher School Certificate Examination, 620
 Hippocrates, The Genuine Works of, translated by Dr. F. Adams (*Review*), 297
 Histamine, Kallikrein and, Dr. M. Rocha e Silva, 591
 Hochfrequenztechnik, Lehrbuch der, Dr. F. Vilbig. Zweite Auflage ; (*Review*), 137 ; Hochfrequenztechnik, Lehrbuch der, Schriftumsverzeichnis zum, Dr. F. Vilbig. Zweite Auflage (*Review*), 137
 Holmium, Atomic Weight of, O. Höning Schmid, 633
 Honey Bees, Acarine Disease of, Origin of the Frow Remedy for, Miss A. D. Betts and D. Morland, 824
 Hormones : and the Garden, M. A. H. Tincker and C. H. Unwin, 112 ; in Plants, Transverse Distribution of, E. D. Brain, 316 ; Animal, T. H. Hawkins (*Review*), 763 ; in Invertebrates, Prof. B. Hanström (*Review*), 763
 Horrox, Astronomical Investigations of, Prof. F. J. M. Stratton, 584
 Horticultural Plants, Propagation of, G. W. Adriance and Prof. F. R. Brison (*Review*), 762
 Hospital Reform, Need of, [1870], 274
 Human : Skin, Wave-length Effect in the Reaction of, to X- and Gamma-Radiation, Dr. J. S. Mitchell, 105 ; Heredity, Bureau of, Activities of the, 183 ; Genera and Species, Dr. S. Zuckerman, 510

- Humpback Whales off West Australia, Prof. W. J. Dakin, 783; G. Rayner, 784
- Huxley's Teaching at Edinburgh, Prof. J. Ritchie, 965
- Huygens' Principle : Prof. H. T. H. Piaggio (*Review*), 531 ; The Mathematical Theory of, Prof. B. B. Baker and Prof. E. T. Copson (*Review*), 531
- Hydraulics, Applied, A Text Book of, Prof. H. Addison. Second edition (*Review*), 141
- Hydrocarbons : Dr. E. F. Armstrong (*Review*), 442 ; Physical Constants of, Vol. 1 : Paraffins, Olefins, Acetylenes and other Aliphatic Hydrocarbons, Dr. G. Egloff (*Review*), 442 ; Energies of, Calculations on the, G. J. Kynch, E. H. Lloyd and Dr. W. G. Penney, 777
- Hydrogen : Lyman Radiation, Absorption of, by Atmospheric Gases, S. E. Williams, 68 ; Line 1215·7 Å., Absorption of the, by Air, W. M. Preston, 623 ; Photochemical Oxidation of, H. A. Smith and A. Napravnik, 827 ; Bond, The, Dr. C. E. H. Bawn, 846 ; Bentonites, Dilute Solutions of, Formation of Aggregates and Structures in, Prof. J. N. Mukherjee and Dr. N. C. Sen Gupta, 971 ; Spectrum, Precision Measurements in the, J. W. Drinkwater, Sir Owen Richardson and W. E. Williams, 1026
- Hyperprothrombinæmia during Pregnancy, Dr. O. Thordarson, 305
- Ice Formation : Unusual, in Wiltshire, E. R. Gunther, 428 ; in Worcestershire, A. A. Newbold, 514
- Illinois University, Dr. J. W. Lloyd appointed acting head of the Department of Horticulture in the College of Agriculture of, 740
- Imperial : Economy, Establishment of an, E. du Vivier de Streel, 301 ; Cancer Research Fund, Thirty-seventh annual report of the, 775
- Imperialism and Service, 852
- India : Hydro-Electric Development in, 23 ; Geology of, D. N. Wadia. Second edition ; Dr. G. de P. Cotter (*Review*), 88 ; Agricultural Meteorology in, Research in, 113 ; Zoology in, Future of, 163 ; British, The Fauna of, including Ceylon and Burma, edited by Lt.-Col. R. B. S. Sewell. Mammalia, Vol. 1 : Primates and Carnivora (in part), Families, Felidae and Viverridae, R. I. Pocock (*Review*), 164 ; The Mammals of, D. Seth-Smith (*Review*), 164 ; Meteorology in, 182 ; Seismological data from, Dr. S. K. Banerji, 193 ; Southern, Ancient Wall-Painting in, S. Paramasivan, 195 ; Medical Council of, Prof. Bidhan Chunder Roy elected president of the, 259 ; Instructional Films in, C. F. Strickland, 458 ; Meteor Observations from, M. A. R. Khan, 468 ; Upper Cretaceous and Lower Eocene Beds of, with special reference to the Cretaceous-Eocene Boundary, Prof. L. Rama Rao, 470 ; Air Circulation over, 471 ; and its Neighbourhood, General Circulation of the Atmosphere over, K. R. Ramanathan and K. P. Ramakrishnan, 471 ; Hydro-Electric Development in, 509 ; Scope of Prehistoric and Anthropological work in, Rao Bahadur K. N. Dikshit, 520 ; Crop Production in, Prof. Jai Chand Luthra, 521 ; Hindu and Moslem in, 544 ; Epidemic Dropsy in, 594 ; Drug Standards for, 716 ; Southern, Rabies Treatment in, 739 ; Malaria in, Prevention of, Recent Advances, Sir Malcolm Watson, 878 ; Government of, Prof. S. S. Bhatnagar lent to the, as director of scientific and industrial research, 968
- Indian : Origins, Some, in the light of Astronomical Evidence, S. N. Chakravarti, 38 ; Sculpture and Architecture, Dr. F. H. Gravely and C. Sivaramamurti, 457 ; Science Congress Association : Madras meeting, 469 ; 519 ; Archæological Studies, Sir Leonard Woolley and, 621 ; Peninsula and Ceylon, The, Dr. G. de P. Cotter (*Regionale Geologie der Erde*, Herausgegeben von K. André, H. A. Brouwer und W. H. Bucher). Band 1 (Absch. 6) (*Review*), 725
- Indian Science Abstracts*, Part 1, 65
- Indian Farming*, No. 1, 585
- Industrial : Population, Distribution of the, Royal Commission on the, Report, 634 ; Health in War-time, 664 ; Scientists, Economic Problems of, H. N. Linstead and others, 715 ; Workers, Training, B. Ungerson, 754
- Industry : in Great Britain, Location of, 601 ; Location of, R. Brightman (*Review*), 916 ; The Location of, and the Depressed Areas, Prof. S. R. Dennison (*Review*), 916
- Infectious Diseases : Acute, a Handbook for Practitioners and Students, Dr. J. D. Rolleston and Dr. G. W. Ronaldson. Third edition (*Review*), 1009
- Infra-Red : Spectra and the Structure of Molecules, Dr. W. H. J. Childs and Dr. H. A. Jahn, 646 ; Drying, 775 ; OH Band and Association, J. Errera and others, 942
- Initial Series from Tres Zapotes, Vera Cruz, Mexico, An, M. W. Stirling, 594
- Insect : Pests of Crops in England and Wales, Dr. A. D. Imms, 359 ; Cuticle, Permeability of, H. Hurst, 462 ; Embryology, Recent Advances in, Mithan Lal Roonwal, 674
- Insectes, Ce qu'il faut savoir des, G. Portevin. Vol. 2 : Coléoptères et hémiptères (*Review*), 811
- Insects : and Disease, Air Transport, F. G. Sarel Whitfield ; Dr. A. D. Imms, 76 ; Destructive and Useful, Their Habits and Control, Prof. C. L. Metcalf and W. P. Flint. Second edition (*Review*), 405 ; Ecology and Control of, Dr. Hem Singh Pruthi, 520 ; The World of, Prof. C. D. Duncan and Prof. G. Pickwell (*Review*), 1005
- Instinct, Inheritance of, C. E. Keeler and H. C. Trimble, 865
- Insulin Hypoglycæmia and the Central Nervous System, El Gellhorn, 516 ; Molecule, Patterson Projection of the Skeletons of the Structure proposed for the, Dr. Dorothy Wrinch, 1018
- Intelligence : Cortical Localization of, H. M. Hildreth, 829 ; and Crime : a Study of Penitentiary and Reformatory Offenders, S. H. Tulchin (*Review*), 876
- International : Health Organizations, Development of, Dr. R. A. Lyon, 217 ; Affairs, Viscount Halifax, 381 ; Unity in War and Peace, 525 ; Air Force, Suggestions for an, 697 ; Seismological Summary, Jan., Feb., and March 1934, 701 ; Spirit in Science, 736 ; Relief Union, The, C. Gorgé, 808 ; Fisheries Research in the Atlantic, 943 ; Democratic Unity, 947
- International Journal of Agrarian Affairs*, No. 1, 145
- Intestinal Sugar Absorption and Phosphate Metabolism, Dr. L. Laszt, 899
- Invar, Thermal Expansion of, Prof. L. F. Bates and J. C. Weston, 550
- Ionization Gauge, A New, R. S. Morse and R. M. Bowie, 712
- Iraq, Meteorology in, 145
- Ireland, Southern, River Development in, A. Miller, 75
- Iron : Protecting, from Atmospheric Influences, [1870], 318 ; and Steel Institute, J. Craig elected president ; award of the Bessemer gold medal to Dr. A. McCance, an Andrew Carnegie silver medal to B. W. L. Ljunggren, the Williams prize to W. B. Lawrie and W. T. Wilson ; E. Schneider nominated an honorary member of the, 548
- Irrigation Through the Ages, Influence of the Mechanical Mind on the Development of, E. B. Ball, 717
- Islam's Contributions to Science, Dr. E. J. Holmyard (*Review*), 5
- Isochromats, Determination of h/e by the method of, Dr. Per Ohlin, 223
- Isotopes, Separation of, R. Fleischmann, 712
- Italian Empire, Fishery Research in the, 545
- Jamaica and Haiti, Myths and Magic in (*Review*), 49
- Japan Metallurgy Society, Sir Harold Carpenter awarded the Honda prize of the, 509, 736
- Japanese Volcano, Explosive Activities of a, T. Minakami, 473

- Java Sea, Preliminary Plankton Investigations in the, Dr. H. C. Delsman, 41
- Jersey, Prehistory of (*Review*), 684
- Jerusalem, Archaeological Investigations in, C. N. Johns, 507
- Kala-Azar, Antimony Treatment of: Dr. E. S. Horgan and Dr. R. Kirk, 228; Sir Upendranath Bramachari, 546
- Kaleidoscope, The Generalised, S. Melmore, 778
- Kallikrein and Histamine, Dr. M. Rocha e Silva, 591
- Kant's Views on Space, [1870], 118
- Kazakhstan, L'Asie centrale soviétique et le, C. Steber (*Review*), 295
- Kipsigis, The Social Institutions of the, Dr. J. G. Peristiany (*Review*), 877
- Kittiwake, Curious Nesting-place of, K. Schmidt-Nielsen, 864
- Knowledge and Character, Dr. Maxwell Garnett (*Review*), 241
- Kontinente, Die Entwicklung der, und ihrer Lebewelt, Prof. T. Arldt. Zweite Auflage. Band 1 (*Review*), 497
- Kornerupine from Ceylon: a New Occurrence, B. W. Anderson and C. J. Payne, 266
- Kristallographie, Geometrische, und Kristalloptik und deren Arbeitsmethoden: Eine Einführung, Dr. F. Raaz und Dr. H. Tertsch (*Review*), 812
- Kurds of the Rowanduz Area, Iraq, E. R. Leach, 710
- Lac, Uses of, Dr. H. K. Sen and S. Ranganathan (*Review*), 815
- Laccase from the Latex of Lacquer Trees, Some Properties of, Prof. D. Keilin and Dr. T. Mann, 304
- L'Acide ascorbique dans la cellule et les tissus, Prof. A. Giroud (*Review*), 294
- Lake Toba, North Sumatra, Origin of, van Bemmelen, 230
- Lamp, The Story of the (and the Candle), F. W. Robins (*Review*), 407
- Land Drainage and Reclamation, Prof. Q. C. Ayres and Prof. D. Scoates. Second edition (*Review*), 815
- Landau Diamagnetism and the Fermi-Dirac Energy distribution of the Metallic Electrons in Graphite, Prof. K. S. Krishnan, 31
- Landscape Meteorology and its Reflection in Art and Literature, L. C. W. Bonacina, 22
- Lantern Slides, Making of, G. H. Bell, 145
- Lapps, Finnish, Teeth of, Dr. Helen Mellanby, 978
- Larvæ of Decapod Crustacea, Bibliography of the, Dr. R. Gurney (*Review*), 494
- Laue Photographs, Anomalous X-ray Reflections on, Dr. I. E. Knaggs, Dr. K. Lonsdale, Dr. A. Müller and A. R. Ubbelohde, 820
- Lead: Tetra-acetate, Oxidation with, J. M. Grosheintz, 353; Etching Effect, A, Dr. J. A. Smythe, 704
- Leaf Respiration, Effect of Rubbing on, L. J. Andus, 555
- 'Leaf Carpet,' Microbiology of the, D. J. Scourfield, 785
- League of Nations: Non-Political work of the, 97; Report of the Health Committee of the, 518
- Learned Societies, A Building for the, [1870], 755
- Leeds University, Dept. of Coal-Gas and Fuel Industries, Report for 1938-39, 344
- Leeuwenhoek, Antonie van, *Journal of Microbiology and Serology*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 459
- Left-handedness, [1870], 599
- Length, Unit of, [1870], 984
- Level Measurement and Control, 314
- Lewis's Medical and Scientific Lending Library, Catalogue of, new edition, part 2, 66
- Liberty: The Challenge to, an address given at Oxford, Viscount Halifax (*Review*), 834; The Ranks of, 985
- Life: Looking at, an introduction to Biology, A. M. S. Clark and G. Buckland Smith (*Review*), 136; and Living, Prof. F. Wood Jones (*Review*), 244; The Origin of, Prof. J. Stanley Gardiner (*Review*), 277; My, Havelock Ellis (*Review*), 759
- Life's Beginning on the Earth, Prof. R. Beutner (*Review*), 277
- Light, A Text Book on, Dr. A. W. Barton (*Review*), 141
- Lighting: Appliances, History of (*Review*), 407; Day-time, of Blacked-out Factories, R. Maxted and J. Bertram, 928
- Lilac, Graft Blight of, C. H. Cadman, 230
- Lilium, The genus, Sir W. Wright Smith (*Review*), 913
- Linen Industry Research Association, Dr. A. J. Turner appointed director of research of the, 806
- Ling Physical Education Association, awards to members of the, 740
- Linkage, Calculation of, W. L. Stevens, 193
- Linnean Society: presentation of the Linnean medal to Sir Arthur Smith Woodward and of the Crisp award and medal to D. J. Scourfield, 806; election of officers, 854; during War-time, 1012
- Liquid State, Theories of the, Prof. N. F. Mott, 801
- Liquids, Cohesion of, R. S. Vincent, 970
- Lister Institute, Prof. C. R. Harington appointed a representative of the governing body of the, 1015
- Listeria: Change of Name for a genus of Bacteria, J. H. Harvey Pirie, 264
- Literature: Phenomenology of, Prof. H. J. Rose (*Review*), 761; The Growth of, H. Munro Chadwick and N. Kershaw Chadwick. Vol. 3 (*Review*), 761
- Live Stock Policy during War-time, Dr. C. Crowther, 284
- Lloydia*, a New Biological Journal, 24
- L.M.S. Railway, award of the Herbert Jackson prize to H. I. Andrews, 302
- Local Government, Scientific Planning of, 161
- London: School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Report for 1938-39, 218; University, conferment upon Dr. F. C. Chalklin of the title of reader in physics; conferment of doctorates, 523; 1030; War-time Mortality in, Dr. P. Stocks, 826
- Louse: The, and How to Deal with it, 345; The, and Louse-born Diseases, Dr. A. D. Imms (*Review*), 723; The, an Account of the Lice which Infest Man, their Medical Importance and Control, Prof. P. A. Buxton (*Review*), 723
- Low Countries: War in the, 771; Fauna and Flora of the, 806
- Lubricant Films, Effect of Temperature on, Dr. D. Tabor, 308
- Lunar Tide in the Atmosphere, Prof. S. Chapman, 257
- Lyell's Geological Texts, Prof. G. R. Wieland, 227
- McComb-Romberg Seismometer, The, J. H. Nelson and H. E. McComb, 159
- Machine Calculation, Modern, with the Facit Calculating Machine Model Lx, H. Sabielny. Translated and revised by Dr. L. J. Comrie and Dr. H. O. Hartley (*Review*), 497
- Macromolecules, 248
- Madagascar: Demography of, Dr. F. Randriamanana, 98; Flora of, Dr. J. Hutchinson, 448
- Magnetic Mine, Countering the, 415
- Magnetism and the Structure of Matter, Dr. Kathleen Lonsdale, 57
- Magnetization: Energy Changes accompanying, Prof. L. F. Bates and J. C. Weston, 188; The Domain Theory of, Prof. L. F. Bates (*Review*), 606
- Magnets, Remagnetizing, used in D. C. Meters, R. Callender, 903
- Maize: Breeding, J. Philp, 556; Origin of, P. C. Mangelsdorf and R. G. Reeves, 711; Pollination in, W. R. Singleton, 979
- Malaria: A Probable Cause of, [1870], 398; as an Occupational Disease, Dr. J. C. Lévy, 853; in India: Prevention of, Recent Advances, Sir Malcolm Watson, 878; Deaths of Natives in the Transvaal from, 892
- Malaya, Higher Education in, 144
- Mammals of India, The, D. Seth-Smith (*Review*), 164
- Man: -Power, Scientific, Utilization of, 43; Rights of, Civilization and the, 237; The Future of, as an Inhabitant of the Earth, Dr. K. F. Mather, 663; The Discovery of, the Story of the Inquiry into Human Origins, S. Casson (*Review*), 809; The Phylogeny of, Prof. W. E. Le Gros Clark, 981

- Manchester University: Dr. C. W. Wardlaw appointed Barker professor of Cryptogamic Botany, 523, 543 impending retirement of Prof. W. H. Lang, 543
- Mangarevan Archaeology, K. P. Emory, 392
- Man's Line of Descent, Paratypical forms in, Prof. G. Montandon, 545
- Maori Bowls, A. G. Stevenson, 229
- Margarine, Prof. J. C. Drummond, 53, 60
- Marine: Animals, Eggs of, Basic Methods for Experiments on, Dr. E. E. Just (*Review*), 494; Organisms, Distribution of, Lieut.-Col. R. B. Seymour Sewell, and others, 732; Biological Association, Journal of the, Vol. 24, No. 1, 1027; Biology, Recent Advances in, Dr. N. B. Eales, 1027
- Marinobufagin, Arenobufagin and Acetyl-marinobufagin, Acetyl content of, Dr. V. Deulofeu, E. Duprat and R. Labriola, 671
- Marlin, Black and the Striped, W. K. Gregory and G. M. Conrad, 555
- Marquesan Insects, III, 392
- Marriage-rate in War-time, 217
- Maternal Deaths in Calcutta, 385
- Mathematical: Tables: Vol. 7: The Probability Integral, late W. F. Sheppard (*Review*), 139; Recreations and Essays, late W. W. Rouse Ball. Eleventh edition, revised by Dr. H. S. M. Coxeter (*Review*), 444
- Mathematician, Plea for the, [1870], 41
- Mathematics: Useless, Prof. J. B. S. Haldane (*Review*), 444; for Actuarial Students, H. Freeman. 2 parts (*Review*), 659; Higher, with Applications to Science and Engineering, Prof. R. S. Burington and C. C. Torrance (*Review*), 659
- Matter: the structure of, Magnetism and, Dr. Kathleen Lonsdale, 57; in Bulk, Properties of, Prof. N. F. Mott (*Review*), 239; Motion and Electricity: a Modern Approach to General Physics, H. De Wolf Smyth and Prof. C. W. Ufford (*Review*), 298; Structure of, Thermodynamics and the, A. R. Ubbelohde, 488
- Meat Packing Industry, Illness in, H. P. Brinton, H. E. Seiffert and Elizabeth S. Frasier, 419
- Mechanical Engineers, Institution of, A. Binns elected president of the, 346
- Mechanics: Theoretical, a Vectorial Treatment, Prof. C. J. Coe (*Review*), 141
- Mechanism, Principles of, F. Dyson. Third edition (*Review*), 142
- Medicago Hybrids, Interspecific Hybridization in, G. F. Ledingham, 595
- Medical Research Council, Report of the, for the year 1938-1939, 615
- Melanesians and Europeans, Feet of, C. S. James, 153
- Men and Ideas: Essays, Graham Wallas (*Review*), 915
- Mercury, Gas-free, First Benedicks Effect in, as influenced by the Mean Temperature, Prof. C. Benedicks and P. Sederholm, 148, 666
- Mesons: Scattering of, and the Magnetic Moments of Proton and Neutron, Dr. W. Heitler, 29; Large Cosmic Ray Showers and, A. H. Wilson and F. Booth, 103
- Mesotron: obey Bose-Einstein or Fermi-Dirac Statistics? Does the, P. L. Kapur, 69; Showers, Photographic Plates as Detectors of, Prof. D. M. Bose and Miss Biva Chowdhry, 894
- Mesotrons into Electrons, Evidence for Transformation of, Prof. E. J. Williams and G. E. Roberts, 102; 151; Prof. E. J. Williams and G. R. Evans, 818
- Metal and its Ions in Solution, Exchange between a, B. V. Rollin, 711
- Metallography: Principles of, Prof. R. S. Williams and Prof. V. O. Homerberg. Fourth edition (*Review*), 660; Microscopical, Practical, Dr. R. H. Graves and H. Wrighton. Third edition (*Review*), 814
- Metallurgy for Engineers, E. C. Rollason (*Review*), 814
- Metals: Institute of, election of officers, 586; The Physical Examination of, B. Chalmers. Vol. 1: Optical Methods (*Review*), 660; Oxidation of, and the Formation of Protective Films, Prof. N. F. Mott, 996
- Metamorphism: a Study of the Transformations of Rock-Masses, late Dr. A. Harker. Second edition (*Review*), 644
- Meteor: Velocity, Determination of, from Zenith Attraction, Hideo Inouye, 35; A Notable, Prof. C. Störmer, 195
- Meteorite, Age of a, W. C. Schumb, R. D. Evans and J. L. Hastings, 431
- Meteorites: Microscopical Investigation of, [1870], 235; Whence Come, [1870], 869
- Meteorological: Office, Report of the, for the year ending March 31, 1939, 64; Blockade, [1870], 118
- Meteorology: for Aviators, Dr. R. C. Sutcliffe (*Review*), 140; in India, 182
- Methylcholanthrene, Action of, on Normal Tissue Cultures, W. R. Earle and C. Voegtlin, 785
- Metric Weights and Measures, [1870], 318
- Metropolitan Water Board, Thirty-third Annual Report, Lt.-Col. E. F. W. Mackenzie, 830
- Mice, Congenital Hyperglycæmia in, Dr. H. Grüneberg and Prof. J. B. S. Haldane, 704
- Microbiology, Medical, Prof. K. L. Burdon (*Review*), 813
- Microscope: Made Easy, The, A. L. Wells (*Review*), 293; Objectives, Depth of Focus of, D. G. Beadle, 1018
- Microseisms and Transmission of Atmospheric Disturbances, K. Sezawa and K. Kanai, 154
- Microtechnique, Elementary, H. A. Peacock. Second edition (*Review*), 1005
- Milk: and Nutrition, 273; in Schools Scheme, Resumption of the, 420; The Chemistry of, Dr. W. L. Davies. Second edition (*Review*), 657
- Millipedes, Systematics of, Rev. S. Graham Brade-Birks (*Review*), 87
- Mine Rescue Telephone, R. C. Woods, 235
- Mineral Resources: Prof. R. N. Rudmose Brown, 232; of the British Empire, 258
- Mines, Haulage Precautions in, 315
- Mistletoe, Magic and Medicine, Dr. L. Kanner, 99
- Mohammedan Calendar and the First Visibility of the New Moon in Egypt, J. H. Reynolds, 751
- Molecular Structure: and Raman Spectroscopy, Prof. C. K. Ingold (*Review*), 406; Viscosity and, Dr. H. Mark and R. Simha, 571
- Molecules: Simple, Relationship between the Critical Temperatures, Boiling Points and the Parachor Values of, D. T. Lewis, 551; structure of, Infra-red Spectra and the, Dr. W. H. J. Childs and Dr. H. A. Jahn, 646
- Monochromatic Image in the Spectroheliograph, Use of, M. A. Ellison, 154
- Montevideo, Foundation of an institute for Experimental Hygiene at, 968
- Moscow in Figures, 100
- Mosquitoes and Filariasis, S. M. K. Hu, 632
- Mother of Pearl Clouds observed in Southern Norway during 1926-34, Height of, Prof. C. Störmer, 221
- Mound Exploration in the Tennessee Valley, U.S.A., 128
- Mount Carmel, The Stone Age of: Abbé H. Breuil (*Review*) 837; The Fossil Human Remains from the Levallois-Mousterian. Vol. 2, T. D. McCown and Sir Arthur Keith (*Review*), 837
- Mouse (*Mus musculus*), Presence of the Sperm Middle-Piece in the Fertilized Egg of the, Dr. R. A. R. Gresson, 425
- Mucinase and Tissue Permeability, D. McClean and C. W. Hale, 867
- Murchison Range, Mineral Deposits of the, van Eeden, Kent, Brandt and Partridge, 193
- Murray, John, Expedition, Fishes of the, J. R. Norman, 978
- Museum: Exhibit, A New Kind of, B. Washburn, 508; Exhibitions, War-time, 929
- Museums of Natural History, [1870], 984
- Music, Electronic, Dr. L. E. C. Hughes, 170
- Musical Pitch of Orchestras, G. B. Madella, 396
- Mycological Taxonomy, J. A. Nannfeldt; Miss E. M. Wakefield, 113
- Myriapoda 3, Polydesmoidea II, Fam. Leptodesmidae, Platyrrhachidae, Oxydesmidae, Gomphodesmidae, Dr. Graf Attems (*Review*), 87
- Myxophyceæ, Aspects of the, Prof. Y. Bhāradwāja, 519

- Nahrung und Ernährung: Altbekanntes und Neuerforschtes vom Essen, Dr. H. Glatzel (*Review*), 816
- Nasion in the Living, Measurement of the, K. P. Chattopadhyay, 674
- Natal University College, Pietermaritzburg, Prof. F. L. Warren appointed professor of chemistry in, 420
- National: Physical Laboratory, retirement of Dr. C. H. Desch; appointment of Dr. C. Sykes as superintendent of the department of Metallurgy and Metallurgical Chemistry, 101; Book Council, Report for 1938-39, 219; Union of Students: London Medical Committee, 583; Physical Laboratory, T. Smith appointed superintendent of the new department of Light, and R. S. J. Spilsbury superintendent of the Electricity department, 622; Institute of Agricultural Botany, annual report of the, 1938-39, 665; Collections in London or in the Country?, Dr. P. R. Lowe, 889; Radium Trust and Radium Commission, Tenth annual reports of the, 891; Food Policy, Co-ordination in, 910; Expenditure, Select Committee on, Fourth Report from the, 911; Physical Laboratory, Report for 1939, 967; Character, The Illusion of, Hamilton Fyfe (*Review*), 1004
- Nation's Food, appointment of a scientific advisory committee on the, 887
- Native Races: and Tuberculosis, 144; of America: The, a Copious Selection of Passages for the Study of Social Anthropology from the Manuscript Notebooks of Sir James George Frazer, arranged and edited by R. A. Downie (*Review*), 242
- Natural: History, Bibliography of, Society for the, election of officers, 259; Science at Cambridge, [1870], 360; Science Schools at Rugby, [1870], 398; History Collections, The, [1870], 908
- NATURE, First number of the second volume of, [1870], 717
- Nature: in the Classics, D. Caclamanos (*Review*), 641; Parade, F. W. Lane (*Review*), 657; Legislation and, [1870], 679
- Naval Architects, Institution of, award of the premium of the, to A. Nicholls and of the Wakeham prize to A. Emerson, 302
- Neanderthal Man in Central Asia, Dr. A. Hrdlička, 63
- Nebennierenrinde, Die funktion der, Prof. F. Verzář (*Review*), 404
- Nebulae and Star Clusters in the Southern Hemisphere, Dr. H. Shapley and J. S. Paraskevopoulos, 596
- Nebular: Red-Shifts, Interpretation of, Dr. K. R. Popper, 69, 701; Spectra, Red-Shifts in, and Scientific Practice, Prof. H. Dingle, 224
- Neolithic Trackway, A, Miss C. A. Simpson and Miss Clifford, 153
- Neurology, Landmarks in (*Review*), 166
- Neurosecretory Cells in the Ganglia of Lepidoptera, M. F. Day, 264
- Neurospora, Genetical Investigation in, B. O. Dodge, 309
- Neutron, Proton and, Magnetic Moments of, Scattering of Mesons and the, Dr. W. Heitler, 29
- Neutrons, Some Biological Applications of, and Artificial Radioactivity, Dr. J. H. Lawrence, 125
- Newall Telescope, [1870], 274
- Newton's: Inverse Square Law and his use of a False Radius of the Earth, The story of, J. Miller, 158; Knowledge of the Radius of the Earth, 158
- New: Guinea: Ethnological Reconnaissance in, J. L. Taylor, 506; Skulls, Age and Sex in, W. D. Hambly, 826; Jersey, Earth Tremors in, Prof. W. A. Lynch, 258; World Order: The, Whether it is Attainable, How it can be Attained, and what sort of World a World at Peace will have to be, H. G. Wells (*Review*), 45; York Hospitals, Mortality in, 892; Zealand: Australia and, Electricity Supply in, 77; Romney Lamb, A Mendelian situation in the Birthcoat of the, Dr. F. W. Dry, P. R. McMahon and J. A. Sutherland, 390; Forest Life of, A Century in the, Dr. E. V. Laing, 943; World Planning, Brave, W. J. Blyton, 966
- Nicotiana, Doubling the Chromosomes of, H. E. Warmke and A. F. Blakeslee, 74
- Nigeria, Southern, Rain Forest of, Dr. P. W. Richards, 983
- Night Sky: in February, 146; in March, 302; in April, 509; in May, 666; in June, 817; in July, 1015; Luminescence, Origin of the Yellow Line in Twilight and the, E. Tönsberg and Prof. L. Vegard, 588
- Niobium, Oxides of, G. Brauer, 903
- Nitrogen: Excretion from Leguminous Root Nodules, A Factor influencing, Prof. A. I. Virtanen and M. Tornainen, 25; Excretion and Metamorphosis, A. F. Munroe, 268; Tribromide, Schmeisser, 787; Fixation in the Rice-Field Soils of Bengal, Dr. H. Chaudhuri, 936
- Non-Ferrous Metallic Ores, Appointment of a departmental committee on, 420
- North-East Coast Institution of Engineers and Shipbuilders, election of officers, 701
- Norwegia Fauna, 663
- Nova Aquilæ (1918), Spectrum of, Dr. A. B. Wyse, 517
- Nuclear: Energy-Levels, Series in, Dr. K. M. Guggenheimer, 104; Physics, Further Applications of the Photographic Method in, Dr. C. F. Powell, 155; Forces, The Theory of, Prof. R. Peierls, 687
- Nuclei, Stable, Excited States of, Dr. C. F. Powell, A. N. May, Prof. J. Chadwick and T. G. Pickavance, 893
- Nucleic Acid, Turnover Rate of, Dr. L. Hahn and Prof. G. Hevesy, 549
- Nucleus, A pigmented, Prof. W. A. Beck and R. A. Joly, 226
- Nursery Practice, American (*Review*), 762
- Nutrition: Milk and, 273; The Newer Knowledge of, Prof. E. V. McCollum, Dr. Elsa Orent-Keiles and Dr. H. G. Day. Fifth edition (*Review*), 816
- Nylon Fibre, Artificial, Optics of the, Prof. A. Frey-Wyssling, 821
- Observer's Handbook for 1940 (*Review*), 498
- Oestrogens, Action of, on the Female Genital Tract, C. W. Emmens and Dr. R. J. Ludford, 746
- Oil Engine, H. Akroyd Stuart and the, T. Hornbuckle and A. K. Bruce, 97
- Oleaceæ, Floral Anatomy of the, Prof. A. C. Joshi and A. N. Fotidar, 354
- Olive Tree, Rooting of the, J. V. Natividade, 632
- Ophiobolus graminis*, Utilization of Nitrogen by, S. D. Garrett, 108
- Optical Anisotropy of Cellulose Sheet, Dr. R. C. Gray, 266
- Orchis Tubercles, B. C. Sharman, 192
- Ordnance: and Gunnery, Prof. H. C. Plummer (*Review*), 443; Elements of, a Textbook for use of Cadets of the United States Military Academy, prepared under the direction of Lt.-Col. T. J. Hayes (*Review*), 443
- Orthogonal Polynomials, Prof. G. Szegő (*Review*), 139
- Osage Warfare, late F. La Flesche, 33
- Ottawa, Electricity and Gas Inspection Services in, 159
- Ova, Artificially Activated, Offspring from, S. Pincus, 33
- Oxford: Early Science in, Dr. R. T. Gunther. Vol. 11: Oxford Colleges and their Men of Science (*Review*), 282; University: H. G. Champion appointed professor of forestry, 19; Dr. E. G. T. Liddell appointed Waynflete professor of physiology, 292; Early Botany at, Dr. J. Ramsbottom, 993
- Oxide Films on Alloy Steels, Dr. A. G. Quarrell, 821
- Oxygen Administration and Inhalation Apparatus, 508
- Oxy-hydrogen Light, Use of, [1870], 80
- Oyster Beds, British, Effect of the Severe Winter of 1939-40 on, H. A. Cole, 976
- Ozone and some Compounds, Structures of, C. L. Lewis and C. P. Smyth, 35
- Pacific Basin, Structure of the, B. Gutenberg, 269
- Pages from the Past, H. A. L. Fisher (*Review*), 683
- Painting, Forgotten methods of, H. Hubbard, 256
- Paleolithic Man in the North Midlands, A. Leslie Armstrong (Wilde Memorial Lecture), 78
- Paleontologist, Some Memories of a, Prof. W. Berryman Scott; Sir A. Smith Woodward (*Review*), 121
- Paleontology, Applications of Statistics to, D. Leitch, 1026

- Palao Tropical Biological Station, The, Prof. C. M. Yonge, 16
- Palladium, Diffusion in, Dr. R. M. Barrer, 898
- Paper: Dr. J. Grant (*Review*), 327; and its Uses: a Treatise for Printers, Stationers and others, E. A. Dawe. Vol. 1, fourth edition; Vol. 2: Samples of Papers and Boards (*Review*), 327
- Paramecium, 3:4-Benzopyrene, and the Production of Tumours, J. C. Mottram, 184
- Paris: Academy: of Medicine, award of the Jansen prize to Prof. A. Bessemans, 66; of Sciences, prize awards of the, 101; Observatory, [1870], 198; 235; Academy of Medicine, Dr. L. Martin elected president of the, 346
- Parliamentary and Scientific Committee of the House of Commons: Capt. L. F. Plugge elected chairman of the, 20; 216; election of officers, 460
- Parthenocarp, S. Yasuda, 826
- Pathogen, A Beneficial, S. H. Ou, 675
- Patterson Projection of the Skeletons of the Structure Proposed for the Insulin Molecule, Dr. Dorothy Wrinch, 1018
- Pea: Garden, Genetics of the, C. Pellew, 751; Sweet, Linkage Group in the, Prof. R. C. Punnett; Dr. C. D. Darlington, 1025
- Peace-making after War, Lord Eustace Percy, 610
- Pears, Classification of, M. B. Crane and D. Lewis, 942
- Pearson, Karl, A Bibliography of the Statistical and other Writings of, compiled by G. M. Morant with the assistance of, B. L. Welch (*Review*), 1010
- Peirce's, Charles, Empiricism, Dr. J. Buchler (*Review*), 1010
- Pennsylvania University, Impending bicentenary of, 931
- Pepsin, Hydrolysis of Proteins by, A. Tiselius and I.-B. Eriksson-Quensel, 193
- Perch Pituitary, The Herring Material in the, T. Kerr, 591
- Periodicities, Reality of, Dr. H. R. Hulme, 979
- Permian System, C. O. Dunbar, 786
- Peroxidases, Dioximalic Acid Oxidase Action of, Dr. B. Swedin and Prof. H. Theorell, 71
- Personality: Psychological Foundations of, a Guide for Students and Teachers, Prof. L. P. Thorpe (*Review*), 140
- Peru: Mental Disease in, Dr. H. M. Pollock, 144; Travels in (*Review*), 685
- Pest: Infestation of Produce, 968; Control Chemicals, 1013
- Petrography: Sedimentary, Manual of, 1: W. C. Krumbein; 2: F. J. Pettijohn (*Review*), 85; of the Igneous Rocks, A Descriptive, Vol. 1, Prof. A. Johannsen. Second edition (*Review*), 1007
- Pharmaceutical Society: award of the Harrison lecture-ship medal to A. D. Powell, 66; election as honorary members of Col. Ram Nath Chopra, Sir Ernley Blackwell and Sir William Willcox, 736
- Pharmacopœia Revision, Dr. C. H. Hampshire, 583
- Pharmacy, Authorization of Faculties in, in French Universities, 931
- Phenyl Isocyanate, Inactivation of Prolactin by Treatment with, A. C. Bottomley and Dr. S. J. Folley, 304
- Philippines, Life Expectancy in the, A. G. Sison, H. Lara, M. M. Herbosa and A. A. Lozano, 967
- Phonetics, Experimental, Recent work in, Dr. E. G. Richardson, 841
- Phosphorus: Pentachloride, Crystal structure of, H. M. Powell, D. Clark and Dr. A. F. Wells, 149; Pentabromide, Crystal structure of, H. M. Powell and D. Clark, 971
- Photo-cell Applications in the Foodstuffs Industries, A. Seymour, 1014
- Photochemistry: Dr. H. W. Melville (*Review*), 609; and the Mechanism of Chemical Reactions, Prof. G. K. Rollefson and Dr. M. Burton (*Review*), 609
- Photodynamic Hemolysis by Carcinogenic Hydrocarbons, M. Wolman, 592
- Photographic: Method in Nuclear Physics, Further Applications of the, Dr. C. F. Powell, 155; Material used in Astronomy, Sensitometry of, D. R. Barber, 787
- Photographie: Wissenschaftliche, eine einföhrung in Theorie und Praxis, Prof. E. v. Angerer. Zweite Auflage (*Review*), 142
- Photography: Applications of, to Engineering, A. H. Styring, 39; its Principles and Practice: a Manual of the Theory and Practice of Photography, C. B. Neblette. Third edition (*Review*), 501
- Photosynthesis, Mechanism of, K. Wohl, 983
- Phycomyces, Predaceous, from Cotswold Leaf-mould, C. L. Duddington, 150
- Phyla of Organisms, Keys to the, including Keys to the Orders of the Plant Kingdom, Dr. F. A. Barkley (*Review*), 494
- Phylogeny and Taxonomy, J. S. L. Gilmour and others, 636
- Physical Society, *Proceedings of the*, resignation of Capt. C. W. Hume of the editorship of the, 180
- Physical: Apparatus, New, Prof. C. J. Overbeck, 219; Science: and Free Will, Principles in, Prof. E. Schrödinger (*Review*), 402; The Philosophy of, Sir Arthur Eddington (Tarnar lectures), (*Review*), 402; Society, award of the Duddell medal to Prof. E. O. Lawrence, 852
- Physicists, Training, 65
- Physics: of the Earth, 8: Terrestrial Magnetism and Electricity, edited by J. A. Fleming (*Review*), 47; in War, Prof. M. L. E. Oliphant, 299; Institute of, and Freedom in Science, 345; in the Glass Industry, Prof. W. E. S. Turner, 446; Theoretical, Aspects of, Prof. Max Born (*Review*), 528; Fun and, Prof. J. A. Crowther (*Review*), 567; and Engineering, New Units in, Suggestions for, 597; Atmospheric and Terrestrial (*Review*), 760; Progress in, Reports on, Vol. 6. General Editor: J. H. Awbery (*Review*), 797; The Progress of, Prof. J. A. Crowther (*Review*), 797; Theoretical, Considerations concerning the Fundaments of, Prof. A. Einstein, 920; Household, W. G. Whitman. Third edition (*Review*), 1009
- Physik: chemischen, Hand- und Jahrbuch der: Herausgegeben von A. Eucken und K. L. Wolf. Band 10, Abs. 3: Starkeffekt, B. Mrowka; Elektrischer Kerr-Effekt, Dr. H. A. Stuart (*Review*), 294; Band 3, Teil 2, Abs. 3-4 (*Review*), 528; theoretischen, Lehrbuch der, Prof. G. Joos. Dritte Auflage (*Review*), 528
- Pineal Gland, The Nerve of the, Prof. W. E. Le Gros Clark, 349
- Pisum sativum*, Genetical Sterility in, Mrs. E. R. and Dr. F. W. Sansome, 226
- Pithecanthropus and Sinanthropus, The Relationship between, Prof. W. E. Le Gros Clark, 70
- Pittsburgh University, D. C. Bradford appointed seismologist at, 892
- Plankton: Investigations in the Java Sea, Preliminary, Dr. H. C. Delsman, 41; Cultures, Large-Scale, H. Pettersson, F. Gross and F. Koczy, 698
- Plant: Virus Diseases (*Review*), 122; Viruses and Virus Diseases, F. C. Bawden (*Review*), 122; Life, The World of, Prof. C. J. Hylander (*Review*), 136; Alkaloids, The, Dr. T. A. Henry. Third edition (*Review*), Dr. W. H. Linnell, 243; Viruses, Recent American work on, 518; Hunting through the Centuries, F. Kingdon Ward, 574; Personalities, J. S. L. Gilmour (*Review*), 608; Viruses, Some Effects of Salicylate on, R. J. Best, 627; Respiration, Salt Accumulation and, R. N. Robertson, 937
- Plants: Salt Absorption of, Prof. H. Lundegårdh, 114; Prof. D. R. Hoagland and Dr. F. C. Steward, 116; Intergrading among, in relation to the Provenance of Forest Trees, Dr. R. Melville, 130; Growth Behaviour of, following Seed Treatment by Organic Mercury Compounds, Dr. G. R. Bates, 262; Economic Structure of, Prof. H. E. Hayward (*Review*), 293; with Personality, P. M. Syngé (*Review*), 608
- Platypus, Undercoat of the, Prof. A. F. Barker, 186
- Pleistocene and Prehistory in Europe and China, Wen-Chung Pei, 516
- Point Dipoles, Classical Theory of, Dr. H. J. Bhabha, 819
- Poisonous Snake Harmless, A New Method of Rendering a, D. B. Jaros, 1025

- Polar Exploration, Carbon Monoxide as a Hazard of, Prof. Yandell Henderson and J. McCullough Turner, 92
- Polynesian Economy, Primitive, Prof. R. Firth (*Review*), 328
- Postage on printed matter, [1870], 599
- Potassium : from Muscle, Liberation of, by Acetylcholine, V. H. Cicardo and J. A. Moglia, 551; and Muscle Contraction and its absence after Adrenalectomy, Prof. F. Verzár and J. C. Somogyi, 781; Metabolism, Thyroid Gland and, Prof. I. Abelin, 935
- Potato Blackleg, Bacterium causing, Identity of the, Dr. W. J. Dowson, 263
- Potatoes in War-time, 62
- Power, The Development of, E. C. Wittick (*Review*), 281
- Prawn, Common, Osmotic properties of the, N. Kesava Panikkar, 108
- Prehistoric Peoples in South Africa, Prof. M. R. Drennan, 394
- Primula kewensis*, Genetics of, M. Upcott, 154
- Primula vulgaris*, Populations of, High Proportions of Homostyle Plants in, J. L. Crosby, 672
- Primus Stove at High Altitudes, The, P. J. H. Unna, 190
- Probability : Integral, The, late W. F. Sheppard (Mathematical Tables, Vol. 7) (*Review*), 139; and its Applications (*Review*), 167; Statistics and Truth, Prof. R. von Mises. Translated by J. Neyman, D. Sholl and E. Rabinowitsch (*Review*), 167; Theory of, Dr. H. Jeffreys; M. G. Kendall (*Review*), 607
- Procrustes, the Bed of, G. D. Knox, 585
- Producer Gas for Motor Vehicles, 473
- Professional Civil Servants, Institution of, Twenty-first annual report of the, 927
- Prolactin, Inactivation of, by Treatment with Phenyl Isocyanate, A. C. Bottomley and Dr. S. J. Folley, 304
- Prostitutes, Adult, Rehabilitation of, 218
- Proteins, Glutamic Acid of, Prof. A. C. Chibnall, M. W. Rees, E. F. Williams and Dr. E. Boyland, 311; Dr. A. Konikova; Dr. B. W. Town, 312; in Egg-White, Native State of, Prof. E. Gordon Young, 1021
- Proton : and Neutron, Magnetic Moments of, Scattering of Mesons and the, Dr. W. Heitler, 29; attracting Properties of Liquids, Gordy and Stanford, 633
- Protons : Bombardment of Nitrogen and Oxygen with, S. C. Curran and J. E. Strohers, 224; Diffraction of, by Vapours, H. J. Yearian, 431
- Prunus triloba*, Shoot Wilt of, W. C. Moore, 153
- Psusennes : Treasure of, 418; Tomb of, at Tanis, 584
- Psychic Phenomena, Laboratory Investigations into, H. Carrington (*Review*), 501
- Psychoanalysis : New Ways in, Dr. K. Horney (*Review*), 500; Dr. E. Glover (*Review*), 662
- Psychological Issues : Selected Papers of Prof. Robert S. Woodworth. With a Bibliography of his Writings (*Review*), 989
- Psychology : of the Initiate, C. P. Mountford, 63; Applications of, in War Conditions, 174; General, J. P. Guilford (*Review*), 298; and Educational Research, Dr. D. D. Shendarkar, 522; A Pioneer in (*Review*), 989
- Psychopathic States, Prof. D. K. Henderson (Thomas W. Salmon Memorial Lectures) (*Review*), 140
- Public : Health in War-time, Sir Arthur MacNalty (Chadwick lecture), 315; Instruction, Minister of, [1870], 318
- Puerperal Sepsis, Control of, 112
- Puffin crosses North Atlantic, 773
- Quanta, Heavy, Theory of, F. J. Belinfante (*Review*), 500
- Quantitative : Characters, L. Powers, 154; Inorganic Analysis : a Text-Book of, Theory and Practice, Dr. A. I. Vogel (*Review*), 495
- Quantum Mechanics : Lectures on, Prof. M. Raziuddin Siddiqi. Vol. 1 (*Review*), 528; New Method in, Dr. E. Schrödinger, 712
- Quartz, The α - β Transformation of, Sir C. V. Raman and T. M. K. Nedungadi, 147; Prof. H. S. Allen, 306
- Quetta Earthquake of 1935, K. R. Ramanathan and S. M. Mukherji, 393
- Rabbit : Coprophagy in the, Dr. A. Eden, 36; Wild, Coprophagy in the, H. N. Southern, 262; Ova, Induction of, Polyploidy in, G. Pincus and C. H. Waddington, 595; Coprophagy in the, Origin of 'Night' Faeces, Dr. A. Eden, 628; Control, Some Experiments in, R. M. Lockley, 767
- Race, Language and Culture, Prof. F. Boas (*Review*), 951
- Radiation Worker, Protection of the, Dr. G. W. C. Kaye (Stanley Melville memorial lecture), 370
- Radioactive Standards, 456
- Radioactivity, Artificial, Some Biological applications of Neutrons and, Dr. J. H. Lawrence, 125
- Radio : Interference Suppression, G. W. Ingram (*Review*), 137; Waves, Propagation of, along the Earth, Dr. J. S. McPetrie and Miss A. C. Stickland; Dr. J. S. McPetrie and J. A. Saxton, 234; Transmission, Scattering of Waves in, T. L. Eckersley, 317; Transmitter, New, 418; -Sulphur, Dr. H. Levi, 588; Frequency Wave Guides, Dr. J. E. Houldin, 792; Therapeutic Panel of Physicists, Constitution of a, 928
- Radium : Treatment : Sir Leonard Hill, 151; Prof. S. Russ; Prof. A. S. Eve, 347; and Radon Therapy, Physical Aspects of, C. E. Eddy and T. H. Oddie. Second edition, 864; Medical uses of, 941
- Radon, Radium and, Therapy, Physical aspects of, C. E. Eddy and T. H. Oddie. Second edition, 864
- Rain Forest of Southern Nigeria, Dr. P. W. Richards, 983
- Raman : Effect, The, and its Chemical Applications, Dr. J. H. Hibben; with a Theoretical Discussion by J. H. Hibben and Prof. E. Teller (*Review*), 406; Spectra of Co-ordination Compounds, J. P. Mathieu, 675
- Random Sampling Numbers, Tables of, M. G. Kendall and B. Babington Smith (*Review*), 1010
- Raspberry Mosaic, R. V. Harris, 556
- Rat, the Black, in Great Britain, C. Matheson, 416
- Rats : Adrenalectomized, Cozymase in, Prof. J. Runnström, E. Sperber and E. Bárány, 106; Hypophysectomized, Effect of Stilbœstrol on the Ovaries of, P. C. Williams, 388
- Ray Society, election of officers, etc., 416
- Reading University, Dr. Barbara Colson appointed lecturer in botany, 523
- Real Variable, Theory of Functions of a, An Introduction to the, S. Verblunsky (*Review*), 296
- Reconstruction : in Europe, 1; A Ministry of, 681
- Refractor, A Great, [1870], 118
- Regional Organization during and after the War, Brig. Sir Edward Tandy, 697
- Relativity : The Mass Centre in, Prof. Max Born and K. Fuchs, 587; of Time, Dr. F. C. Powell; Prof. H. Dingle, 626; Mass Centre in, Prof. A. D. Fokker; Prof. Max Born and K. Fuchs, 933
- Reproduction, Metabolism of, Carotenoids and the, R. Emerson and D. L. Fox, 594
- Research : Direction and Utilization of, 81; the Planning of : Lord Chatfield, 399; Prof. W. F. K. Wynne-Jones, 417; Experimental, and Unemployment, [1870], 637; and Invention in Universities, 639
- Respiration at Sub-optimum Substrate Concentrations, Inhibition of, W. F. Floyd, 592
- 'Rhizosphere', The, A. G. Lochead, 711
- Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, Work of the, Godfrey Wilson, 255
- Rhodes Scholarships : Statement of the, 1938-39, 65; for India, 417
- Rhodesia : Southern, Meteorology of, 99; Ancient Gold-working site in, Neville Jones, 430
- Rhododendron Complex, A, J. M. Cowan, 978
- Rice, Nutritive Value of, Dr. W. R. Aykroyd, 522
- Risso's Grampus in the Mersey, Supposed, 64
- River : A Forgotten, a book of Peruvian Travel and Botanical Notes, C. Sandeman (*Review*), 685
- Road : Surface Texture, A Printing Method of recording, 40; Research Laboratory, Report of the, 561; Obstruction Lanterns, 1014
- Roads with a Cotton Fabric Basis, 699
- Rockefeller Foundation : Prof. W. W. Stewart elected chairman and member of the board of the, 586; The, a Review for 1939, Dr. R. B. Fosdick (*Review*), 833

- Rock: -Drawings of Southern Upper Egypt. I: Sir Robert Mond Desert Expedition, Season 1936-1937; Preliminary Report, Dr. H. A. Winkler (*Review*), 84; Metamorphism, Prof. H. H. Read (*Review*), 644; -Paintings in South Africa: More, from the Coastal Belt between Albany and Piquetberg. Mainly copied by Joyce and Mollie van der Riet. With Notes, etc. by Miss Dorothea F. Bleek; Abbé H. Breuil (*Review*), 992
- Rocksalt, Blue: Dr. J. Newton Friend and J. P. Allchin, 266; Dr. H. Pettersson, 743
- Rocks and Ores, Oxygen Isotopes in, M. Dole and R. L. Slobod, 751
- Roman Town in East Yorkshire, A, P. Corder and Rev. Thomas Romans, 272
- Rome University, award of the Ettore Marchiafava prize to Prof. M. Monacelli, 586
- Rona: A Naturalist on, Essays of a Biologist in Isolation, Dr. F. Fraser Darling (*Review*), 810
- Rose, A New Species of, B. O. Mulligan, 467
- Roses, A book of, Dr. J. Ramsbottom (*Review*), 136
- Rossi Transition Curve for Copper, The Second Maximum in the, P. J. G. de Vos, 387
- Rostro: -Carinate Stone Implement from Rhodesia, Neville Jones, 467; -carinates in Africa, H. B. S. Cooke and J. D. Clark, 902
- Rothamsted Experimental Station, E. J. Roberts, 76
- Royal: Academy, 1940, Science in the, Lieut W. E. Swinton, 730; Aeronautical Society: election of officers, 892; gift to the, by Mrs. G. Alston for a Peter Alston memorial prize, 931; Air Force, Education in the, 618; Asiatic Society, award of the University prize to A. Briggs, 259; Astronomical Society: award of the gold medal of the, to Dr. E. Hubble, 95; election of officers, 259; College of Surgeons: of England, Sir Humphry Rolleston, Sir Thomas Dunhill and Sir Hugh Devine admitted honorary fellows of the, 146; award of the John Hunter medal and triennial prize to Dr. L. E. H. Whitby, 460; Geographical Society, awards of the, 665; Institute of Public Health and Hygiene, award of the Harben gold medal to Sir Leonard Hill and of the Smith award to Sir William Savage, 259; Irish Academy, Dr. E. Schrödinger appointed professor of Theoretical Physics in the, 544; Meteorological Society: award of the Symons gold medal to Dr. J. Bjerknes, 19; Phenological Report for 1939, 698; Society: New fellows of the, 455; election as foreign members, of Maurice, Duc de Broglie, Prof. R. G. Harrison, Prof. G. N. Lewis and Dr. F. P. Rous, 851; of London for the Promotion of Natural Knowledge, The Record of the. Fourth edition (*Review*), 873; Progress of the, Dr. J. I. O. Masson (*Review*), 873; of Edinburgh: election of fellows, 384; award of the Keith prize to Prof. F. A. E. Crew and of the Neill prize to J. Wright, 385; Botanic Garden, Calcutta, Dr. K. Biswas, 959; Observatory, Greenwich: Annual Report of the Astronomer Royal, 980; Meteorological Society, award of the Howard prize to Cadet S. R. Pryor, 1015; Academy, Natural Science at the, [1870], 1030
- Rubber: Softening of, V. H. Wentworth and J. D. Hastings, 34; at Low Temperatures, Heat Conductivity of, A. Schallamach, 67; Paving Block, New type of, 891
- Rubus Aphides, Biology of, G. H. L. Dicker, 978
- Rumex acetosella* L., Polyploidy in, Åskell Löve, 351
- Rural Life in Europe, Dr. L. Dudley Stamp, 356
- Rusts, Crossing Experiments with, T. Johnson and Margaret Newton, 786
- Rutherford: Dr. C. G. Darwin (*Review*), 324; Being the Life and Letters of the Rt. Hon. Lord Rutherford, O.M., Prof. A. S. Eve (*Review*), 324
- Ryegrass, Blind Seed Disease of, Dr. M. Wilson, M. Noble and E. G. Gray, 783
- Sabouraud, Raymond. work of, Dr. L. Grigoraki, 968
- Salicylate, Some Effects of, on Plant Viruses, R. J. Best, 627
- Saliva Superstitions, Miss Rachel Selare, 585
- Salt: Absorption of Plants, Prof. H. Lundegårdh, 114; Prof. D. R. Hoagland and Dr. F. C. Steward, 116; Deposits, Prof. H. H. Read (*Review*), 279; Accumulation and Plant Respiration, R. N. Robertson, 937
- Salts, Calcium and Strontium, Flame and Arc Spectra of some, Prof. R. K. Asundi and Dr. B. K. Vaidya, 224
- Salvage and Utilization of Waste, 988, 1012
- Sandal, 'Spike' Disease of, Control and Eradication of New Outbreaks of the, Rao Sahib S. Rangaswami and A. L. Griffith, 754
- Sargassum Weed, Biology and Systematics of the, A. E. Parr, 559
- Scabies, Memorandum on, 548
- Scandinavia, Present Conditions in, 582
- School Child, Health of the, Sir Arthur MacNalty, 255
- Science Abstracts*, 460
- Science: Islam's Contributions to, Dr. E. J. Holmyard (*Review*), 4; and Scientists, Position of, in the War Situation, Prof. H. Levy and others, 61; Government aid to, [1870], 80; and Educational Policy, 119; and War, Dr. V. Bush, 143; and Everyday Life, Prof. J. B. S. Haldane (*Review*), 201; for a New Audience, J. Langdon-Davies (*Review*), 201; The Public Relations of, Prof. Wesley C. Mitchell, 207; Royal Commission on, [1870], 235; Oxford Men of (*Review*), 282; War and Reconstruction, Dr. J. S. Huxley, 289; General, The Theory and Practice of, H. S. Shelton (*Review*), 297; Forthcoming Books of, 502; Masters' Association, Report for 1939, 548; A Skeleton History of, Prof. A. Wolf (*Review*), 570; since 1500: a Short History of Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, H. F. Pledge (*Review*), 570; and Civilization, Dr. B. Lovell (*Review*), 661; Descriptive and Predictive, Sir Richard Gregory, Bart. (*Review*), 722; To-day and To-morrow, Dr. W. Kaempfert (*Review*), 722; in the Royal Academy, 1940, Lieut. W. E. Swinton, 730; International Spirit in, 736; The Growth of, an Outline History, A. P. Rossiter (*Review*), 814; Museum, Dr. H. Shaw appointed acting director of the, 817; Practical, in Schools, 835; and the War Effort, 986; Practical, in Schools, Dr. V. J. Chapman; the Editors of NATURE, 1023
- Scientific: and Technical Books, Recent, January 27, iii; February 24, iii; March 30, vii; April 27, iii; May 25, iii; June 29, iii; Centenaries in 1940, Eng.-Capt. Edgar C. Smith, 9; Man-Power, Utilization of, 43; Workers and the Armed Forces, 61; Workers and the War, 61; and Technical Literature and Information, Col. L. Newcombe, 109; the Writer of the Article, 110; Research during the War, Utilization of, Lord Chatfield, 143; Workers and the Armed Forces, Dr. W. A. Wooster, 152; Planning of Local Government, 161; Collaboration between Britain and France, 179; Research for the Services, 179; Management in Administration, 275; and Learned Societies of Great Britain and Ireland, Official Year Book of the, fifty-sixth annual issue (*Review*), 297; Co-operation, British and French, 299; Journals, Censoring, A Panel to assist in, 300; Workers, Government Recruitment of, Dr. W. A. Wooster, 630; Research and Taxation, 696; and Industrial Research: The Department of, Twenty-fifth anniversary, 726; Education, [1870], 793; Films in War-time, 927; Research, Agriculturists and, [1870], 984
- Sclerostachya fusca*, Chromosome Numbers in, E. K. Janaki-Ammal, 464
- Scottish Ethnology, Scandinavian Influence in, Prof. R. A. Fisher and G. L. Taylor, 590
- Screw Propulsion, First Twenty Years of, 1838-1858, Eng.-Capt. E. C. Smith, pt. 2, 181
- Sea: Work of the, [1870], 235; Fisheries of Europe, 432
- Sediments, Mechanical Analysis of (*Review*), 85
- Sedov*, Drift of the, 145; Prof. N. N. Zubov, 533
- Seed: Dressings, Growth Hormones in, H. E. Croxall and L. Ogilvie, 516; Disinfection, W. A. R. Dillon Weston and C. C. Brett, 824
- Seedlings in Transit, New Method of, 219

- Seeing at Night, R. G. Hopkinson, 458
 Seismograph Stations, Density of, H. Landsberg, 675
Seismology, Bibliography of, 13, No. 2, 24
 Selenium-containing Plants, Toxicity of, to Pests, V. H. Morris, C. R. Neiswander and J. D. Sayre; Neiswander and Morris, 430
 Sėnoi (Sakai), lowland, Vital Statistics of the, H. D. Noone, 97
Sequoia sempervirens, Gynospore Formation in, Prof. J. Doyle, 900
 Seventy Years Ago, 41; 80; 118; 160; 198; 235; 274; 318; 360; 398; 436; 474; 523; 561; 599; 637; 679; 717; 755; 793; 831; 869; 908; 946; 984; 1030
 Sex: and Internal Secretions: a Survey of Recent Research. Editor: E. Allen. Second edition (*Review*), 662; A Great Psychologist of, Prof. J. C. Flugel (*Review*), 759
 Sexes, Outbreeding and Separation of the, Dr. K. Mather, 484
 Shamanism in the South-West United States, Isabel T. Kelly, 941
 Shape of Things: The, an Introduction to Design in Everyday Life, N. Carrington (*Review*), 82
 Sheep, Pining in, not Curable by Cobalt Administration, W. Lyle Stewart and Dr. A. Phyllis Ponsford, 1023
 Sheffield University: Dr. W. Sucksmith appointed professor of physics, 776, 887; impending retirement of Prof. S. R. Milner, 887
 Sherrington, Sir Charles, Selected Writings of, Compiled and edited by Dr. D. Denny Brown (*Review*), 166
 Shining in Human Eyes, D. G. A. Dyson, 737
 Shoshoni Indians, Cultural change Among, J. H. Steward, 192
 Sidmouth: The Scenery of, its Natural Beauty and Historic Interest, Dr. Vaughan Cornish (*Review*), 1006
 Significance: Tests of, What they Mean and How to Use Them, J. H. Smith (*Review*), 1010
 Silicosis: Causation of, F. W. Simson and A. S. Strachan, 631; Aluminium Dust in, L. H. Germer and K. H. Stork, 941; Disease in the South Wales Coalfield, 968
 Silver Halides, Optical Sensitizing of, by Dyes, Dr. S. E. Sheppard, R. H. Lambert and R. D. Walker, 969
 Sinanthropus, Pithecanthropus and, The Relationship between, Prof. W. E. Le Gros Clark, 70
 Singing, Art of, The Physiological Basis of the, H. Hemery (*Review*), 816
 Sirius and the Constellation of the Bow, Dr. H. Chatley, 670
 Skeletal Muscle, A Crystalline Albumin Component of, Dr. K. Bailey, 934
 Sky Blue?, Why is the, [1870], 717
 Smith, William, Father of English Geology, Life and work of, Dr. L. R. Cox, 299
 Smithsonian Institution: Prof. H. Arctowski at work in the, 544; Report for year ended June 30, 1939, 930
 Smoke Abatement in War-time, 419
 Smut Disease, Loose, Control of, G. Howard Jones, 34
 Snake Bite, Treatment for, [1870], 41
 Snakes, Moulting in, R. M. Stabler, 309
 Snake's Venom, Toxicity of, N. O'Connor Wolff and T. S. Githens, 392
 Snow: on Solids, Angle of Repose of, R. Schnurmann, 553; and Glaciers, New International Commission of, F. E. Matthes, 753
Snow Cruiser, The Antarctic, 772
 Snowfall in the winter of 1939-40, L. C. W. Bonacina, 554
 Soaring Flight, The Art of, W. Hirth. Translated by Naomi Heron Maxwell (*Review*), 142
 Social Organism, The, A. H. Mackmurdo, 187
 Socialism, Victorian, Dean Inge (*Review*), 45
 Soil: Organic Matter, Town's Refuse as a Source of, Dr. E. H. Tripp, 56; Fertility, Some Biological Aspects of, Prof. W. Neilson Jones, 411; Analysis: a Handbook of Physical and Chemical Methods, C. H. Wright. Second edition (*Review*), 1004
 Soja, Le, et les industries du soja: produits alimentaires, huile de soja, lecithine végétale, caséine végétale, A. Matagrın (*Review*), 48
 Solar: Eclipse, Total, of October 1, 1940, Prof. F. J. M. Stratton, 32; Spots, On the Periodicities of the, [1870], 80; D lines, Photometry of the, C. W. Allen, 353; Eclipse of October 1, 1940, 712; Spectrum, Alpha Photometric Observations of the, D. S. Evans, 787; and Terrestrial Relationships of March 23-29, 1940, M. A. Ellison, 898; Ultra-Violet, Energy in the, E. Pettit, 1026
 Solubility, Solvent Effect on, T. W. Davis, J. E. Ricci and C. G. Sauter, 310
 Solutions, Surface of, Prof. J. W. McBain, W. V. Spencer, J. R. Vinograd and D. A. Wilson, 786
 Somaliland, French, Volcanism in, E. A. de la Rüe, 828
 Somatic Tissue, Translocation in the, L. V. Morgan, 309
 South Africa: Malnutrition in, Ellen Radloff and T. W. B. Osborn, 22; Prehistoric Peoples in, Prof. M. R. Drennan, 394; Union of, Road Accidents in the, 968
 South African: Native Policy and the Liberal Spirit, Prof. R. F. A. Hoernlé (Phelps-Stokes lectures), 564; Institute for Medical Research, Dr. E. H. Cluver appointed director of the, 1015
 South Australia, Primitive Insects of, H. Womersley, 967
 Southward: This Way, the Account of a Journey through Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, A. F. Tschiffely (*Review*), 811
 South-West Essex Technical College, Report for 1938-39, 775
 Sovereigns, Sweating, [1870], 118
 Soya Bean, The, Sir Geoffrey Evans (*Review*), 48
 Space, Spanning, C. A. Claremont (*Review*), 281
 Special Libraries and Information Bureaux, Association of, Annual Report of the, 314
 Spectrograph Coils, Magnetic, M. Ference, A. E. Shaw and R. J. Stephenson, 596
 Spectroheliograph: Use of Monochromatic Image in the, M. A. Ellison, 154; An Auto-collimating, M. A. Ellison, 517
 Spectroscopy: Chemical, Prof. W. B. Brode (*Review*), 568; Chemical Applications of, Dr. W. Rogie Angus (*Review*), 568
 Spencer: Herbert, Betrayed, with some account of the Repudiation of the "Descriptive Sociology" by his Trustees, A. W. Tillet (*Review*), 493
 'Spike' Disease of Sandal, Control and Eradication of New Outbreaks of the, Rao Sahib S. Rangaswami and A. L. Griffith, 754
 Spiritual Values and World Affairs, Sir Alfred Zimmern (*Review*), 439
 Splashes, and What They Teach, Prof. Allan Ferguson (Alexander Pedler lecture), 508
 Sponges, Pigments of, Dr. P. J. Drumm and W. F. O'Connor, 425
 Spreading Factors, Natural and Artificial, Mucolytic Effect of, 866
 Stability, Distributional, Dr. A. Wintner, 225
 Stainless Steels, Oxide Film on, T. Tokumitu, 589
 Stamps, Commemorative, to American Science, 964
 Star: -streams, Constants of the, Dr. W. M. Smart and T. R. Tannahill, 310; Clusters, Moving, Criteria of, Dr. W. M. Smart, 556; Atlas, A, and Reference Handbook (Epoch 1920-1950): for Students and Amateurs, A. P. Norton (*Review*), 656
 Stars: Surface Temperatures of the, Prof. W. M. H. Greaves, 412; Relative Gradients of 250, determined at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, Dr. H. Spencer Jones, 865
 Starch from Glucose-1-Phosphate, Enzymic Synthesis of, C. S. Hanes, 348
 Starling, Female (*Sturnus v. vulgaris*, L.), Male Behaviour of the, in Autumn, Dr. W. S. Bullough and Dr. R. Carrick, 629
 Statesman's Year-book, 1940. Edited by Dr. M. Epstein (*Review*), 1006
 Statistical: Methods, Modern, An Introduction to, P. R. Rider (*Review*), 296; Methods and Ethnographical Observations, Prof. A. L. Kroeber, 300; Mathematics, Dr. A. C. Aitken (*Review*), 1010; Methods: for Medical and Biological Students, Prof. G. Dahlberg (*Review*), 1010

- Statistics : Teaching of, Dr. J. Wishart, 99 ; and Engineering Practice, Dr. B. P. Dudding and W. J. Jennett, 117
 Stearamide, Hydration of, B. A. Toms, 227
 Steinsalz und Kalisalze : Geologie, Prof. F. Lotz (*Review*), 279
 Stellar System, Absorption within the, J. Stebbins, C. Hugger and A. Whitford, 675
 Stereo Plate Casting, Progress in, 700
 Stilboestrol, Effect of, on the Ovaries of Hypophysectomized Rats, P. C. Williams, 388
Stoic, The, April, 817
 Stomatopoda from the John Murray Expedition, B. Chopra ; G. E. H. Foxon, 750
 Stove, Wood-burning, New Type of, 218
 Strange Noises heard at Sea off Grey Town, [1870], 755
 Strata, Orientation of, First Use of Current-Bedding to Determine, Dr. A. Lamont, 1016
 Straw, Soil Decomposition of, T. S. Sadasivan, 596
 Streptocarpus, The genus, W. J. C. Lawrence, 269
 Structure and Function (*Review*), 244
 Sugar : in Fermentation, Decomposition of, [1870], 274 ; -Cane, Smut Fungi of the, Dr. B. B. Mundkur, 827
 Sulphanilamide and Glucose Antidote, Dr. Matilda M. Brooks, 707
 Sulphathiazole in the Treatment of Pneumonia, 112
 Sulphur, Liquid and Plastic, X-Ray Diffraction of, Gingrich, 751
 Sulphuryl and Thiophosphoryl Fluorides, Structures of, D. P. Stevenson and H. Russell, 393
 Sunday Lectures, [1870], 436
 Sunspot, A Big, 509
 Sunspots, Big, 66
 Sun's Speed of Galactic Rotation, G. L. Camm, 230
 Supernovæ, New, Dr. J. Johnson, 827
 Supply, Ministry of, J. Davidson Pratt appointed an additional director-general for chemical research, experiment and development in the, 931
 Surnames, Intelligence and Fertility, Dr. J. A. Fraser Roberts, 939
 Suspensions : Rheology of, a Study of Dilatancy and Thixotropy, H. L. Röder (*Review*), 499 ; Viscosity of, and the Einstein Equation, Dr. E. W. J. Mardles, 970
 Sutton Hoo : Ship Burial, Antiquities from the, T. D. Kendrick and others, 231 ; Burial a Cenotaph ?, 343 ; Ship-burial, Articles in *Antiquity* on, 585
 Sweat, Inheritance of Inability to, L. C. Glass and D. H. Yost, 353
 Sweet Potato Breeding, J. C. Miller, 353
 Swimming Baths, Hygiene of, Dr. M. Mazillier, 738
 Swiss Watch-making Industry, 100
 Takoradi, New Government Technical School at, 545
 Tanganyika Territory, a Field Key to the Savanna Genera and Species of Trees, Shrubs and Climbing Plants of, late B. D. Burtt, 750
 Tata, Lady, Memorial Fund, Awards from the, 968
 Taxonomy : Experimental, J. W. Gregor, 392 ; Phylogeny and, J. S. L. Gilmour and others, 636
 Teak Defoliators, Biology of Parasites of, P. F. Garthwaite and M. H. Desai ; C. F. C. Beeson and S. N. Chatterjee ; P. N. Chatterjee, 710
 Teart Disease in Cattle, W. S. Ferguson, A. H. Lewis and S. J. Watson, 941
 Teeth, Front : in Man, Removal of, Dr. A. Hrdlička, 631 ; Evulsion of, in East Africa, Dr. F. Marsh, 1013
 Teleology, True and False, Dr. C. H. Waddington ; Dr. K. Mather, 705
 Telephone : Mine Rescue, R. C. Woods, 235 ; Calls, Long-distance, Automatic Service of, W. Hatton, 944
 Telephony, Transcontinental, Twenty-five Years of, 457
 Television Projection, Large-Screen, Dr. A. H. Rosenthal, 1028
 Temperatures, Lowest, Thermodynamics and the, Dr. C. G. Darwin (Kelvin lecture), 954
 Terminal Velocities, Dr. H. Chatley, 64
 Terrestrial Magnetism and Electricity, edited by J. A. Fleming ; Prof. S. Chapman (*Review*), 47
 Tertiary Siphonous Algae in the W. K. Parker Collection, with descriptions of some Eocene Siphonæ from England, L. and J. Morelet (*Review*), 810
 Thames Subway, A New, [1870], 80
 Theiler, Sir Arnold, Memorial to, 557
 Thermal : Neutrons in Thorium, Lead and Uranium 238, Capture Cross-sections for, Prof. L. Meitner, 422 ; Diffusion in Liquids, Demonstration of, D. Taylor and Dr. M. Ritchie, 670
 Thermodynamics : Statistical, a version of Statistical Mechanics for Students of Physics and Chemistry, Prof. R. H. Fowler and Dr. E. A. Guggenheim (*Review*), 239 ; The Structure of Matter, A. R. Ubbelohde, 488 ; and the Lowest Temperatures, Dr. C. G. Darwin (Kelvin lecture), 954
 Thiamin, Enzymatic Phosphorylation of, Mechanism of the, M. A. Lipton and Prof. C. A. Elvehjem, 226
 Think, How we, and Why, Prof. A. D. Ritchie (*Review*), 798
 Thionyl Chlorofluoride, H. S. Booth and F. C. Mericola, 786
 Thiophosphoryl, Sulphuryl and, Fluorides, Structures of, D. P. Stevenson and H. Russell, 393
 Thorium, Uranium and, Fission of, under Deuteron Bombardment, Dr. R. S. Krishnan and Dr. T. E. Banks, 860
 Thought, The Nature of, Prof. B. Blanshard. 2 Vols. (*Review*), 798
 Thylacine or Tasmanian 'Wolf', Position of, M. R. S. Sharland, 555
 Thyroid Gland and Potassium Metabolism, Prof. I. Abelin, 935
 Tibet, Travellers in, late H. Hosten, 710
 Tibetan Coronation, 342
 Tikopia : of the Solomons, Ritual in, 435 ; The Work of the Gods in, Prof. Raymond Firth. Vol. 1, 435
 Timber : its Properties, Pests and Preservation, Dr. F. Y. Henderson (*Review*), 1003
 Time : The Nature of, Prof. J. W. Campbell, 426 ; Prof. H. Dingle, 427 ; Relativity of, Dr. F. C. Powell ; Prof. H. Dingle, 626
 Tobacco Mildew, Control of, P. J. Anderson, 786
 Tomato, Seed Weight in the, L. C. Luckwill, 33
 Tompkins, Mr., in Wonderland : or Stories of *c*, *G*, and *h*, Prof. G. Gamow (*Review*), 567
 Torpedoes, Early, [1870], 679
 Totaguina, M. Ciuca, 458
 Town's Refuse as a Source of Soil Organic Matter, Dr. E. H. Tripp, 56
 Toxic Gases in Industry, Methods for the Detection of, 100
 "Traces", Use of Adsorption Processes for the Detection of, K. L. Sutherland, 553
 Transformation Liquid to Solid, Surface Potential Changes of Thin Films in the, Dr. C. Ockrent and W. H. Banks, 861
 Transformer Noise, Limitation of, B. G. Churcher and A. J. King, 1029
 Transformers, Insulation Stresses in, J. L. Thomas, 468
 Transpiration into a Saturated Atmosphere, Prof. H. H. Dixon and J. S. Barlee, 352
 Transport in Many Lands, W. R. Foran (*Review*), 295
 Trees, Radial Growth of, Weather and, C. J. Lyon, 595
 Trench Fever, Dr. R. Schapiro, 547
 Trephining, Prehistoric, Technique in, T. W. Parry, 594
 Trichoptera, Comparative Morphology and Evolutionary Trends in, P. J. Deoras, 976
 Trigonometrical : Survey of England and Wales, [1870], 41 ; Tables : Seven-figure, for Every Second of Time, prepared by H.M. Nautical Almanac Office (*Review*), 482 ; with the Argument in Time (*Review*), 482
 Troposphere, Radio Wave Reflections in the, L. G. Stodley, 743
 Trotule and the Ladies of Salerno, Dr. H. P. Bayon, 507
 Trout : Habits and Habitats of, W. Rushton (*Review*), 50 ; Streams : Conditions that Determine their Productivity and Suggestions for Stream and Lake Management, Dr. P. E. Needham (*Review*), 50
 Trout's Egg, Rhythmical Impedance Changes in the, Lord Rothschild, 744
 Truth, The Repudiation of, 871
 Tsunamis, B. Gutenberg, 193

- Tubellaria from Bermuda and the Sargassum, L. H. Hyman, 750
- Tubercle Bacillus, reaction to, Possible relation between ability to Synthesize Vitamin C and, Dr. T. W. B. Osborn and J. H. S. Gear, 974
- Tuberculosis : Native Races and, 144 ; and War, Dr. E. Rist, 506 ; and National Health, Dr. H. H. Thomson (*Review*), 660 ; Pulmonary, Urinary Excretion of Combined Ascorbic Acid in, S. Banerjee, P. B. Sen and Prof. B. C. Guha, 706
- Tumours : 3 : 4-Benzpyrene, Paramecium and the Production of, J. C. Mottram, 184 ; Metabolism of, Dr. F. Dickens, 512 ; Dr. E. Boyland, 513 ; in Mice, Production of, by Deoxycholic Acid, Prof. J. W. Cook, Prof. E. L. Kennaway and N. M. Kennaway, 627 ; Carbohydrate Metabolism of, I. Berenblum, Dr. E. Chain and N. G. Heatley, 778 ; Dr. F. Dickens and Dr. H. Weil-Malherbe, 779
- Tung Oil, Dr. M. Ashby, 738
- Turkey : The Earthquake in, E. Tillotson, 13 ; Power Development in, 891
- Twilight : Origin of the Yellow Line in, and the Night Sky Luminescence, E. Tönsberg and Prof. L. Vegard, 588 ; the Atmospheric Layer from which the Yellow Line in, Originates, Prof. L. Vegard, 623
- Tyndall on Haze and Dust, [1870], 160
- Typhoid Fever, Memorandum on, 24
- Ultracentrifuge, The, Prof. The Svedberg and K. O. Pedersen and others ; J. St. L. Philpot (*Review*), 566
- 'Ultra-Perceptive' Faculty, The, Dr. J. Hettinger, 430
- Ultra-Violet and Infra-Red Radiations on the Farm, L. C. Porter, 257
- Ulu Kelantan, Malaya, New Neolithic Site in, H. D. Noone, 112
- Unborn, Biography of the, Margaret Shea Gilbert (*Review*), 814
- Underground Traffic and Pedestrian Routes, Lighting of, Prof. R. d'Arboville, 22
- Units : New, in Physics and Engineering, Suggestions for, 597 ; Heat, [1870], 599
- Universe, The Mass of the, Surgeon Rear-Admiral C. M. Beadnell ; Sir Arthur Eddington, 549
- Universities : Treasury Grant to, 299 ; in War-time, The, 319 ; Dr. R. Priestley, 381 ; Research and Invention in, 639 ; The, and Research, Dr. J. I. O. Masson, 855
- Uranium : -X₂, Energies of β -Particles from, Dr. D. Roaf, 223 ; Isotopes : Nuclear Fission of Separated, Dr. A. O. Nier, 736 ; Separation of, W. Krasny-Ergen, 742 ; and Thorium, Fission of, under Deuteron Bombardment, Dr. R. S. Krishnan and Dr. T. E. Banks, 860
- Urea : Formation of, S. J. Bach, 193 ; Stibamine, Chemistry of, Sir Upendranath Brahmachari, 1021
- U.S.A. : Tennessee Valley, Mound Exploration in the, 128 ; Helium Production in the, Dr. C. W. Siebel, 257 ; National Research Council, award of a fellowship in protein chemistry to Dr. I. Fankuchen, 385 ; Suggested Grid, in the, 418 ; New Seismographic Equipment in the, 419 ; New Commercial Fruits in the, O. Atkins ; S. J. Lynch, 458 ; Criminal Anthropology in the, Dr. A. Hrdlička, 738 ; National Museum Report for 1939, 739 ; Maternal Mortality figures for 1938, 740 ; Accidental Deaths in Old Age in, 775 ; Progress of Education in, 776 ; Venereal Disease in, 854 ; Educational Legislation, A Review of, 1937 and 1938, W. Keesecker, 930
- U.S.S.R. : Academy of Sciences, Joseph Stalin elected an honorary member of the, 24 ; Biogeography in the, Dr. B. P. Uvarov (*Review*), 52 ; Archaeology in the, Prof. V. Gordon Childe, 110 ; the Writer of the Note, 111 ; Finland and the, 456
- Uterus : Behaviour of the (*Review*), 762 ; Physiology of the, with Clinical Correlations, Prof. S. R. M. Reynolds (*Review*), 762
- Vacuum Flask, History of the, Sir William Bragg, 408 ; Lord Rayleigh, 625 ; G. H. Gabb, 862 ; Lord Rayleigh, 940
- Valve Oscillators : Theory and Design of, for Radio and other Frequencies, Dr. H. A. Thomas (*Review*), 501
- Vegetable Crops, Prof. H. C. Thompson. Third edition (*Review*), 283
- Vegetation of the World (Plant Geography, Vol. 3), A. P. Il'inskij (*Review*), 52
- Venereal : Disease : Prevention of, Dr. Marie Carmichael Stopes. Third edition (*Review*), 660 ; in the U.S.A., 854 ; Diseases in War-time, 216
- Ventilation : A Handbook on, including Air Conditioning, P. L. Marks (*Review*), 501 ; War-time, A. Peel, 737
- Venus, Transits of, in 1874 and 1882, [1870], 474
- Vertebrate Egg, The Oldest, Prof. A. S. Romer and Ll. I. Price, 516
- Vibration in Engineering Practice (*Review*), 991
- Vibrations and Balancing, Mechanics applied to, D. L. Thornton (*Review*), 991
- "Victorian Socialism", H. G. Wells ; Dean W. R. Inge, 152
- Vienna Institute of the History of Medicine, Prof. F. Lejeune appointed professor, and director of the, 24
- Virgin Islands, Influence of the Geology of the, on Local Agricultural Practices, F. A. Squire, 71
- Virus : Research, Dr. F. C. Bawden (*Review*), 483 ; -infected Plants, Intranuclear Inclusions in, B. Kassanis, 632 ; Nature of, Dr. T. M. Rivers, 853
- Virusforschung, Methoden der, Prof. H. da Rocha-Lima, Dr. J. Reis und Dr. K. Silberschmidt (*Review*), 483
- Viruses : and their Insect Vectors, M. A. Watson and F. M. Roberts, 430 ; Filterable, L. J. Davis, 467 ; Insect-transmitted, Purification of, F. C. Bawden and N. W. Pirie, 632
- Viscosities near Absolute Zero, Prof. W. H. Keesom and G. E. Macwood, 393
- Viscosity and Molecular Structure, Dr. H. Mark and R. Simha, 571
- Vision, Problèmes de la, A. de Gramont (*Review*), 661
- Visual After-Images, Origin of, K. J. W. Craik, 512
- Vitalism : A Defence of, Prof. A. D. Ritchie (*Review*), 6 ; its History and Validity, Dr. L. R. Wheeler (*Review*), 6
- Vitamin : E, 345 ; K₁, Synthesis of, L. F. Fieser, 353 ; B₆, Synthetic, Effect of, on the Hæmopoietic System of Human Beings, R. W. Vilter, H. S. Schiro and Prof. T. D. Spies, 388 ; E : a Symposium held under the auspices of the Food Group (Nutrition Panel) of the Society of Chemical Industry on Saturday, 22nd April, 1939, Dr. L. J. Harris (*Review*), 604 ; B₆ in Foods, Chemical Estimation of, by means of the Diazo Reaction and the Phenol Reagent, M. Swaminathan, 780 ; B₁ and Acetylcholine Formation in Isolated Brain, Dr. P. J. G. Mann and Dr. J. H. Quastel, 856 ; C, Possible relation between ability to Synthesize, and reaction to Tubercle Bacillus, Dr. T. W. B. Osborn and J. H. S. Gear, 974
- Vocoder, The, H. Dudley, 157
- Volcanism in French Somaliland, E. A. de la Rüe, 828
- Voodoo Gods : an Inquiry into Native Myths and Magic in Jamaica and Haiti, Zora Hurston (*Review*), 49
- Wallas : Graham, a Scientific Humanist, T. Raymont (*Review*), 915
- Wandering Lake, The, Dr. Sven Hedin. Translated by F. H. Lyon (*Review*), 812
- War : and Reconstruction, Dr. J. S. Huxley, 330 ; The Sinews of, G. Crowther, 505 ; Tuberculosis and, Dr. E. Rist, 506 ; and Peace, International Unity in, 525 ; Costs, Economics of, G. Crowther ; P.E.P., 830 ; Extended, The, 909
- Wartime Guests—Our, Opportunity or Menace, 1028
- Wasps, North American Vespine, A contribution to the biology of, Prof. C. D. Duncan (*Review*), 657
- Waste, Salvage and Utilization of, 988, 1012

- Prof. C. F. Tolman (*Review*), 295 ;
 Water : Ground search, 456 ; -Power in Durham, G. F.
 Pollution, 772 ; Heavy, Structure of the OD Bands
 Kenned K. R. Rao and M. G. Sastry, 778 ; London's,
 of, Dig 1938, 830
 Water : by Telephone in New York, 23 ; The Drama
 of, Sir Napier Shaw. Second edition (*Review*), 139
 Weeds, Control of, and Grassland Experimentation,
 Bulletins on, 890
 Wellcome Foundation, presentation to Dr. T. A. Henry,
 696
 West Africa : Europe and, some Problems and Adjust-
 ments, Dr. C. K. Meek, Prof. W. M. Macmillan and
 E. R. J. Hussey (*Review*), 655
 Whales, Giants of the Sea, R. Kellogg, 259
 Wheat : Origin of, S. N. Pathak, 827 ; Planning, World,
 and Economic Planning in General, P. de Hevesy
 (*Review*), 843 ; Production, Planned, Sir John Russell
 (*Review*), 843
 Wherry, William B., Bacteriologist, Prof. M. Fischer
 (*Review*), 499
 Wild Chorus, Peter Scott (*Review*), 135
 Wing dimorphism in a Dipterous Insect, J. Guibé, 268
 Winter : The Severe, of 1939-40, 376 ; Frosts, Effect of,
 on Bird-life, Eric Hardy, 773
 Wireles : Propagation and the Reciprocity Law, T. L.
 Eckersley, S. Falloon, F. T. Farmer and W. O. Agar,
 222 ; Station, A Pioneer, 620
 Witchcraft in Swaziland, 664
 Witwatersrand Local Tremors, W. S. Finsen and H. E.
 Wood, 428
 Woman, Aboriginal, Sacred and Profane, Dr. Phyllis M.
 Kaberry (*Review*), 493
 Women, Scientific Education of, [1870], 946
 Wood : Pole Transmission Lines, G. T. Garwood, 808 ;
 -Lice, Genetics of, H. W. Howard, 1026
 Wool, Effects of Concentrated Aqueous and certain Non-
 Aqueous Solutions of Alkali upon, M. R. Freney and
 M. Lipson, 25
 Working Period, Relation of, to Output, Dr. W. A.
 Wooster, 1024
 Works and Buildings, Director of, [1870], 236
 World Citizenship, Education in, 676
 Wound Hormones of Plants, J. English, J. Bonner and
 A. J. Haagen-Smit, 353
 Wren, Boyle and, Friendship of, Ruth Musser and J. C.
 Krantz, jun., 182
 Wurtz Syntheses, Mechanism of, A. V. Morton, J. T.
 Massengale and G. M. Richardson, 556
 X-Ray Photographs, Diffraction Maxima in, Prof. W. H.
 Zachariassen, 1019
 X-Ray Photography of the Renal System, 459
 X-Rays : in Industry, H. P. Rooksby, 182 ; Specular
 Reflection of, by High-frequency Sound Waves, Sir
 C. V. Raman and P. Nilakantan, 667 ; Reflection of,
 with a Change of Frequency, Sir C. V. Raman and P.
 Nilakantan, 860
 X- and Gamma-Radiation, Wave-length Effect in the
 Reaction of Human Skin to, Dr. J. S. Mitchell, 105
 X- and γ -Radiation, Volume Integration of Dosage for,
 Dr. F. Happey, 668
 Yankee Clipper, Plastic Materials in the, 665
 Yeast : Zymase, Substrate Specificity of, Dr. J. Leibowitz
 and S. Hestrin, 671 ; Cell, Carbohydrate and Potas-
 sium Metabolism in the, Connexion between, Dr. R.
 Pulver and Prof. F. Verzá, 823
 Youth : Social Services for, 21 ; The Needs of, A. E.
 Morgan, 119 ; Present-Day Problems of, 199
 Zea-Euchlæna Hybrids, D.S. Langham, 633
 Zea Mays, Growth of Protoplasm and Nitrogen Migration
 in the Coleoptile of, Prof. A. Frey-Wyssling and F.
 Blank, 974
 Zellforschung, Hundert Jahre, L. Asehoff, E. Küster and
 W. J. Schmidt (*Review*), 875
 Zinc : 'Famine', A, 65 ; Nuclear Isomerism in, J. W.
 Kennedy, G. T. Seaborg and E. Segré, 269
 Zodiacal Light, Observations of the, M. A. R. Khan, 393
 Zoo, The, during War-time, 697
 Zoogeography : Prof. I. I. Puzanov (*Review*), 52 ; of the
 Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, M. Sharleman
 (*Review*), 52
 Zoological Nomenclature, Prof. G. S. Myers, 264
 Zoology : in India, Future of, 163 ; General, Laboratory
 Outline for, Prof. G. E. Potter (*Review*), 656



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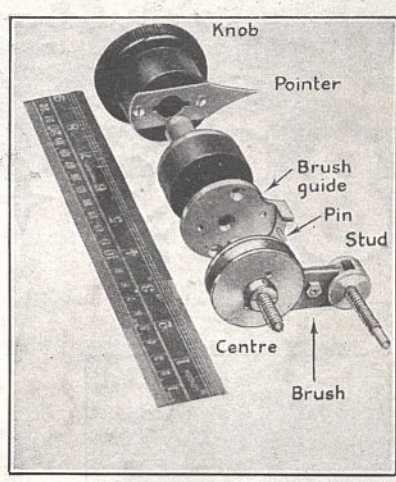
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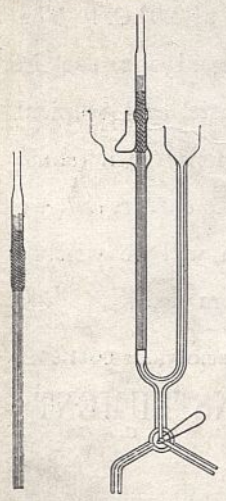


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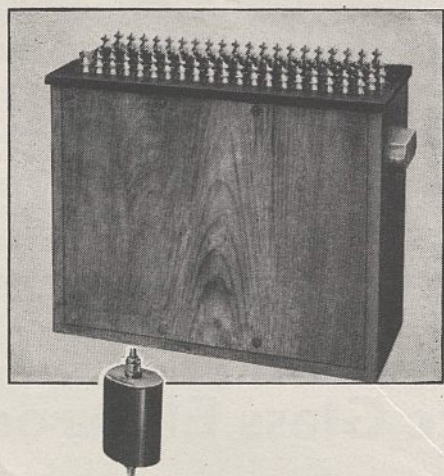
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NATURE

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SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 1940

No. 3663

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Utilization of Scientific Man-Power	43
Victorian Socialism. By The Very Rev. Dean Inge, K.C.V.O., F.B.A.	45
Terrestrial Magnetism and Electricity. By Prof. S. Chapman, F.R.S.	47
The Soya Bean. By Sir Geoffrey Evans, C.I.E.	48
Myths and Magic in Jamaica and Haiti	49
Habits and Habitats of Trout. By W. Rushton	50
Chemistry for Intermediate Examinations. By Dr. J. N. Sugden	51
Biogeography in the U.S.S.R. By Dr. B. P. Uvarov	52
Margarine. By Prof. J. C. Drummond	53
Town's Refuse as a Source of Soil Organic Matter. By Dr. E. H. Tripp	56
Magnetism and the Structure of Matter. By Dr. Kathleen Lonsdale	57
Obituary :	
Mr. Wilfred Trotter, F.R.S. By T. R. E.	59
News and Views	60
Letters to the Editors :	
Anisotropy of Cellulose Sheet.—D. G. Drummond	67
Heat Conductivity of Rubber at Low Temperatures.—Adolf Schallamach	67
Absorption of Hydrogen Lyman Radiation by Atmospheric Gases.—S. E. Williams	68
Does the Mesotron Obey Bose-Einstein or Fermi-Dirac Statistics?—P. L. Kapur	69
Interpretation of Nebular Red-Shifts.—Dr. K. R. Popper	69
"The Relationship between Pithecanthropus and Sinanthropus".—Prof. W. E. Le Gros Clark, F.R.S.	70
Influence of the Geology of the Virgin Islands on Local Agricultural Practices.—F. A. Squire	71
Dioximaleic Acid Oxidase Action of Peroxidases.—Dr. B. Swedin and Prof. H. Theorell	71
Diurnal Rhythms in the Axolotl Larva and in Drosophila.—Dr. Hans Kalmus	72
Research Items	74
Air Transport, Insects and Disease. By Dr. A. D. Imms, F.R.S.	76
The Rothamsted Experimental Station. By E. J. Roberts	76
Electricity Supply in Australia and New Zealand	77
Palæolithic Man in the North Midlands	78
Hearing Tests	79
Seventy Years Ago	80

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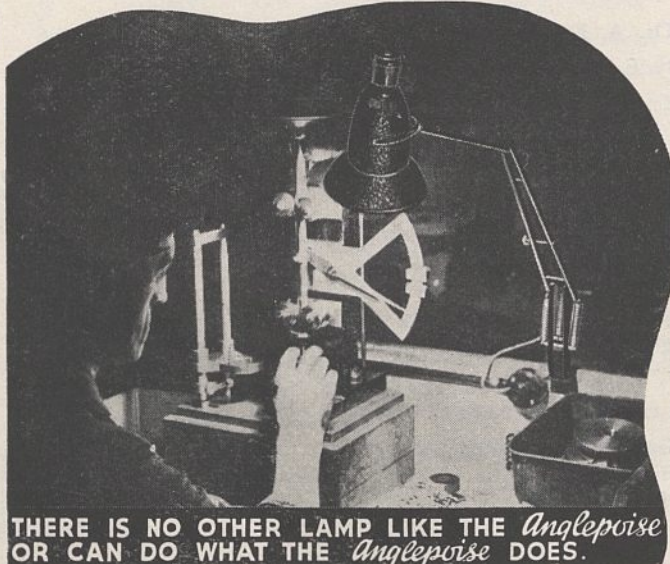
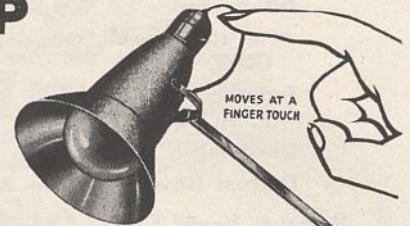
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UTILIZATION OF SCIENTIFIC MAN-POWER

THE concern which has recently found expression as to the position of science in the war effort of Great Britain, and the extent to which the services of scientific workers are being utilized, is evidence that the importance of this contribution is recognized far beyond the ranks of scientific workers themselves. The apparent tardiness with which the maximum contribution of science is being developed in the war-time effort of Great Britain has caused much questioning, and it is to be hoped that the activities of the newly appointed Advisory Council on Scientific Research and Technical Development will quickly overcome at least some of the obstacles which have appeared.

Political and Economic Planning (P E P) published a year ago an admirable broadsheet on "Man-Power Policy" in which four principles were laid down as essential and suggestions made for giving effect to them. It has now published a review of the present situation and its relation to economic policy under the title "Industrial Man-Power", in which the effect of expansion and contraction in industry in war-time is considered. The table showing the changes which have occurred in certain industries between 1923 and 1938 in Great Britain and Northern Ireland suggests that the great 'dilution' problem of the War of 1914-18 may be of much less importance to-day, since there now exists a range of metal trades already staffed for munitions, without the need to create them afresh.

This factor particularly affects the position of women, and it is accordingly unlikely, in view of the work already carried out under the Industrial Health Research Board and the National Institute of Industrial Psychology, that the grave social problems arising out of physical difficulties through

the industrial employment of women will recur. The chief reason for alarm indeed appears to lie in the tendency of the Government to dispense with the Factories Act. The recent report of the Industrial Health Research Board recalls that its work was born of the experience of the War of 1914-18, but there are signs that scientific workers must bestir themselves if that entirely new attitude towards the study of working conditions and industrial welfare is to be preserved under the stress of the present war.

In industry as in civil defence, there is already evidence that the over-working of men and women has begun, and there are no signs of a consistent and well-understood policy in granting permission to work overtime. Equally it is important to conserve our limited resources of skilled labour by training, on a sufficient scale, fresh recruits for the less skilled operations. A scientific policy, which will keep alive the protective machinery and handle such problems before they become serious enough to damage health and efficiency, demands the co-operation of scientific workers as much as the prosecution of fresh research in these fields.

The difficulties experienced at the moment, however, are chiefly of a special and local character. There is some difficulty in spreading the available skilled workers evenly over the field, especially among the new munitions and aircraft factories. Social difficulties also attend the provision of the non-factory groups with work in munition factories. The dangers and opportunities in bringing many of these unorganized workers into official organizations are immense. Again, the labour requirements of several large industries, such as the textile groups, depend very much on policy, particularly export policy, and for this reason lack of a clear

economic policy on the part of the Government is being held responsible for the rise in unemployment.

The PEP broadsheet forecasts a considerable scarcity of male labour in the coal-mining, ship-building and other heavy industries, rather than in the munitions industries, and stresses the fundamental changes in the whole structure of British society since the War of 1914-18 in relation to the industrial sources of man-power for the forces. A much greater proportion of the population is engaged in selling goods or performing personal services, and the entire non-factory working-class is larger in relation to the rest of the population. Of the non-factory groups, a much larger proportion are now employees rather than employers or workers on their own account. The distributive trades, personal services, and other non-factory trades and occupations are regarded as important sources of personnel for the fighting services and civil defence.

The change in the framework of labour relations involves, for a thorough study of the man-power problem, a survey of the changes in organization, and the broadsheet comments on the great "civil service" which has grown up in industry, represented by thousands of paid officials, hundreds of joint committees and slow-moving democratic machinery. Smooth adaptation of labour relations to war problems as they arise will depend on whether such constitutions reveal latent elasticity or become too brittle to bear the strain.

The value of the National Register as a basis for the scientific use of man-power does not require stressing here. The PEP broadsheet refers particularly to the Central Register of scientific, technical, professional or higher administrative workers, which is already being used by Government Departments and by firms engaged on work of national importance. Much unemployment still exists, however, among highly trained technical workers, particularly graduates in chemistry and other sciences, and even among professional workers such as architects, whose services would be expected to be in demand in numerous problems involved in civil defence and evacuation. A special section of the Central Register has been formed of those in this position, but the preservation of their abilities would seem to require a considerable extension of research programmes, even if such activity has no immediate connexion with war. So far as chemists are concerned, the establishment by the Chemical Society of an Advisory Research Council already

provides a means for pooling suggestions for research and bringing them before those engaged in research in the universities and colleges.

Something more is required than improvements in placing methods. Formulation of a really adequate programme of work and its adoption by the Government could scarcely fail to secure the efficient and adequate use of the available scientific personnel and the disappearance of unemployment from the scientific register.

Certain suggestions were made by Sir William Bragg in his presidential address at the anniversary meeting of the Royal Society (see NATURE, Dec. 9, 1939, p. 953). Sir William Bragg suggested that a Ministry of Science would be too formal and rigid for immediate needs and that personal and elastic methods of using knowledge were the most successful. We might well be content to bring science as a whole into close relation with government as a whole by attaching a central authority of science to the central authority of the country. The immediate application of science in any department of national affairs should be made from within that department, not from without, and the real need is for means of ensuring that the Government is able to rely on and make use of the whole range of scientific knowledge.

The value of the Royal Society as a consultative body, so strongly urged by Sir William Bragg, will be endorsed by all scientific workers, most of whom will agree that the Government could well utilize these services much more widely and fully. It is, however, the evidence of a bureaucratic outlook, indicated by the interruption of important research as a result of evacuation or other exigencies and the neglect to provide alternative accommodation, that has occasioned misgivings in the minds of scientific workers. The Advisory Research Council of the Chemical Society appears to be the first organized attempt to mobilize the research resources of the country at the universities or elsewhere, and it may be hoped that the new Advisory Council will extend the process quickly and effectively.

In the meantime scientific workers might well follow the lead of Prof. J. D. Bernal, who at the recent annual council meeting of the Association of Scientific Workers alluded to a number of scientific problems which would appear to have been overlooked in the present situation. Suggestions for investigation should not be restricted to any one field. Prof. Bernal himself referred to

the need for a scientific study of 'black-out' psychology and the effects of the 'black-out' on the temperament of the community. Similarly, problems of health and hygiene raised by evacuation and other changes await investigation.

Besides the suggestion and initiation of lines of investigation, the maximum development of our scientific effort in war demands an immense educational effort, and whatever central body is established will require to have under careful consideration the propaganda of science. Science cannot be used to the best advantage without the co-operation of the whole public. The stimulation of public interest in science is of vital importance to public efficiency and technical morale, and incidentally should provide a check on the bureau-

cratic tendencies which have been causing concern in some quarters.

The educational aspect is of importance from another point of view also. There is perhaps the danger that in the mobilization of scientific effort and resources in support of our cause, there may be further disposition to blame science for some of the evils of war. Propaganda of the type we have indicated should do more than prevent such misunderstanding. By promoting that full understanding and sympathy which are essential in the highest technical achievements, they should also prepare the way for science to make its full contribution, undisturbed by the demands of war, to the advancement of knowledge and the enrichment of human living.

VICTORIAN SOCIALISM

The New World Order

Whether it is Attainable, How it can be Attained, and What Sort of World a World at Peace will have to be. By H. G. Wells. Pp. 192. (London: Martin Secker and Warburg, Ltd., 1940.) 6s. net.

"FEW human beings," says Mr. Wells in his new book, "are able to change their primary ideas after the middle thirties. They get fixed in them and drive before them no more intelligently than animals before their innate impulses." Here he does himself a great injustice. We used to wonder what panacea he would discover next. He was sure to advocate it in a brilliant and stimulating manner.

But the time comes to all of us—it came to me long ago—when our minds stiffen, and we become, as a Frenchman unkindly said, the comedians of our early convictions. The hardships of his early life have permanently embittered Mr. Wells against the class in which his genius has placed him. He sees Red when he thinks of them, and exults in the destitution which he hopes awaits them.

So, since he is far too well-informed to be a Bolshevik, he has nailed his colours to that water-logged derelict, Fabian collectivism. We have only to make a clean sweep of emulation, ambition, love of private ownership, patriotism and pugnacity, and we shall all be as happy, progressive and intelligent as a flock of sheep. That is always the way with Utopians. Abolish all the strongest passions and instincts of human nature, and a terminal state of blessedness, an earthly paradise, will be reached.

It is pathetic to look at the row of deserted idols which we used to worship in the last century: Liberalism, Democracy, Human Perfectibility, Socialism, Communism—there are few any more to do them reverence. Liberalism, which might sweep the suburbs with the Gladstonian creed of peace and retrenchment, is content to limp feebly after Labour, and has paid the penalty. Democracy is still a fetish in America, where it means anything, from an attribute of the Deity to a method of therapeutics, except what it really is, a not very successful experiment in government. "Uric acid," I read in a New York medical journal, "is tottering on its throne. The triumphs of Democracy are not confined to politics." Elsewhere it is merely accepted from inertia, or from fear of something worse. No institution has lost in prestige so much as the House of Commons. Who now reads the dreary debates, which are not expected to turn a single vote? (Democracy as a form of society—equality of consideration—is a different matter; some other name ought to be found for it.) As for human perfectibility, nobody any longer believes in a law of progress. The fact of progress in the past—for example, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—cannot be denied. But in the future? We began with faith, we went on with hope; now there is nothing left but charity.

Socialism has never recovered from giving birth to its misbegotten brat Communism. There was such a thing as Social Democracy, though Socialism and Democracy are fundamentally incompatible. Nothing could be more ignominious than the total collapse of the Social Democrats in Italy and

Germany at the first impact of Fascism. The Bolsheviks found that the Social Democrats had not got the true milk of the word, and helped in their overthrow. Mussolini and Hitler were quick to observe the signs of the times.

Communism is also practically dead. It exists in the U.S.S.R. only for export; the Government of the Soviet Republic is pure Fascism or State capitalism. It would be difficult to name any prediction of Marx that has not been falsified by history; but the most significant of all his miscalculations was that after the success of the social revolution the State would "wither away". Instead of withering away, the State in Russia is omnipotent, the most brutal and searching tyranny that the world has ever known. Communism at home is now the creed of a few *enragés* and armchair doctrinaires, and of callow boys and girls at Oxford, Cambridge and the London School of Economics.

The total failure of the prophecy that the State under Soviet Socialism would wither away is important because it affects other kinds of socialism. The inevitable result of collectivism is to deprive the citizen of all liberty, and to put him at the mercy of a horde of ignorant, indolent and insolent Jacks-in-office, who take their orders from above. This is the crucial difference between State-socialism and democracy. The bureaucracy under socialism must take their orders from above. Mr. Wells wishes his citizens to be free to speak their minds; but your bureaucrat cannot stand criticism, and will know well enough how to gag it. Mr. Wells's Gestapo are to be "sturdy and assertive". There is no fear of their being anything else.

State-capitalism can make out a plausible case for itself. But apart from the difficulty of finding skilled administrators who are willing to give their best for a very small salary (in the U.S.S.R. differential salaries are as steeply graded as in England) in the absence of competition it is most unlikely that the infinitely complicated affairs of a great industrial community would be competently handled by State officials. Such experience as is available is very discouraging to the advocates of that favourite Fabian slogan, 'a planned economy'.

I entirely agree with Mr. Wells's detestation of the new idol which has dethroned the fetishes of the Victorians—frenzied nationalism. The deification of the State is indeed a monstrous and Satanic form of idolatry. It is at present the strongest force in the world, though it must be said to the credit of the democratic countries that it has made few converts in England, France or the United States. It unfortunately commands the allegiance of some of the best as well as the worst elements in the totalitarian countries, and is therefore the greatest danger that European civilization has

ever had to meet. Nevertheless, to speak of the possible "extinction of mankind" (p. 18) is surely a violent exaggeration. The worst that can happen to Europe, if we persist in what are really civil wars, waged with greater fury than the old wars of religion, is that we may be plunged into another 'dark age', which we may hope would not last six hundred years, like the welter of barbarism which followed the downfall of Græco-Roman civilization. But America and the British Dominions would survive and hand down the torch. Count Keyserling, in his "Révolution Mondiale", unaccountably forgot the not unimportant part of the human race who speak English. For I do not think that even Great Britain will either cease to exist or relapse into savagery.

I also agree with the author about the ruinous folly of the present war; but perhaps at present the less said the better on that subject.

One protest I must make in conclusion. I am not supposed to be very fond of the Roman Catholic Church, but I deprecate Mr. Wells's very harsh words about that institution. Catholicism is certainly anti-revolutionary. With its unequalled experience of human nature, that Church knows that revolutions always lead to reactions, and achieve very little at a terrible cost of human suffering. But it preserves some valuable traditions which are in some danger of being lost, including a philosophy which is far superior to modern systems. I am specially distressed to read what Mr. Wells says about Spain. I cannot understand how any decent person can deny that the Nationalists were justified in taking arms against those devils in human shape, the Spanish Reds, who, fighting under the 'hammer and sickle', and under orders from Moscow, butchered three hundred thousand men and women, a hundred thousand in Madrid alone, in an attempt to extirpate whole classes of the population. It is difficult to forget what an American eye-witness saw in the town of Ronda, near Malaga. The Reds impaled on stakes all the male inhabitants who belonged to the middle class, and while they were dying in agony compelled them to watch their wives and daughters being first violated and then burnt alive. There are scores of similar horrors equally well authenticated.

Although Mr. Wells's Utopia seems to me utterly unrealizable, no one can read the book without admiration for his earnest longing for a new and better world. As Plato said of his Republic, the type of the perfect State is laid up in heaven, and we need not inquire too curiously whether it is likely to be realized on earth. The obstacles are human sin and folly, and we shall soon have sharp enough lessons to cure all but the incurable.

W. R. INGE.

TERRESTRIAL MAGNETISM AND ELECTRICITY

Physics of the Earth, 8 :

Terrestrial Magnetism and Electricity

Edited by J. A. Fleming. Contributors : J. Bartels, L. V. Berkner, J. A. Fleming, O. H. Gish, H. D. Harradon, C. A. Heiland, E. O. Hulburt, H. F. Johnston, H. E. McComb, A. G. McNish, W. J. Rooney, B. F. J. Schonland, O. W. Torreson, L. Vegard. Pp. xii + 794. (New York and London : McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1939.) 52s. 6d.

INTEREST in geophysics is widespread in the United States of America to a degree paralleled nowhere else. This still young community, now in the first flush of vigorous scientific maturity, is from practical motives actively exploring the hidden riches of its land ; it is also energetically studying the land, the sea, and the air, from purely intellectual motives. One consequence is that America possesses, in the American Geophysical Union, the largest geophysical society in the world ; * this Union publishes an extensive and many-sided annual report, but not, as yet, any general geophysical journal. America is, however, the home of the only existing journal devoted solely to terrestrial magnetism and electricity ; and the only research institution which pursues all branches of this department of geophysics, from a world-wide point of view, is also American. It is therefore fitting that the volume under review, which is probably the largest general work ever published on the subject, should come to us from across the Atlantic. It will give a valuable stimulus and help to the study of the earth's magnetism and electricity, publications on which have hitherto been rather inaccessible to workers in other fields. The volume is one of a series of reports on geophysics prepared under the auspices of the U.S. National Research Council, with which the American Geophysical Union is associated.

The book is not a systematic treatise on its subject (and there remains a need for such a treatise) ; it is a collective work by fourteen authors, under the editorship of Dr. J. A. Fleming, director of the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism of the Carnegie Institution of Washington—who himself, in the first chapter, on “The Earth's Magnetism and Magnetic Surveys”, gives a general introduction to this, the larger of the two subjects with which the book deals. These two subjects are in fact not very intimately related to one another, and the four ‘electrical’ chapters—on “Atmospheric Electricity” (iv, Gish),

“Instruments used in Observations of Atmospheric Electricity” (v, Torreson), “Earth-Currents” (vi, Rooney), and “Thunder-clouds, Shower-clouds and their Electrical Effects” (xii, Schonland)—might well have appeared as a separate volume ; these chapters are excellently written in a systematic expository style, and almost constitute a treatise on terrestrial electricity, though of course this subject offers scope for a more detailed treatment. With their bibliography, these four chapters occupy about a quarter of the book.

No fewer than a hundred pages are devoted to a bibliographical chapter (xiii, Harradon) ; this is a valuable part of the book, because one of the difficulties in this, as in some other branches of geophysics, is that the original data and observations are for the most part not published in the scientific journals which have wide currency throughout the world ; often they appear in separate publications or in observatory reports—the introductions or appendixes of which sometimes contain important discussions of the data, not to be found elsewhere. Moreover, owing to the border-line character of the subject (lying as it does between physics, astronomy, meteorology, geology and geography), together with the fact that there is only one journal expressly devoted to it, its current literature is scattered over an exceptionally wide collection of periodicals. Hence such a bibliography forms, as the editor states, “a most valuable research tool”.

The remaining two thirds of the book includes two main groups of chapters, much more closely linked together than might appear at first sight. There are the more strictly magnetic chapters, including (with the first, already mentioned), “Magnetic Instruments” (ii, Johnston, Fleming and McComb), “Magnetic Prospecting” (iii, Heiland), “On Causes of the Earth's Magnetism and its Changes” (vii, McNish) and “Some Problems of Terrestrial Magnetism and Electricity” (viii, Bartels) ; and there are three chapters relating to the upper atmosphere, including one with that title (x, Hulburt), one on “Radio Exploration of the Earth's Outer Atmosphere” (ix, Berkner), and one on the “Aurora Polaris and the Upper Atmosphere” (xi, Vegard).

Workers on the many topics with which the book deals will recognize the authority of the writers who contribute the several chapters. With the exception of Chapter iii, the outlook of the book is more towards the purely scientific than the important practical aspects of the subject ; it

may be said to be directed to the initiation or enlightenment of physicists (and perhaps also astrophysicists) in one of the oldest of the modern sciences, which still confronts us with the mystery of Gilbert's great discovery that the earth is itself a magnet, and the but little less mysterious secular variation of the magnetic field. Apart from this, the exciting and complex problems of the subject are concerned mainly with the atmosphere; there is the semi-meteorological problem of the maintenance of the earth's negative surface charge, and the group of problems associated with the action of the sun upon the earth—for it is the sun which causes and controls the inconstant daily magnetic variation, the irregularly occurring magnetic storms and the associated auroras,

and also the recently discovered group of terrestrial phenomena linked with eruptions in the solar chromosphere—radio fading and brief magnetic disturbances. The moon also, through the lunar tide which it produces in our atmosphere, plays a small but interesting part in causing the magnetic variations.

All these subjects are discussed in an interesting and authoritative way in this book, and if the voices are not always in unison, this is but a token of the need for more observation and more thought to illuminate dark questions. It is to be hoped and expected that many among the readers of this book will be led to take a share in making these "rough places plain".

S. CHAPMAN.

THE SOYA BEAN

Le soja et les industries du soja
Produits alimentaires, huile de soja, lécithine végétale, caséine végétale. Par A. Matagrín. Pp. x + 390. (Paris: Gauthier-Villars, 1939.) 60 francs.

IT is well known that the soya bean (*Glycine soja*) is one of the most valuable of cultivated crops, and this comprehensive account is of value, particularly at the present crisis, because of the numerous by-products that are obtainable from this particular plant. It is in fact one of the world's indispensable commodities.

The author records with considerable success the whole range from the cultivation of the bean to the manufacture of the latest form of by-product. In an account of the history and origin of the crop, it is pointed out that the home of the plant is eastern Asia, and in particular, Manchuria, Japan and China, from which regions, for many years, the main supply for the markets of the world was obtained. It is natural that other countries, with an eye to the valuable nature of the crop, should have endeavoured to establish it into their agricultural systems, and the most successful so far has been the United States. Here after years of trial and experiment, success has been attained in breeding types suitable to the climatic conditions, and the output of which now rivals in extent that of the Far East. In the detailed account that is given of the many attempts that have been made to establish the crop, it is noted that although the crop is stated to be adaptable and capable of growing from the equator to 50° S. and 60° N. respectively, yet success has, in the main, only been achieved on a grand scale in

those countries possessing a temperate or subtropical climate.

In view of its great nutritive value, due to its high oil and protein content, there is little doubt that if the crop could be established in the tropics it would be of great value, not only because it is a valuable export crop which could be sold for cash and would, therefore, widen this field, which is so often held by cotton alone at present, but also on account of its food value. To the many who are now interested in the nutrition drive that is taking place in the British colonies its value is obvious; but it is not an easy crop to grow in the tropics. The number of varieties as indicated by the author is very great, but he brings out clearly that each variety has been evolved to meet particular types of soil and climatic conditions, and that each will usually only be found in a comparatively circumscribed area where it can enjoy these particular conditions.

The United States introduced numerous varieties and undertook prolonged selection before types suitable to American conditions were obtained. The trade demands a large round bean of a white or light colour, but unfortunately such experiments as have been made in the tropics indicate that the type of soya that grows best is one of a darker colour with a smaller and flatter bean. There is no doubt that much plant-breeding work will be needed before types really suited to the tropics can be evolved, although there is evidence that success will ultimately be obtained. Another difficulty is the short viability of the seed under tropical conditions. For this reason it is not always easy to obtain an even stand, with the result that disappointing crops are often reaped,

although individual plants may often be excellent heavy bearers. The causes of this rapid loss in viability will, therefore, need to be studied and systems of storage, within the means of the peasant, evolved. Temperature is one contributing factor, as seed stored at about 60° F. keeps its viability well. It is probable that moisture content may be another factor as a natural corollary.

Another difficulty that will have to be faced is ignorance of the most attractive ways to prepare it for human consumption. Not the least valuable part of this book is the account given by the author of the different dishes that are prepared in various countries, and a campaign to educate the grower into the cooking of the bean will probably have to accompany any attempt to introduce it into his cropping system. The problem of

inoculating the seed will also need to be faced, as it appears obvious that good crops cannot usually be obtained unless the right inoculum is present. This problem should not be difficult of solution, however, once a commencement has been made, as soil from an inoculated field can be used to extend the system.

Nearly half the book is devoted to accounts of the commercial products of the bean, particular attention being paid to the processes involved in the refining of the oil and its numerous uses, to the preparation of lecithin and the manufacture of vegetable casein, the demand for which has expanded greatly in recent years.

The volume is well arranged, but it is hoped that in a future edition an index will be added.

G. EVANS.

MYTHS AND MAGIC IN JAMAICA AND HAITI

Voodoo Gods

An Inquiry into Native Myths and Magic in Jamaica and Haiti. By Zora Hurston. Pp. x+290+24 plates. (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1939.) 15s. net.

OBEAH in Jamaica and Voodoo in Haiti, as secret cults of the Negro, have both aroused considerable curiosity, mostly morbid. The literature relating to them is extensive, but more remarkable for its sensational statements than its ability to carry conviction as to its truth or accuracy of observation. It is, in fact, with a few notable exceptions, based on hearsay. Miss Hurston's knowledge of both cults has at least been acquired, to a great extent, at first hand; and her book is the work of a trained and experienced observer. As a member of the race she was qualified to take part in the ceremonial as an initiate, while as a pupil of Prof. Franz Boas she was able to grasp its significance as the manifestation of a form of religious belief, and view it with detachment.

Miss Hurston gives the two cults of Obeah and Voodoo their social setting in her accounts of the Negro community in Jamaica and of society and politics in the Black Republic of Haiti. The high lights of Haitian history are reached in revolution and massacre, more especially in the earlier years of the present century, leading up to occupation by the United States in 1915. The occupation lasted for nineteen years. Notwithstanding this story of bloodshed and corruption, the author sees in the recent growth of a young intelligentsia, which is making its mark in public life, the possibility

of a future regeneration. There are indications of the growth of a national consciousness and of a decrease in the degree of cultural dependence on France.

In this movement towards cultural and national independence of white influence, it is thought by some, strangely enough, that Voodoo will play its part. This may seem surprising, in view of the fact that it has been usual to look upon Voodoo solely as an influence for evil, rather than as a form of spiritual belief, which could hold its own in the long run against one of the more highly organized religions, such as Christianity. This may be due to prejudice; and it has to be conceded that under the influence of the negro temperament, even Christianity itself may assume strange forms. At the same time the popular and darker view of Voodoo may not be entirely accurate.

Miss Hurston attributes much of the sensationalism which has become almost inseparable from accounts of Voodoo to a failure to understand its symbolism. Thus she maintains that the reverence accorded to the gods of the Negro in the guise of the Roman Catholic saints 'done over in black', the prominence of the snake in their cults, the erotic rites and the magical dances, and the like, are all parts of an elaborate system of symbolism, which has been, but should not be, taken at face value. Voodoo, in fact, is neither snake worship nor magic mixed up with fetichism, sacrifice and other of the more repulsive erotic and necrophilic practices of wizardry, but an organized body of pagan belief with an African pantheon.

The gods of the Haitian pantheon to a great extent are localized, and a spirit of great power

in its own home may be unknown beyond a radius of fifty miles. Nevertheless some of the gods are revered generally; Damballa, for example, whose signature is the snake, and the goddess of love, whose position in relation to Voodoo as a fertility cult is indicated not only by the fact that she has no children, and is implacable to women, but also in that every man in Haiti is regarded as her husband. It is significant that two types of gods or spirits are recognized—the Rada or Arada, who are the good gods, to whom only pigeons and chickens are sacrificed, and the Petro, the more powerful and evil gods, who can,

however, be made to do good things. To them are offered pigs, goats, sheep, cows and dogs, and even on occasion dead bodies from the tombs. The Rada are said to have been brought with the Negroes from Guinea or Dahomey; the Rada came from the Congo.

This brief mention of one feature only in Voodoo belief does less than justice to a remarkable record, which will repay close study by those who wish to understand the mentality which underlies what has been the most remarkable experiment in self-government of the black races, on their own initiative, of modern times.

HABITS AND HABITATS OF TROUT

Trout Streams

Conditions that Determine their Productivity and Suggestions for Stream and Lake Management. By Dr. Paul R. Needham. Pp. x+233. (Ithaca, N.Y.: Comstock Publishing Co., Inc., 1938.) 3 dollars.

THIS book is an attempt to place in the hands of anglers, sportsmen, and aquatic biologists, trustworthy information relating to trout and streams in which they live.

The author is well qualified by years of experience to undertake such a work and has done it very well, not only using his own researches into stream problems but also that of many workers in his own country and in other lands where trout streams abound. The opening chapter deals largely with the various kinds of trout to be found in North America in both streams and lakes, dealing also with the habits of the different fish, followed by the chemical and physical conditions of trout streams in general and how such factors as temperature, transparency, oxygen content, and river bed play their part.

The importance of biological indicators as evidences of pollution as against that of chemical analysis is stressed—a line which is advocated in Great Britain. A very well illustrated chapter deals with trout stream animals which serve as food for trout, and should prove very useful to aquatic biologists, while it cannot fail to attract the angler with very little interest in stream organisms apart from fish. The line drawings and photographs are very clear and the tables show evidence of much work in collecting the data.

An interesting point to which attention is directed is the large numbers of land insects which are taken by trout at certain times of the year; the probable reason for this is well discussed. A very large number of stomach contents have been

examined to obtain the information, and so far as streams in the central area of New York State go, the author points out the amounts of foods fall in the following percentages: caddis flies, two-winged insects and may flies, 66 per cent taken in the order stated, beetles fourth (6.6 per cent of total), spring tails, leaf hoppers, ants, bees and wasps furnish 3–6 per cent of the total, with other foods about 1 per cent, made up of crayfish, shrimps, grasshoppers, stone flies, true bugs and earthworms.

The distribution of the food in streams is dealt with under the heading of the physical conditions of the bed of the stream, stream flow and depth. The methods to be adopted in taking a census of the stream animals is described and is much on the lines adopted by workers in other countries. Stocking, propagation, and protection find a place in the book, followed by the management of trout waters gained by experience in many States.

A very useful appendix deals with the numbers and sizes of fish it is wise to introduce into streams where restocking is done, taking into account size of stream and available natural foods. Outlines are given of stream surveys and how the information should be recorded to be of use for comparison with later surveys or with those of other rivers.

There is a very extensive bibliography, which should prove very useful to those seeking fuller information on the points dealt with. The book is very well illustrated with photographs of weir fishing pools and the like, making it very attractive to the non-technical reader as well as the scientific investigator. It also gives an insight into the extent of the investigations undertaken by workers across the sea, and being written by one who, in addition to being a scientific investigator is also an angler, links up the two sides of the questions that arise.

W. RUSHTON.

CHEMISTRY FOR INTERMEDIATE EXAMINATIONS

(1) General and Inorganic Chemistry

By Dr. P. J. Durrant. Pp. x + 547. (London, New York and Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1939.) 8s.

(2) A College Course of Inorganic Chemistry

By Prof. J. R. Partington. Pp. x + 658. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1939.) 8s. 6d.

(3) Intermediate Chemistry, Inorganic and Physical

By Dr. Frederick Prescott. Pp. viii + 828. (London: University Tutorial Press, Ltd., 1939.) 12s. 6d.

THE number of chemistry text-books is becoming greater every year, and because of their number, the final selection of a suitable book is becoming increasingly difficult. During the last few years, the needs of those taking intermediate science examinations and university entrance scholarships have received special attention, and here are three new books catering for their requirements.

(1) Of the people who write text-books, the one who obtains the deepest insight into the student mind is not the teacher (who may, in fact, be very ignorant of its contents) but the examiner. He, more than any other, is familiar with the facts which are absorbed, and the heresies which persist. Dr. P. J. Durrant is not without experience as an examiner, consequently something exceptional was to be expected, and expectation has not been disappointed. The book he has written is an admirable one, and the reviewer can fully endorse the report of the publishers' reader that "the book has originality and vitality of presentation and gives a balanced and cultural appraisal of a difficult subject". Not only is this so, but the type, headings, spacing and arrangement of the text are excellent and make an immediate appeal to the eye.

The outlook is modern, Bohr's theory of atomic structure and the electronic theory of valency are introduced at an early stage, and are used as a basis for the explanation of chemical theory. The scope of the book is not limited to the syllabus of any particular examination, and it would take the student through his first year at the university. The less common elements are omitted, and only compounds of definite technical or theoretical interest are included. The only important omission is a chapter on radioactivity, which might, with advantage, have been included. Errors are extremely rare: the quantum shells (p. 116) are presumably those of uranium, where the *P* shell

contains 12 not 13 electrons, and *catronic* (p. 297) is an obvious misprint.

(2) Prof. J. R. Partington's "Text-Book of Inorganic Chemistry" first appeared in 1921 and is now in its fifth edition. Successive editions have grown in size with the passing of time, until it is now too comprehensive for 'inter-science' students. His "College Course of Inorganic Chemistry" is intended to meet the needs of the latter, especially those rather older students who are beginners, as well as younger pupils.

Although the plan and method of the "Text-Book" have naturally served as a foundation for the smaller work, much of the text has been rewritten and rearranged. Nevertheless, the familiar and successful "Partington" method is obvious throughout. The historical approach has been retained, special attention being given to the physical chemistry required at this stage, and although designed only as an intermediate text-book, it contains a very considerable amount of information and details of industrial processes.

Opinions differ as to how soon the student should begin to use and appreciate the significance of electronic formulæ. The modern tendency is to introduce them early and even to abandon the classical 'structural formulæ' entirely. The fact that here the former are sparingly used, and the latter largely retained, gives the book a somewhat old-fashioned appearance which might not entirely satisfy a modern teacher. This is the only criticism of the book, which well maintains the high "Partington" standard.

(3) Dr. F. Prescott's "Intermediate Chemistry" is described as "an entirely new book, a well-planned course of Inorganic and Physical Chemistry, based on modern ideas associated with the inter-related domains of Physics and Chemistry". The plan and balance of the book are good, but the contents are of very uneven quality, and the proof-reading has been entirely inadequate. A perusal of the book revealed twenty-one incorrect equations (and there may be more, for a systematic search was not made), many incorrect formulæ, and small errors in the text. All these mistakes are obvious and would be detected by the dullest student.

The section on the structure of the atomic nucleus and the occurrence of isotopes (pp. 252-4) contains the following sequence of statements: (a) the nucleus consists of protons, or particles of positive electricity, and, in most cases, electrons, the protons always being in excess; (b) the

atomic number corresponds to the net positive charge on the nucleus; (c) the mass number (atomic weight) is equal to the number of protons in the nucleus; (d) the difference between the mass number and the atomic number is attributed to neutrons in the nucleus; (e) neutrons are particles with a mass nearly that of a proton; (f) the neutrons, being of negligible mass, may be disregarded. The table (p. 253) which gives the atomic structure of a number of selected elements does not mention the neutron, which, considering

its (apparently) uncertain properties, is perhaps just as well.

'Partington' and 'Durrant' are widely contrasting books, complementary rather than competitive. Partington is historical, somewhat discursive, and (at least once) reminiscent (p. 433). Durrant is non-historical, logical, modern, and provides much tabulated information, of which Partington (p. vii) disapproves. The teacher may choose according to his tastes. J. N. SUGDEN.

BIOGEOGRAPHY IN THE U.S.S.R.

(1) Zoogeography

By I. I. Puzanov. Pp. 360 + 32. (Moscow: State Publication Office of the Commissariat for Education, 1938.) 7·80 roubles.

(2) Zoogeography of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic

By M. Sharleman. Pp. 234 + 1. (Kiev: Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, 1937.) 6·60 roubles.

(3) Vegetation of the World

(Plant Geography, vol. 3.) By A. P. Il'inskij. Pp. 458. (Botanical Institute of the Academy of Sciences, Moscow-Leningrad, 1937.) 10 roubles.

ALTHOUGH the three books referred to above by no means exhaust the most important biogeographical publications that have appeared in the Soviet Union during the last few years, they deserve special notice for various reasons.

(1) Prof. Puzanov's book on zoogeography is of interest as an attempt to produce a text-book in this subject, which is still taught in too few universities, one of the reasons being the lack of suitable books for students. A brief introduction dealing with the aims and methods of zoogeography and giving a concise history of the science is followed by two general parts. The first presents a lucid discussion of the ecological principles of zoogeography; the second deals with dynamics of faunas from a geological aspect. This difficult problem is dealt with in a very clear manner, without superfluous detail, while avoiding undue simplification. The third, and the main, part of the book is devoted to regional zoogeography, that is, to descriptions of the faunas of various regions. These descriptions are based mostly on vertebrate animals, but whenever possible some data on insects, etc., are also given. A feature of the book is the abundance of very well-executed (but poorly reproduced) original illustrations of numerous animals mentioned in the text. There are

even three plates in colour, but their standard is low.

On the whole, the book undoubtedly represents a very successful approach to a university text-book of zoogeography, which is as yet lacking in any language, in spite of a seriously felt need for one.

(2) Sharleman's book on the zoogeography of the Ukraine is an original treatise on the regional distribution of vertebrates of that country in connexion with their ecology and geological history. The book is written in the Ukrainian language, but Russian and English summaries are appended, while a complete list of species showing their distribution by districts, and a very full bibliography should make it very valuable for workers on the Palæarctic fauna.

(3) The book on the vegetation of the world by Il'inskij is published as the third (and concluding, but first published) volume of a series, the other two of which deal with plant geography and plant ecology respectively. The general part of the book is very brief—because the two other volumes just referred to should supply the introductory knowledge to the present one, which contains descriptions of types of vegetation by continents and natural regions. Most of the descriptions are clear, concise, based on up-to-date information and illustrated by well-reproduced photographs. All this goes to make a good text-book that should be very useful, particularly to geography students.

Indeed, it can be said that geography departments in Soviet universities are particularly fortunate in having modern text-books in both branches of biogeography, by Puzanov on animals and by Il'inskij on vegetation. The appearance of similar text-books in English would go a long way towards introducing biogeography into British and American universities, where this science is suffering from undeserved neglect. B. P. UVAROV.

MARGARINE

BY PROF. J. C. DRUMMOND,
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EARLY HISTORY

IT is unlike the French to be unmindful of a son of their country who has rendered notable service in so important a matter as food, yet I am not aware that the achievement of Mège-Mouries is commemorated in France by a public monument or inscription or even by a street name. Equally surprising is the scanty information supplied by biographical works of reference about that most ingenious inventor. Perhaps we can attribute this to the lack of sympathy one would expect from a nation which appreciates above all other things good food and good cooks, towards one who hoped to pass off the greasy and rather unpalatable products of his laboratory as butter. Whatever the reason for such neglect, the fact remains that the French might well be proud to claim the inventor who made possible one of the greatest food industries of our time.

It is often erroneously believed that Mège-Mouries set out to concoct a substitute for butter. It is true that he was stimulated by the desire of the Victualling Department of the French Navy to find such a substitute; but he himself was more ambitious. He attempted to produce butter itself, and that by a series of laboratory treatments that he thought would reproduce exactly the changes by which he believed body fat to be converted into milk fat in the animal body. His laborious process, in which beef fat was digested at blood heat, first with macerated sheep's stomach and then with chopped cow's udder and milk, actually gave him nothing more unusual than the softer portion of the original fat, carrying, presumably, some traces of a milky flavour. Nevertheless, in the early days he was quite satisfied that he had made butter. Others, less optimistic, were content to believe that he had solved the problem of preparing an edible substitute for butter, and for this achievement he was honoured in 1870 by Napoleon III.

Had it not been for the Franco-Prussian War, it is probable that France would have led the world in the technical development of the new process. As it happened, the opportunity was seized in the United States and in Holland. In a remarkably short time factories were springing up in these countries for the manufacture of what was then called 'butterine'. It was soon found that Mège-Mouries's complicated digestion was quite

unnecessary, and that all it was necessary to do was to mix as thoroughly as possible with skimmed milk, preferably slightly sour, a fat of the appropriate melting point. On separating the fat again it was found to have acquired a buttery taste. It could then be 'worked', salted and coloured to taste.

Manufacture in Great Britain lagged far behind in the seventies. So far as can be judged from the contemporary press, the home-produced material was, moreover, of very inferior quality. Most of it was made in small, dirty, 'back-street' premises under highly insanitary conditions. To a large extent it was knowledge of these facts that gave 'butterine' so bad a reputation at that time. The English public was ready to believe any fantastic yarn about the doubtful nature of the fats used by the manufacturers, and they also suspected, often with more reason, that a good deal of the despised stuff was employed as an adulterant for butter. The passing of the Margarine Act in 1887 did something to allay uneasiness; nevertheless, the reputation of the new food remained an unsavoury one for a good many years.

IMPROVEMENTS IN MANUFACTURE

Then in 1889, Otto Monsted opened the first up-to-date factory in Great Britain. The pioneers were faced with a truly formidable task. Prejudice against margarine was at that time shared by rich and poor alike, and opposition from certain other trades, particularly the dairy industry, was vigorous and none too scrupulous. The product Monsted turned out was made from that fraction of beef fat which is known as 'oleo' or 'premier jus'. It was, in fact, a highly digestible fat possessing a calorific value equivalent to that of ordinary butter and, what was of great importance although unknown at the time, its vitamin A, and probably also its vitamin D, content was by no means negligible. It is probable that its nutritive value was not far below that of ordinary 'average' butter; but it is difficult to make a proper estimate because it is a curious fact that an extensive modern literature on the vitamin contents of foods does not give us any information as to the A and D value of the common edible body fats such as those of beef or mutton.

By comparison with our modern margarines these primitive materials were undoubtedly very crude. They were inclined to be unpleasantly

greasy, to stick to the knife, and to spread in a manner unattractive to those used to butter. Moreover, they often had a 'fatty' taste and smell which many people disliked.

No problem has given the margarine manufacturers more trouble than that of producing a texture resembling that of dairy butter. The introduction about 1890 into margarine manufacture of vegetable oils suitable for blending with 'oleo' helped them to some extent; but it was not until some years of the new century had passed that their fortunes turned. By this time the small producer was dropping out of the picture and with him many brands of dubious quality which had served to keep alive an unenviable reputation. To an ever-increasing extent manufacture was passing into the hands of large commercial organizations guided by directorates not only anxious to provide the consumer with an article of high quality, but also prepared to spend very large sums of money on scientific and technical research to that end. One by one the problems were attacked and solved. Care in the selection of oils for blending; improved methods of emulsifying the mixture with pretreated separated milk; controlled crystallization of the final product to get the right 'grain'; special precautions to be taken in 'working' a mixture differing in many subtle characteristics from butter; such knowledge, gained by patient and costly research, brought about remarkable improvements in respect of that almost indefinable but all-important character of texture. Chemists, biochemists and bacteriologists collaborated to select the appropriate bacterial flora which would produce in the separated milk just the right blend of substances necessary to impart to the margarine that elusive 'butter flavour'. Others ingeniously prepared chemical flavouring substances to serve the same end.

Another important milestone was the introduction of 'hardened' vegetable and animal fats.

Such have been the labours that have gone to produce the high quality of the popular butter substitute we know to-day.

VITAMIN REINFORCEMENTS

The period of the War of 1914-18 is very important in the history of margarine. At that time most authorities on dietetics regarded margarine as a reasonably good substitute for butter, because it was well digested and for all practical purposes provided the same heat-producing power. It was one of the cheaper forms of energy.

During the latter part of the War, however, the importance of the fat-soluble vitamins, discovered a few years before, gradually came to be recognized. The nutritive worth of edible fats could

no longer be assessed solely in terms of digestibility and energy equivalents. It was necessary to ascertain whether they would also provide the newly discovered constituents. Butter was found to contain them. On the other hand, most of the vegetable oils and fats then being used more and more extensively in margarine manufacture, as well as the hardened fats which had come into use soon after 1910, were found to be defective in this respect. Following up the obvious line these observations indicated, the late Prof. W. D. Halliburton and I examined a number of typical margarines and found that their nutritive value for the growing animal was determined by the vitamin contents of the constituent oils and fats. Margarines prepared almost solely from beef 'oleo' appeared to be as nutritive as butter, whereas the vegetable oil margarines, in spite of being excellently assimilated, did not supply the fat-soluble 'growth-promoting' factors needed by the young animal.

These observations made little impression on the margarine industry at the time. Such reaction as there was consisted of frank scepticism. Some people challenged the conclusion that vegetable oil margarines were devoid of vitamins by directing attention to the fact that milk, which in a vague sort of way was thought to be one of the richest sources of the accessory factors, was employed in the manufacture of the products. Others refused to acknowledge that experiments on rats could have any bearing on human nutrition. Others, again, argued that such small differences in composition of a single article of diet could scarcely be of any practical significance. Nearly ten years passed before serious attention was given to the matter. Then, at last, the margarine manufacturers moved. Many of the earlier attempts to raise the nutritive value of their products by the addition of vitamin preparations were failures. For the most part they were attempting to employ materials and concentrates prepared from cod liver oil. It was not a difficult matter to add sufficient of such supplements to bring the vitamin value of margarine up to that of an 'average' butter; but it was found that such additions almost invariably ruined the flavour and palatability besides materially increasing the cost.

The first real progress was made after the discovery of the method for preparing pure crystalline vitamin D₂ from ergosterol. It then became possible to raise the antirachitic value of a margarine at a very slight cost without affecting edibility in the slightest. To confer on margarine a vitamin D activity of 30 units per ounce, it was necessary to add only one ounce of vitamin D₂ (calciferol) to 120 tons of margarine. What was next required was a cheap and effective source of

vitamin A. It was found in one of the by-products of the whaling industry operating in Antarctic waters. Like other mammals, the whale stores considerable amounts of vitamin A group in its liver, though on the other hand it has curiously small reserves of D. The development of the factory-ship organization in the far southern waters made available large quantities of whale liver fat. It had the advantage not only of being valuable as a source of A but also of yielding material which could be employed without impairing the flavour of the finished margarine. By employing this supplement and at the same time adding artificially prepared vitamin D, the production of a satisfactory 'vitaminized' margarine for the ordinary market was achieved. Brands prepared with such additions first came on the market about six years ago. Not unexpectedly, they aroused a good deal of hostility from the butter industry, and there have been sharp controversies between the rival interests. With the many and widely differing aspects of these controversies we cannot be concerned here. Suffice it to say that in one country at least a rather bitter trade war has been terminated by a government-inspired 'gentleman's agreement' to 'live and let live'.

More recently, success has rewarded efforts to prepare from fish liver oils concentrates of A and D suitable for adding to margarine. They are prepared from liver oils of very high initial potency. So small an addition is required that the palatability of the final product is unaffected, and, what is so important, the cost is almost negligible.

MARGARINE IN THE NATION'S DIET

It is very important, particularly at a time like the present, to try to get such a valuable foodstuff as margarine into proper perspective with the diet of the nation. In 1938, a year in which butter was, generally speaking, cheap, the weighted average consumption per head of the population of Great Britain was 7.6 oz. a week, while the corresponding figure for margarine was 2.3 oz. Even the people classified in the poorest category of the population purchased, on an average, 4.5 oz. of butter per head per week.

If we take, as a peace-time basis for our argument, 10 oz. per week as a rough and ready estimate of the consumption of butter and margarine by the people of Great Britain in 1938, and if we also assume that the whole supply had the same vitamin content as an 'average' butter, we find a weekly intake of, approximately, 5,500 units of A and 150 units of D. Had the whole ten ounces been an 'average' vitamin-reinforced margarine, the intake of A would have been somewhat less, whereas the D supply might have been

nearly twice as large. In either event, these quantities approximate more closely to the requirements of the individual for one day than to those for a whole week.

In other words, the 'average' individual is more dependent on milk, eggs, green vegetables, etc., than on butter and 'vitaminized' margarine for vitamins A and D.

It is very important to remember, therefore, that the consumption of these alternative sources of fat-soluble vitamins is pitifully small among the poorer sections of the community. Under such conditions the question of the vitamin content of margarine assumes greater importance.

A consumption of 4.5 oz. of butter weekly—which is slightly more than the official ration—together with the balance of 5.5 oz.—assuming once again a total intake of 10 oz.—in the form of a 'non-vitaminized' margarine, would provide a mere 2,500 units of A and 70 of D. That is scarcely a conspicuous contribution to what the body requires. Such figures signify that a good proportion of the poorer people were receiving insufficient of these two vitamins under the relatively good conditions prevailing in 1938. There is evidence from other sources that this was so.

The deficiency was, of course, very much more serious at the end of the War of 1914–18, when rationing restricted weekly supplies to 1 oz. of butter and 4 oz. of margarine, none of the latter being 'vitaminized'. From these foods the individual could count on little more than 550 units of A and 15 units of D in a week—about one tenth of an adult's daily needs!

With rationing of butter in force, and having in mind the limited purchasing power of the poorer sections of the community, the desirability of enriching all margarines with vitamins A and D supplements must appear obvious.

At the present time a large proportion of the margarine sold over retail counters is so enriched. Unfortunately, there does not appear to be uniformity between the various brands, although for the purpose of general estimates such as have been made in this article, the content of an 'average' vitaminized product can be taken as 450 units of A and 30 units of D per ounce. A weekly supplement to the butter ration of 6 oz. of reinforced margarine could be regarded, therefore, as adding some 2,700 units of A and 180 units of D to the diet. It is certainly nothing to boast about; but one must remember how valuable is every unit where poverty diets well below the marginal nutritional level are concerned.

It will not be possible to plead ignorance this time if vitamin deficiency is allowed to be responsible for a decline in general health such as occurred during the years of 1914–18.

TOWN'S REFUSE AS A SOURCE OF SOIL ORGANIC MATTER

BY DR. E. H. TRIPP

ALTHOUGH animal and vegetable wastes have been used as manure for untold ages, and their good effect on soil fertility has never been in doubt, chemists and microbiologists would be the first to confess that there are many gaps in our knowledge of their modes of action. To take farmyard manure—still without a rival—we know the value of the plant foods it contains, and its remarkable power, after decomposition, of promoting and conserving the granular structure of the top soil, thereby making it porous to air, absorptive and retentive of moisture. How this physical effect is brought about is still largely a matter of hypothesis; and generally speaking, we know nothing of the sequence of changes that follow the incorporation of farmyard manure with the top soil.

The solution of such questions would help in determining beforehand the possibly beneficial action of many other organic substances that are or might be available to eke out our diminishing supplies of farmyard and stable manures. At the present time, when it is planned to convert millions of acres of inferior grassland into arable, the provision of additional supplies of humus-forming material becomes exceptionally important.

A potential source of supply of organic manure is the refuse of cities and large towns that is now carted away and dumped on to waste land or into the sea. The composition and production of such refuse have, *inter alia*, been investigated by a sub-committee of the Institute of Public Cleansing, and reported upon by H. Edridge (1937). Samples of the refuse collected from 485,894 houses, with 2,082 million people, contained an average of 13.23 per cent of vegetable and putrescible matter, corresponding to more than one million tons of such matter contained in the estimated total of 8.3 million tons for the entire annual output of the United Kingdom. The percentage of organic matter in the refuse varied considerably with the class of dwelling; that from artisans was 9.96, from the middle class 15.33, and from the 'better' class 16.62. Paper averaged 14.29 per cent, and rags 1.89 per cent.

The question arises, therefore, whether such refuse can be used as an organic manure, either directly or after processing. As criteria of suitability the main considerations are: contents of nitrogen, cellulose and lignin, and rate of decomposition in the soil. Although little work has been done in these directions, a few practical men have been forestalling scientific inquiry. The Corpora-

tion of St. Albans, Herts, is producing material that is reported to have given good results on neighbouring farm land, and the Royal Borough of Kensington is disposing of all its refuse to a private company that is converting it into an organic manure in a plant designed to treat 250 tons a day, situated at Wood Lane, London, W. A similar plant is to be in operation at Harrow early in 1940. The process is simple: grosser solids like metal containers, glass, and paper are picked out by hand on moving belts; the material is crushed, sprayed with a culture of nitrogen-fixing bacteria, and then allowed to ferment, aerobically and anaerobically, for sixteen days in large chambers. The product has little odour, and is a coarse brown powder containing about 30 per cent of organic matter (with about 1 per cent of nitrogen), 40 per cent of inorganic solids, and 30 per cent of moisture.

Large-scale replicated experiments to determine its manurial value were undertaken by the Rothamsted Experimental Station on a wide variety of soils at Rothamsted on kale, Woburn on sugar-beet, Tunstall (Suffolk) and Siddlesham (Sussex) on potatoes, and at High Halstow (Kent) on mangolds. The treated town's refuse (termed 'Hyganic') was compared with farmyard manure, rape-dust, and sulphate of ammonia in single and double doses. The chief interest lies in the comparison with farmyard manure at Rothamsted where, on an equal nitrogen basis, 'Hyganic' proved superior three times out of four; and at Woburn where, although the differences in terms of sugar per acre were not statistically significant, there was an advantage of 3 cwt. per acre of sugar in favour of 'Hyganic' when double dressings (1.6 cwt. nitrogen per acre) were applied. The value of the nitrogen in the manure was found to be nearly equal to one half that in sulphate of ammonia.

The results apply to the year of application only (residual effects were not examined), but they show that the organic matter in the town's refuse decomposes quickly, rendering the contained nitrogen readily available. The relatively rapid decomposition in the soil may well be associated with the beneficial effect on soil texture, which has been observed by market-gardeners and others, thus supporting Geltzer's generalization that the rate of decomposition of organic matter in a soil is directly related to the stability of the larger soil-aggregates that determine a good tilth.

MAGNETISM AND THE STRUCTURE OF MATTER*

BY DR. KATHLEEN LONSDALE

ROYAL INSTITUTION, LONDON

THE first attempts at an explanation of magnetic phenomena were mainly concerned with the problem of action at a distance, but later the centre of interest shifted to the mechanism within the magnetized body which came into action under the influence of the external field. After the discovery by Oersted of the magnetic effect of an electric current, Ampère suggested in 1825 that a hypothesis of molecular currents might explain induced and permanent magnetization. At the time, only ferromagnetic phenomena were known, but the design of powerful electromagnets enabled Faraday to make the fundamental discovery that all matter is affected to a greater or less degree in a magnetic field. There are two broad types of behaviour: diamagnetic substances tend to move from the stronger to the weaker part of a non-uniform field and to set their longest dimension at right angles to the lines of force; paramagnetic substances move from the weaker to the stronger part of a field and set their length along the lines of force. Faraday showed that the resultant flux (lines of force per square centimetre) within a diamagnetic body must be less, while the flux within a paramagnetic body must be greater, than that in the external field. That means that the induced magnetization within a diamagnetic body opposes the inducing field, while that within a paramagnetic body reinforces the field.

Weber suggested in 1854 that if electric currents could exist within molecules, then substances might be divided into two classes according as to whether their molecules had a resultant magnetic moment due to circulating currents or not. Only the former could show paramagnetism. This is the basis of the Langevin theory. The atom is now known to be built up of particles of a certain mass and charge, the velocity and distribution of which can be varied under certain conditions. Magnetism is a property of these ultimate particles, because a moving charged particle is equivalent to a current in a circuit and therefore possesses a magnetic moment.

DIAMAGNETISM

Diamagnetism is due to induced currents within the atom, these induced currents taking the form of a modification of the existing motion of the electrons. The orbits precess about the field direction, and this extra electronic motion gives

rise to a magnetic moment the value of which depends on the field strength, the electronic mass and charge, and the projected areas of the electronic orbits. The gram atomic susceptibility (ratio of the intensity of magnetization per gram atom to the inducing field) is entirely governed therefore by the distribution of electron density in the atom. All atoms show diamagnetism, but unless the resultant angular momentum of the atom is zero in the absence of a field, paramagnetism or ferromagnetism will also be present and the diamagnetism is relatively unimportant.

The susceptibilities of the inert gases have been measured and compared with those calculated from spectroscopic knowledge of the electron density distribution. Other atoms or groups of atoms may attain zero resultant angular momentum in three principal ways. In *ionic compounds* the component atoms may give or accept electrons, so that the external shells of each are completed. This occurs, for example, in the alkali halides. The susceptibilities of such polar compounds are additive, but when the compounds are dissolved in water, only dilute solutions show additivity. In concentrated solutions the ions not only depolymerize the water, but also form hydrates and other complexes. The electronic structure both of the ions and of the water molecules is deformed, with a consequent change of susceptibility. The structures of light and heavy water and of water of crystallization are also being studied by measurements of susceptibility.

In *homopolar compounds* the atoms share electrons, thus completing their electron shells or pairing off their odd electron spins. The diatomic molecules H_2 , Cl_2 , Br_2 , etc., are diamagnetic because the electron spin of one atom is antiparallel to that of the other. In O_2 , however, the electron spins are parallel, giving rise to a strong paramagnetism. Nearly all organic compounds are diamagnetic, and Pascal has shown that their molecular susceptibilities obey an additive rule $\chi_M = \Sigma\chi_A + \lambda$, where λ is a factor which makes allowance for the different kinds of valency bonds. This rule can be used for the determination of chemical constitution in doubtful cases, and for the study of polymerization. Complex compounds are frequently diamagnetic because the effective atomic number of the complex group is equal to that of an inert gas, but this alone is not a sufficient criterion. The state of the electrons taking part in the formation of chemical bonds.

* Substance of a special course of lectures for students, given at the Royal Institution on November 29, December 6 and 13, 1939.

is important. Measurements of susceptibility are now being used to investigate the constituents of natural products, including blood.

In *metallic compounds* the valency electrons become free electrons having a small resultant paramagnetism, while the positive metallic ions will be diamagnetic if their outer shell is closed. Thus many metals are weakly paramagnetic or diamagnetic. In some semi-metals such as bismuth, antimony and graphitic carbon, the binding electrons are not really free; their energy states bear a definite relation to the crystal structure and this results in high diamagnetism and large anisotropy, both of which disappear on melting or can be radically changed by the solution in the solid of small quantities of other elements.

Normally, diamagnetism is independent of temperature and of change of state, but a metal which becomes superconducting at very low temperatures always becomes also strongly diamagnetic. Except for a very small surface region, no flux can penetrate an ideal superconductor, the permeability being zero throughout the interior of the metal and changing from zero to unity in a region of about 1000 Å. width below the surface. The supercurrent, which exists only in this surface region, is according to the theory of London a stationary current dependent upon the presence of a magnetic field, similar to that in a large diamagnetic atom. In wires, films or particles of dimensions comparable with 1000 Å., the susceptibility is only a fraction of that of the bulk superconductor. Slater has suggested a molecular model for the theory of London on the basis of semi-bound electrons with very large wavefunctions, and explains the 'threshold field' as that value at which the Larmor precession energy becomes comparable with the 'atomic' energy.

In aromatic organic compounds there are electrons which occupy large plane orbits, and this results in a large molecular anisotropy. From the principal susceptibilities of single crystals of such substances, it is sometimes possible to determine the orientations of the molecules, or if the crystal structure is known to deduce the electron distribution in the molecule.

PARAMAGNETISM AND FERROMAGNETISM

Any atom or ion will be paramagnetic that does not succeed in completing its outer shell or in pairing off its electrons. The inner closed shells contribute only to a correcting diamagnetism. The resultant magnetic moment of the atom is measured in Bohr magnetons (μ_B) and is dependent upon the motion and distribution of the odd electrons, that is, upon their momenta. Electrons can have orbital (L) and spin (S) momenta, which combine to give a resultant angular momentum (J). All

of these are quantized, that is, they can only have certain values. The angle between the resultant angular momentum and the magnetic field direction can also only have $(2J + 1)$ discrete values. The gyromagnetic ratio, which is the ratio of angular momentum to magnetic moment, is $2m/e$ for orbital motion, m/e for spin motion and $2m/ge$ for the whole atom, where g , the Landé splitting factor, is dependent only on L , S and J .

In the Gerlach-Stern experiment a stream of free atoms from an electric oven passes through an inhomogeneous magnetic field and is received on a cold glass plate, the vapour pressure in the apparatus being low so that no collisions take place. Paramagnetic atoms will be both orientated and deflected, giving $(2J + 1)$ separate traces, the separation of which depends upon g . Hence the one experiment gives both angular momentum and magnetic moment of free atoms. Data so obtained agree well with those determined from spectroscopic measurements. A modification of the method can give the spin momentum and magnetic moment of the nucleus. Even for large atoms containing many protons and neutrons the largest nuclear spin observed is $9/2$, indicating that the nucleus itself may have a shell structure, only uncompensated particles contributing to the resultant momentum. The magnetic moment of the proton is 2.85 nuclear magnetons ($\mu_N = \frac{1}{1840} \mu_B$), from which it appears that the proton itself may not be a single particle.

When the effective magnetic moments of bulk substances containing paramagnetic ions are measured, it is found that the rare earth salts give results which agree well with theory, whereas salts of the transition series have susceptibilities considerably lower than theoretical values. This is due to quenching of the orbital moments in the latter by electric fields due to neighbouring atoms; this effect may introduce asymmetry in the case of crystalline fields. The incomplete group in rare earth ions is largely shielded from such interaction by an outer completed shell.

Paramagnetic saturation can only be approached at very low temperatures using enormous fields and substances of large magnetic moment. At ordinary temperatures the susceptibility varies inversely with absolute temperature (Curie's law) or with the excess temperature above a critical value θ (Curie-Weiss law). In the latter case it appears as if, within the substance, there were an extra field adding to the effect of the external field. This inner field is much too large to be of purely magnetic origin and is attributed to exchange interaction between electrons of neighbouring atoms.

Below the Curie point, θ , it is possible for a spontaneous magnetization to exist in certain cases

even in the absence of an external field. This magnetization, which varies from complete saturation at 0° A. to zero at the Curie point, is identified with the 'saturation' intensity of ferromagnetic substances appropriate to each temperature. Above their Curie points, all ferromagnetic substances are paramagnetic and obey the Curie-Weiss law. The intrinsic magnetization of a ferromagnetic is uniform in direction only throughout small regions or domains the average size of which is about 10^{-8} c.c., containing some 10^{15} atoms. The directions of magnetization of the various domains may be random and their resultant nil, but a small field is usually sufficient to align moments of individual domains. Single crystals have certain axes of easy magnetization which would appear to be the natural directions of spontaneous magnetization. Measurements of the gyromagnetic ratio prove that the elementary magnetic carrier is the electron spin. Heisenberg showed that intrinsic fields of the right order of size could arise from exchange interaction between electron spins. The condition for a large-scale alignment of spins is that the ratio of the distance between

neighbouring atoms to the radius of the energy shell in which uncompensated electron spins exist shall lie within certain limits. The ratio has the right value for iron, cobalt, nickel, and for some of the rare earth metals; chromium and manganese lie just outside the range, but certain compounds and alloys containing these elements (notably the Heusler alloys) are ferromagnetic.

The first few atoms of an impurity do not markedly affect polycrystalline ferromagnetic materials, but if the number of dissolved atoms becomes larger than the number of domains, then even very small percentages of carbon, oxygen or sulphur can greatly lower permeability and increase hysteresis. The addition of silicon has the effect of causing these impurities to crystallize out in forms in which they are relatively less harmful. Much work has been done on the technical side in these directions, and in the preparation of 'soft' and 'hard' magnetic materials. Recent X-ray work has revealed why it is that alloys prepared under certain conditions of heat treatment make excellent permanent magnet material.

OBITUARY

Mr. Wilfred Trotter, F.R.S.

IN the recent autumn the Royal Society has suffered the loss of both of its fellows whose work lay in surgery, Harvey Cushing of America, who died on October 7, 1939, and Wilfred Trotter of London, who died on November 25 at the age of sixty-seven. Each had done conspicuous work in the surgery of the brain, approaching their problems with physiological thought, and Cushing's name will always be remembered for the studies by himself and his pupils on the pituitary gland and on the microscopic structure of brain tumours in reference to their ways of malignant growth. He was a pioneer in cerebral surgery in America, and his supreme powers both as an operator and as a scientific thinker soon gathered around him at Harvard a school of workers who will assuredly maintain the energetic influence left by Harvey Cushing's mind. The possibility of this broadly based success was a reward of the changes deliberately planned in American universities in order to enable a leader in medicine or surgery to receive all such laboratory and other advantages as a professor of physiology would expect in his department for the progress of scientific work and teaching.

Trotter was too early in England for such an opportunity, and much of his life was perforce spent in individualistic effort as a consulting surgeon. At University College Hospital he inherited the field of Sir Victor Horsley's work and soon proved himself

to be a master of the surgery of the brain and of the thyroid gland. He wrote a general analysis of the physiological processes involved in cerebral concussion which influenced surgical thought widely. A new approach to the difficult tumours of the pharynx was devised by him, and in this and equally in all the familiar operations of surgery he worked with such technical perfection and delicate care of every detail for the welfare of both wound and patient that none could surpass his results. Practice as a London consultant grew rapidly, and from 1932 onwards Trotter had the honour of being sergeant surgeon in succession to three kings of England. But at that zenith of individual success he made a choice which to ordinary ambition seemed utterly paradoxical. His health was becoming unequal to the fullest strain of work, and so about 1934 he withdrew, not from unpaid hospital duties at his medical school, but from all private practice. He wished, while he still could, to teach the young men.

Trotter's influence on those around him at University College Hospital had at all times been profound. The fine lines of his face and the quiet perfection of everything said or done by him were united with a keenness of intellect that was stirringly eager to aid the minds of others and never stood aloof. His method was like that ascribed to Socrates, a conversation in which he would relentlessly, yet never with discourtesy or overbearing force, compel those sharing it to think afresh, to see

through time-worn phrases, and to discover the foundations, if any, of their beliefs. Any question would serve him for the method—surgical, medical, ethical, or artistic; and a light irony would always keep the talk at human levels. He seemed to have realized completely the old precept "Know thyself", and through that discipline to have gained the power to influence the minds of all others.

Trotter's intense interest in the human mind inspired the first as well as what chanced to be the last of his publications ("Has the Intellect a Function?", *Lancet*; June 24, 1939). In 1905, when demonstrator of anatomy at his medical school and waiting in the hope of appointment to the surgical staff, he produced none of the conventional apprentice papers in surgery but wrote for the *Sociological Review* an illuminating article on herd instinct. This was enlarged and republished in 1915 as a small book analysing the mentalities of nations then at war. Describing himself in it as a biological psychologist, he sought to compare with objective detachment the workings of the mind and of instinct in man and in animals, and he found associated with the gregariousness of man and of many creatures a powerful herd instinct that could be used to explain much in human behaviour.

But his surgical training and his exact sense of scientific values made Trotter reluctant for speculation that could not be tested by observation, and his later writings on such questions were those of a wise philosopher surveying the world of medicine rather than of a formal psychologist. The question of pain often occupied his thoughts, and during the earlier period when he had some leisure for experimental work he published in the *Journal of Physiology*, 1909, an important series of observations made with Morrision Davies on the nature of the sensations found during restoration of function of various skin nerves that had been deliberately cut in themselves. This work was done to test the generalization as to the existence of separate epicritic and protopathic

nerves that Head and Rivers had made upon one experiment. Afterwards Trotter himself suggested a most attractive generalization, that pain arose when body tissues were in contact with naked and un-insulated nerve fibres; but then he had no leisure to test his view experimentally nor pupils to whom he could give the problem.

For a period, 1935–37, that was too brief and too late for work of his own, Trotter accepted the post of director of the Surgical Unit at University College Hospital as a temporary successor on the retirement of Prof. Choyce, because he regarded the welfare of such departments as of the highest value to a medical school. His eminence as a surgeon naturally gave him a seat for many years on the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons. He also served clinical science by his membership of the Medical Research Council during 1929–1933; and he was twice chosen for the Council of the Royal Society, on the second occasion being named as a vice-president. Trotter never avoided committee work, for he was eager to guide practical progress. But he cared little to popularize his name in general surgery, and the writings by which he became more widely known in the medical world were his short papers and addresses on the general theme of medical science. They gave his message of the need for clear thinking. But few men have the power to think as penetratingly as Trotter could always do, or to state their thoughts with such clearness and perfection of language.

T. R. E.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Mr. W. A. S. Calder, president of the Institute of Chemistry, on January 6.

Dr. W. B. Worthington, formerly engineer-in-chief of the Midland Railway, president of the Institution of Civil Engineers during 1921–22, on December 29, aged eighty-five years.

NEWS AND VIEWS

Margarine

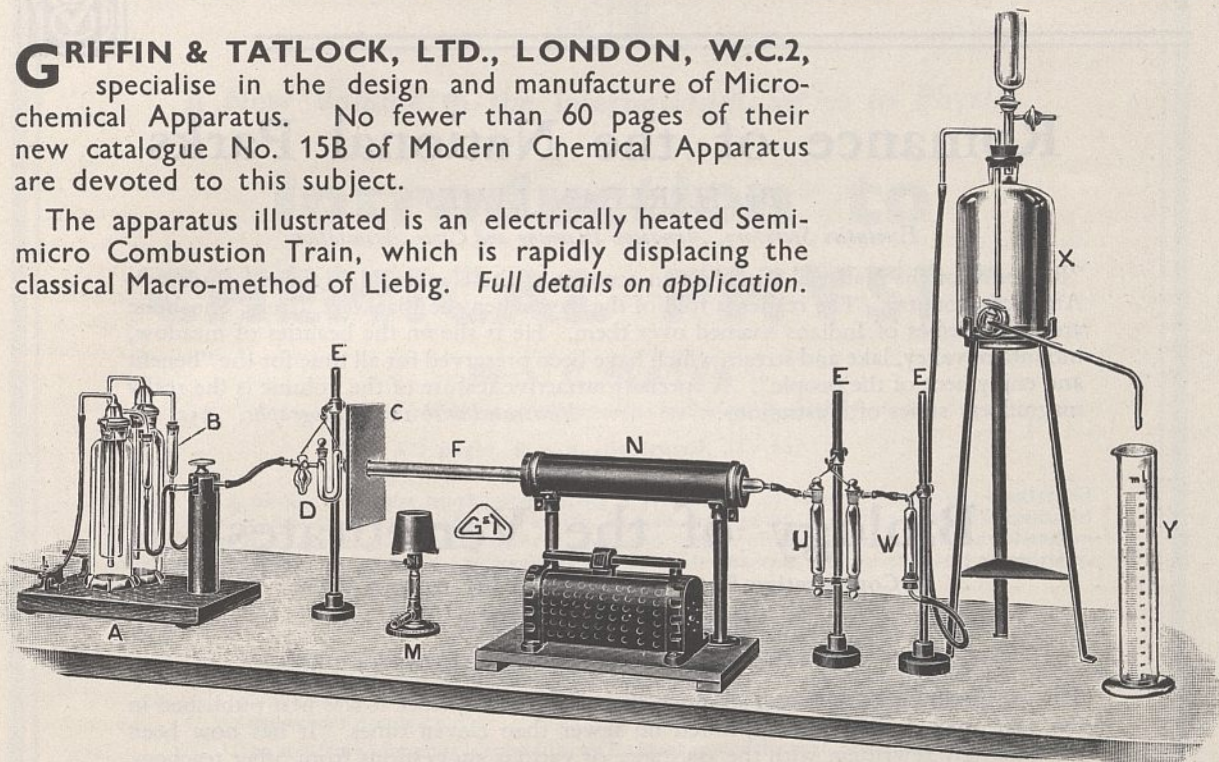
Now that rationing of certain articles of diet has begun in Great Britain, interest is naturally being concentrated on substitute foodstuffs. In the recent past, margarine has not enjoyed much popularity, even among the poorer people of the country. This has been due partly to a not too savoury history and partly, no doubt, to ignorance of its constitution and dietetic value. Present-day brands of margarine cannot be considered in any way *Ersatz* butter, but will, once prejudice has been eliminated by experience, prove complementary to the adequate amount of butter allowed under the present rationing scheme. At present, margarine is not being rationed; therefore until it becomes necessary to ration cooking fats, its greatest value lies in eking out our butter supplies.

The plain statement of facts about margarine in an article beginning on p. 53 of this issue of *NATURE*, by Prof. J. C. Drummond, should do much to allay suspicion of, and counteract ill-founded prejudice against, this important commodity. Prof. Drummond has been University professor of biochemistry in University College, London, since 1922, and his deep practical knowledge of biochemical and physiological problems is now being utilized by the Ministry of Food, to which he is attached. His account of the early history and later improvements of manufacture of margarine will be read with interest, while the description of vitamin reinforcements should convince those still sceptical that margarine is a valuable article of food not only from the point of view of nutrition but also from that of health.

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5. Certain topics are included which are not always treated in such discussions, such as the detailed theory of the specific heat of crystals, phase equilibrium in binary mixtures, phase changes of the second order, crystal structure, the nature of the homopolar bond, thermionics, and the energy band theory of metals.

Chapter Headings

Preface

**Part I—Thermodynamics,
Statistical Mechanics, and
Kinetic Theory**

Heat as a Mode of Motion
Thermodynamics
Statistical Mechanics
The Maxwell-Boltzmann Distribution Law
The Fermi-Dirac and Einstein-Bose Statistics
The Kinetic Method and the Approach to Thermal Equilibrium
Fluctuations

Part II—Gases, Liquids & Solids
Thermodynamic and Statistical Treatment of the Perfect Gas and Mixture of Gases

The Molecular Structure and Specific Heat of Polyatomic Gases

Chemical Equilibrium in Gases
The Equilibrium of Solids, Liquids and Gases

Van Der Waals' Equation
The Equation of State of Solids
Debye's Theory of Specific Heats
The Specific Heat of Compounds
The Liquid State and Fusion
Phase Equilibrium in Binary Systems
Phase Changes of the Second Order

**Part III—Atoms, Molecules
and the Structure of Matter**
Radiation and Matter

Ionization and Excitation of Atoms

Atoms and the Periodic Table
Interatomic and Intermolecular Forces

Ionic Crystals
The Homopolar Bond and Molecular Compounds
Organic Molecules and their Crystals

Homopolar Bonds in the Silicates
Metals
Thermionic Emission and the Volta Effect

The Electronic Structure of Metals

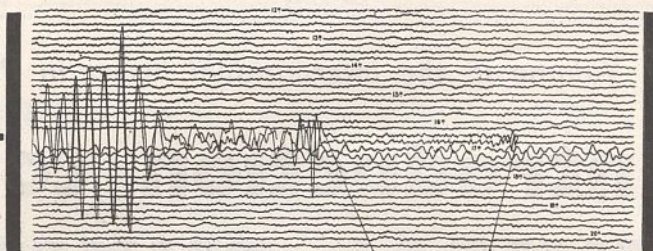
Probable Values of the General Physical Constants
Suggested References
Index

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Record of Zante earthquake, January 1921, obtained at Eskdalemuir Observatory (Reproduced by permission)

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Sir John Reith, Minister of Information

SIR JOHN REITH, chairman of Imperial Airways, Ltd., has been appointed Minister of Information in succession to Lord Macmillan; the way is thus open to bring into the House of Commons the minister in charge of a department the working of which has been severely criticized ever since it began to function on the outbreak of war. Sir John is perhaps better known as the director-general during 1927-38 of the British Broadcasting Corporation, having been managing director of the British Broadcasting Company which preceded it. Hence he was largely responsible for the guidance and development of the broadcasting service of Great Britain in its early and critical days, when its functions were ill-defined and its merits as a vehicle of entertainment, of news and of education for the masses were much debated.

Before he became associated with broadcasting, Sir John was for a short period general manager of the well-known engineering firm, Wm. Beardmore and Co., Ltd. This followed Government posts in charge of munition contracts after and during the War of 1914-18, in which he served with the Royal Engineers. Sir John is an engineer by profession, having passed through the Royal Technical College, Glasgow, and served a five-years engineering apprenticeship in Glasgow. He is a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers. While his professional knowledge was no doubt of service during his eleven years with the B.B.C., it was his forceful character and administrative ability which were outstanding; these, with his experience of public affairs and the Press, will be invaluable assets in the chief of a young department which is capable of making invaluable contributions to the influence and prestige of Great Britain and to the morale of the people at home.

The British Association

THE General Committee and the Council of the British Association held a joint meeting last week, at which Sir Albert Seward, the retiring president, handed over the chair of the Association to his successor, Sir Richard Gregory. It was reported that, by agreement between the authorities at Newcastle and the general officers of the Association, arrangements for the meeting of the Association which had been appointed to take place in that city next September were in abeyance, and that a meeting there was not contemplated, save in the event of an early peace.

The Committee of the Association therefore proceeded to a discussion of the desirability and possibilities of a meeting being held, in some modified form, and in some other place. As to desirability, there was general agreement; as to possibilities and places, various suggestions were put forward, and in the upshot the general officers were instructed to make the best arrangements they can for some sort of an abbreviated meeting. Whether as part of such a meeting, or independently, the potential activities of the Division for the Social and International Relations of Science will be taken into consideration. No action has been taken to appoint

new sectional officers for the year; but the general officers were instructed to consult those who held such offices last year, and any others whose advice and help would be appropriate.

Scientific Workers and the Armed Forces

THE Ministry of Labour and National Service announces that the operation of the Schedule of Reserved Occupations is being relaxed to enable men at or above the age of reservation in scientific occupations to volunteer in approved cases for service in the Forces. Such men have previously been able to join the Forces in their professional capacity, and the present relaxation of the schedule is designed to enable those whose services are not required in a professional capacity in the Forces or as civilians to volunteer for other forms of service. To secure that scientific workers shall not be withdrawn from civil work to the detriment of the national interest, and that an adequate reserve of scientific workers is maintained for essential services, the Scientific Research Committee of the Central Register Advisory Council will consider applications from volunteers with the view of ensuring that relaxation is granted only in suitable cases. Any reserved scientific worker who wishes to volunteer should apply to the Ministry of Labour and National Service (National Service Department), Montagu House, Whitehall, S.W.1.

Scientific Workers and the War

A SYMPOSIUM, organized by the Faculty of Science of Marx House, Clerkenwell Green, London, E.C.1, was held during the week-end of December 30-31, the title of the meeting being "The Position of Science and Scientists in the War Situation". No adequate assessment of the effect of the war is possible without some knowledge of the economic background, and this was afforded by Maurice Dobb in a paper entitled "The Economics of War Capitalism". It was with this background that the meeting held a discussion on the effects of the war on university research and education, opened by Prof. H. Levy. It was argued that the cost of the social services would be cut, and in this respect, the maintenance of the universities on the present scale would be regarded as an unnecessary luxury, with adverse effects on staff, students, and standards of education. Mr. Roscoe Clarke, in discussing the scientific social services, showed that the incidence of the same problems has been felt in the medical services. The emergency medical schemes have cut right across the normal medical services, already dislocated by the evacuation of schoolchildren. Prof. J. D. Bernal, in the concluding paper, dealt with the status of the man of science. The historical role of science in the development of capitalism was analysed, and the effect of the functions of the scientific worker on his status discussed; at the present time, the existing system cannot use to the full the science it has itself brought into being.

The general tone of the discussion as a whole was that scientific workers are more and more

beginning to feel dissatisfied with the role of science and its present applications to human welfare, and that a material change, if not a complete break, will have to be made with the present economic system before science can be fully utilized. Concern at the insecurity of their own position in the immediate future is leading scientific workers to the view that a new type of scientific organization, based on the experience of the trade unions in the defence of the economic and cultural interests of large masses of the population, is becoming necessary.

The Earthquake in Turkey

As the railway between Sivas and the ruins of Erzinjan has now been repaired, it is possible to add a few more details concerning the Erzinjan earthquake of December 27, 1939 (see *NATURE* of Jan. 6, p. 13). From Ankara to Sivas and Tokat the damage has been done chiefly to the old and badly constructed buildings made from inferior material, whilst the better ferro-concrete public buildings of recent construction have escaped with cracks and minor damage; but from Tokat and Sivas to Erzinjan there has been practically complete destruction of old and new. The only 'oasis' of lesser damage thus far recorded has been at Kemah near Erzinjan, where some buildings still stand, though 548 buildings were wrecked and nearly 150 casualties caused. It appears probable that Kemah was built on more solid rock than the other towns in the area of approximately 15,000 square miles affected.

In the mountainous district between Amasya and Tokat there are ground fissures 12 yards wide, out of which are said to issue smoke and sulphur fumes and also jets of boiling water. There is as yet no direct news of some five hundred villages to the east of Erzinjan, although efforts are being made to reach them through a countryside covered to a depth of 12 ft. in snow. At Niksar a rock pinnacle fell on the town, doing much damage, and there were few survivors in this place or in fourteen of the neighbouring villages, whilst on the Black Sea coast the towns of Kerasun and Ordu are reported to have suffered the greatest damage.

At Kew Observatory the first waves to arrive did so at 0h. 3m. 26s. G.M.T. and the maxima exceeded the limits of registration, the ground movement being greater than one millimeter in amplitude. Several severe after-shocks have occurred as well as hundreds of smaller ones. On January 1 there were seven severe after-shocks at Erzinjan, and a violent shock at 7 a.m. local time at Bergama in the west of Turkey. On January 2 at Yozgad there was a strong shock and 190 houses collapsed, though no casualties are reported. The after-shocks appear now to be decreasing in strength and number. Although the after-shock of January 1 was at Bergama, it is yet uncertain whether the floods in the Brusa and Smyrna districts of Turkey and in the Bilecik Valley (River Sakaria) had anything to do with changes in topography attendant on the earthquakes, nor whether the Kemal Pasha Dams and numerous river bridges were destroyed by the shocks or by the

floodwaters, but if the meteorological conditions in the area did not cause the floods, they certainly enhanced them considerably.

Other Recent Earthquakes

ON December 21, San José (Costa Rica) suffered the most severe earthquake it has known since 1923. Buildings were cracked, including the cathedral, though no casualties are reported. The shock was recorded at Manila, at De Bilt (Holland), where the *P* wave arrived at 21h. 7m. 10s. G.M.T., and at Kew, where the first of three shocks in rapid succession arrived at 21h. 6m. 51s. G.M.T., the maximum ground amplitude at Kew being 0.42 mm. On December 22, considerable damage is reported to have been caused by earthquake shocks in Costa Rica, though no loss of life or other casualties are reported. These shocks were possibly after-shocks of the earthquake which rocked San José on December 21.

On December 22 also severe earthquake shocks were experienced in the South Sea islands of Molucca. On December 23 and 24 earthquakes and landslides, which were probably caused by the earthquakes, occurred in Java in the East Indies. In addition to the Anatolian earthquake of December 27, further shocks were registered at Kew Observatory on December 25 (2), December 28 and December 29. Further news concerning all these shocks is awaited from the areas concerned and from other seismological observatories. On January 2, early in the day, an earthquake shock was perceptible on the Ionian Island of Zante (Greece), though no damage or loss of life has been reported.

Potatoes in War-time

POTATOES are one of the most valuable sources of human and animal food in war-time, and it is of the greatest national importance that both the acreage devoted to this crop shall be increased and that the maximum yields shall be obtained. Questions of quality, colour and shape must now take second place and yield be the all-important aim of the grower. The National Institute of Agricultural Botany, Cambridge, has just issued a war-time edition of its Farmer's Leaflet No. 3, in which useful information to this end is supplied. Emphasis is laid on the necessity for using healthy seed, as otherwise attention to cultivation, manuring, etc., is of little value. A number of varieties are recommended for both early and main crops; but it is pointed out that to lift potatoes in an unripe condition is an unwarranted waste of tonnage in a time of emergency. As regards choice of varieties, most of those commonly grown are still recommended, but King Edward should be replaced by a heavier cropping kind such as Arran Banner, Arran Consul, Kerr's Pink, Majestic or Redskin.

The use of unsaleable potatoes for animal feeding is the subject of "Growmore" Leaflet No. 10, issued by the Ministry of Agriculture. All potatoes, whether to be used raw or cooked, should be washed before feeding, or digestive trouble may result. Raw potatoes

can be used safely in moderation for cattle, dairy cows and sheep; but they are not suitable for young stock, horses or pigs. Cooked potatoes, however, can be successfully fed to pigs of all ages, and a table of suitable quantities is provided. Potato and potato and green fodder silage are other useful ways of utilizing waste tubers, particularly if some of them are slightly diseased, and simple methods for preserving them in this way are described. Nutritious food of a feeding value equivalent to about a quarter of its weight of barley meal, and suitable for sheep, cattle and pigs, can thus be produced.

Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752-1840)

JOHANN FRIEDRICH BLUMENBACH, a pioneer in anthropology and craniology, was born on May 11, 1752, at Gotha. He studied medicine at Jena under Soemmering and qualified in 1776 at Göttingen, where he was appointed extraordinary professor of the practice of medicine in the following year and full professor in 1778. In his thesis entitled "De generis humani varietate nativa" (1776), which according to Garrison is the starting point of modern ethnology, he based his classification of mankind upon the shape of the skull and the facial configuration as well as on the colour of the skin. As the result of his craniological investigations, he divided the human race into five great families: the Caucasian or white race, the Mongolian or yellow, the Malayan or brown, the Negro or black, and the American or red.

Blumenbach was a voluminous writer. His principal work, which was published in 1790-1820, was entitled "Decades 1-6 collectiones suae craniorum diversarum gentium illustratae". He was also the author of "Handbuch der Naturgeschichte" (1779-80), "Ueber der Bildungstrieb und das Zeugungsgeschäft" (1781), "Institutiones physiologicae" (1787), "Beiträge zur Naturgeschichte" (1790-1811), and "Handbuch der vergleichenden Anatomie" (1805). He was also the editor of "Medicinische Bibliothek" from 1785 until 1795, and contributed many articles to periodical literature. He was a fellow of the Royal Society, member of the Royal Academy of Sciences of Paris, and the recipient of many other honours at home and abroad. He died on January 18, 1840.

Neanderthal Man in Central Asia

A PRELIMINARY account of the discovery of skeletal remains of Neanderthal man in Central Asia is given by Dr. Aleš Hrdlička through the Smithsonian Institution of Washington. The remains—the skull of a child, with the lower jaw and all the teeth, and some of the bones of the skeleton in a fragmentary state—were found by Dr. A. Nokladnikov in a cave of the Gissar Mountains of Siberia. The discovery is of special importance, as not only is this the first example of Neanderthal man to be recorded from Central Asia, but it is also the farthest extension of the type eastward hitherto known. With the exception of the finds in Palestine, all previous specimens have been found in Europe. Dr. Hrdlička, who has had an opportunity of examining the material while on a visit to Siberia recently, regards

it as one of the most important discoveries in anthropology of the last two decades, and further as lending support to his view that there is an overlap in skull pattern between *Sinanthropus* and Neanderthal man.

In an account of the find which Dr. Hrdlička received at first hand from those who were responsible for the discovery, it was stated that the cave deposits contained many splintered bones of deer, leopards, wild horses, goats, boars, marmots and birds. Many of these showed evidence of having been used in the manufacture of stone implements. Most of these implements were made of local limestone, but the finest were of jasper. Good material for implement-making, however, was scarce. Typical Mousterian scrapers and small pointed implements, chipped on one side, were associated with the animal bones, and both were in relation to fire-places. The human skeletal remains were imbedded in a sterile underlying stratum. An interesting feature of their disposal was that they were encircled by five pairs of goat horns, of which three were still united.

Psychology of the Initiate

An interesting sidelight is thrown on certain changes in mentality taking place after initiation by an examination of two series of drawings made by an Australian aboriginal boy, which have been recorded and reproduced by C. P. Mountford, acting ethnologist of the South Australian Museum (*Records S. Austral. Mus.*, 6, 2; 1939). The subject was one of two interpreters accompanying an anthropological expedition of the University of Adelaide to the Warburton Ranges of Western Australia in 1935. At the time of his engagement it was understood that he was a full initiate; but when an investigation of aboriginal art was being made, it was noted that when drawings of a secret character were being made by tribesmen, they were carefully concealed on his approach. His own drawings in the first series invariably represented objects of, or known to, European civilization.

This fact, coupled with his failure as an interpreter, led to inquiry, when it was found that initiation of the man had not been completed. Though circumcized, he had not been subincized, and consequently in all matters affecting tribal ritual he was virtually ostracized, while his behaviour conformed with that of younger members of the tribe. Full initiation, which was then carried out, induced a remarkable change in his outlook, behaviour, and what from one point of view was of greater moment, in the attitude of other members of the group. The youth assumed the attitude and behaviour of a senior of the tribe; he was no longer prevented from seeing ceremonial drawings and taking part in ritualistic discussions, while, it is interesting to note, his own drawings now depicted the ceremonial designs associated with, or recording tribal traditions. The author's comment is significant. He points out how any interference with tribal ritual by outside influence may prove an effectual bar to association with tribal society, while still not securing an admission to any real participation in white civilization. The lesson is instructive.

Supposed Risso's Grampus in the Mersey

THE importance that authorities in tidal districts be acquainted with the fact that, under an arrangement made some few years ago, all large cetaceans stranded on the shores of Great Britain should be offered to the British Museum before any decision is made to dispose of them, is well borne out by the unfortunate destruction of a rare cetacean recently stranded in the Mersey. The flood tide of December 10, stranded a large cetacean in the Mersey at Widnes, and various unofficial reports circulated suggested it to be a porpoise, dolphin, or killer whale. Immediately upon discovering that no local museum or university had been informed of the rarity, the Merseyside Naturalists' Association went to considerable trouble to collect all available evidence and photographs and to interview all people who had handled the specimen. Through some misunderstanding, it appears that although the customs authorities had told the transporter company who recovered the whale that any scientifically interested body could have it, the Upper Mersey Conservators took possession of the carcass the day following its stranding, cut it up into pieces and returned it to the river from one of their vessels.

Evidence which was gathered by the Merseyside Naturalists' Association strongly suggests that the animal was a Risso's grampus (*Grampus griseus*), of which there is no previous Lancashire or Cheshire record. The report of evidence it collected gives: Length, 11 ft. 2 in.; upper parts: dark grey, almost black, blotched and streaked plainly with greyish-white, dorsal fin broad and high; head: no teeth in upper jaw; lower jaw with a few rather blunt teeth spaced about 0.75 in. apart; lower jaw a shade shorter than upper jaw; whitish tinge to muzzle and greyish tinge to head; head large and swollen like that of pilot whale; underparts white, smooth; flippers long, narrow and pointed; tail flukes narrow. No scientific measurements had been taken owing to the surprising and unannounced destruction of the carcass, but a photograph taken by a local man had been secured. The specimen was still alive and blowing when stranded and roped.

The Meteorological Office

THE recently issued report of the Director of the Meteorological Office for the year ending March 31, 1939 (H.M. Stationery Office. 9d. net), is largely occupied with a description of changes of organization arising from the rapid expansion of the Office, due mainly to the expansion of the Royal Air Force; it contains also an account of the methods adopted for dealing with routine requirements of the different services and of civil aviation. For these reasons a more careful perusal of the report is necessary than has generally been the case in the past in order to find items of purely scientific interest, although, it is curious to note, the decision was made during the period under review to make organized research a part of the normal work of the Office, instead of leaving research to individual enterprise on the part of the scientific staff.

The most important instrumental problem that has been pursued has been the development of the *radio-sonde* method of measuring the pressure, temperature and humidity of the atmosphere up to heights of 10 miles or more. The apparatus arrived at has been developed in collaboration with the National Physical Laboratory. It is carried by a free balloon, and transmits radio signals which are modulated in a manner dependent on the physical state of the atmosphere with which the balloon is surrounded at the moment. Fifty ascents were made, in most of which a Dines meteorograph was attached so that a check on the indications of the radio transmitter was available eventually on those occasions when the instruments were recovered. Much time was spent in trying to eliminate various sources of error that were encountered. Trials of a radio method of measurement of winds at great heights were continued, the method consisting of observations by two distant radio direction finding stations of the position of a small radio transmitter carried by a balloon. The main difficulty arose from the deflection of the radio signals by surface objects, which necessitated elaborate calibration. During the year under review the use of the cloud searchlight for rapid determination of cloud height at night was greatly extended. Improved specifications for pilot balloons were considered, with the view of avoiding the rapid deterioration experienced in hot climates, also improved methods of storage.

Terminal Velocities

DR. HERBERT CHATLEY prepared a paper on 'terminal velocities' for delivery to the Junior Institution of Engineers on October 13. It is now published in the December issue of the *Journal of the Institution*. In many engineering and physical problems of the present day, the question often arises as to the maximum velocity developed when a body falls in a fluid medium. To give a rough idea of the terminal velocities, Dr. Chatley compares the impact velocity of a stream-lined aerial bomb and the speed with which the finest clay suspensions settle in water. Between these speeds he considers the landing speed of parachutes, the fall of rain or oil-drops, the vertical current speeds necessary in coal dust or grain elevators, the suspension of sand or silt in rivers, and the settlement of dust particles in a room.

When an elevated body is released, it falls earthwards according to the law of gravitation. As it proceeds, the resistance of the air or water increases up to a definite value, namely, when this resistance equals the weight of the body. When this happens, the velocity remains constant and is called the terminal velocity. A sand particle one micron in diameter has a terminal velocity in water of about 0.001 mm. per second; in air it is about ninety times as great. One of the most useful applications of the terminal velocity is in the computation of the power required to sustain bodies when placed in a current of fluid. For example, in the elevation of grain from a hopper or ship's hold to a level somewhat above the receiver, out of which it flows to a second container (say, 50 feet

lift), modern plants consume about 0.8 h.p. hour per ton. This represents a very low efficiency. In a vertical pipe a fluid ascends more quickly than a suspended material, their relative velocity being the 'terminal velocity' in this case.

A Zinc 'Famine'

ACCORDING to the *Electrical Contractor and Retailer* an idea was current a short time ago that a shortage of zinc was responsible for the recent famine in torch-batteries. This is not the case as there was plenty of zinc in Great Britain and the torch-battery famine was due entirely to the overwhelming Government and public demand for these accessories—and quite naturally so. When a large number of people suddenly resolve to carry flash-lamps, something like a temporary famine is unavoidable. During the life of an ordinary dry battery possibly five per cent of the zinc is consumed and so about 95 per cent of the zinc used for this service is thrown away. It looks as if we were surrounded by an appalling waste in various directions. Notice, for example, the packing of tobacco and cigarettes for domestic use in 'tins' and then visualize the waste of iron and tin thereby involved. Many of these tins are also provided with substantial rubber seals, all of which are used once and then thrown away. It would be of interest if somebody considered whether this waste is serious or not, and if it is, then investigate how the saving could be effected.

Training Physicists

DURING the last six years there has been much discussion in the United States as to the most suitable training for physicists who are required in industry, and the conclusions come to have been summarized in these columns. In general, the training then available was considered to provide a superficial acquaintance with the latest developments of quantum theory and of atomic disintegration rather than a fundamental knowledge of the older physics. Criticisms of the same type were made in the May issue of *Metals and Alloys* this year and were quoted in the July issue of the *Journal of Scientific Instruments*.

In the November issue of the *Journal*, two physicists in the research department of a cable works in Great Britain point out that the criticism applies equally well to the training the universities of Great Britain provide, and that in consequence industrialists are reluctant to employ physicists. They think that the position would be improved if the universities provided some training in applied physics and supplemented it by visits to works and by practical experience in works during vacations.

Fused All-Glass Cells

MESSRS. TINTOMETER LTD., of Salisbury, announce the manufacture of a range of fused all-glass cells suitable for holding liquids for colorimetry, photometry, polarimetry and other purposes. The construction of the standard type consists of a body of a single bend of glass with faces of clear glass sintered

to it. This avoids the use of the usual cements, which often break down under the attack of alkalis and other solvents. It is claimed that the accuracy of the thickness is within $\pm 4 \times 10^{-3}$ in. for cells of one inch or less; moreover, examination shows that distortion of the faces in the sintering process has been very largely avoided. Beside the standard types, hollow cubes, prisms, rectangular cells, double light-filter cells, and 'blood' cells are also being manufactured. It appears that these products will form a useful addition to the range of such articles manufactured in Great Britain.

Rhodes Scholars

THE "Statement of the Rhodes Scholarships" for the academic year 1938-39 shows that 68 scholars began their English experience, while 188 were in residence. Among the subjects covered, natural science and medicine with 45 representatives, and jurisprudence and the Modern Greats school with 38 each are easily the most popular. Agriculture, forestry and music have solitary devotees. The record is good on the whole in academic distinctions, and includes several names well known in sport and athletics. The list of books published by men of the foundation is long. The Rhodes scholars include a dean of Christ Church and a regius professor of medicine. They come to England with previous academic training and at an age more advanced than that of the average undergraduate. The question whether this discrepancy is advisable has been the subject of considerable comment.

Scientific Research in India

THE progress of research in India can be followed by the help of the *Indian Science Abstracts*, which is an annotated bibliography arranged by subjects. Some of these bear closely on the economic development of the country, and their principal interest is local rather than general. Part 1 for the year 1937 covers mathematics, physics, geology and botany (National Institute of Sciences of India, September 1939). Mathematics has 86 papers, five of which deal with Indian geodesical problems, physics has 189, only a dozen of which deal with local meteorological or geophysical subjects; geology has 316 and botany 286, dealing almost exclusively with Indian problems.

Alchemical Manuscripts

VOLUME 6 of *Osiris*, dedicated to Prof. Bidez, contains his portrait and a bibliography of his publications. The rest of the volume of 844 pages consists of a "Catalogue of Latin and Vernacular Alchemical Manuscripts in the United States and Canada" by W. J. Wilson, of the Library of Congress, Washington. After a brief but very interesting general introduction, the text consists of detailed and annotated analyses of 79 manuscripts, with 41 facsimile figures. The dates of the manuscripts range from the thirteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Many of them contain collections of recipes. There is a very full index (pages 690-844). The work is thorough and reaches a high standard of scholarship;

it is a notable addition to the literature of a subject which has recently attracted a good deal of attention, namely, the history of alchemy.

Early Works on Medicine and Science

WE have received from Messrs. Goldschmidt and Co., Ltd., 45 Old Bond Street, W.1, their Catalogue No. 53 listing rare early works on medicine and science. Pride of place is occupied by a good and large copy in vellum of the first edition of William Harvey's "De Motu Cordis" (1628), and also a copy of the rare third edition of the same work. A complete set of Conrad Gesner's "Natural History" (1551), three of Kepler's important works, a work by Joseph Black on alkalis (1770) and William Withering's "An Account of the Foxglove" are also to be noted. A number of less rare though none the less important books and tracts by Erasmus Darwin, Euler, Faraday, Fayrer, Fraunhofer, Stephen Hales, Mendeléeff, Pasteur, Lister, Fox Talbot and many others are also listed.

Medical and Scientific Lending Library

PART 2 of the new edition of the "Catalogue of Lewis's Medical and Scientific Lending Library", revised to the end of 1937, has now been issued (London: H. K. Lewis and Co., Ltd., 136 Gower Street, W.C.1. 16s. net; to subscribers, 8s.). It contains the classified index of the subject-matter of the books, with the names of their authors, upon medical and scientific subjects contained in Lewis's Library. An extensive subject is subdivided to facilitate reference; for example, chemistry has eleven, and agriculture thirteen, sub-headings. The date of publication is given, and a note is frequently added to indicate the scope of the work. It will be appreciated what a large number of works is listed when it is mentioned that the text occupies 156 pages, each with three columns and each column containing authors' names of some 30-45 works. The catalogue should therefore prove a very useful general guide to medical and scientific books.

Big Sunspots

A BIG group of sunspots, originating about January 1 and growing rapidly, crossed the sun's central meridian on January 5 and reached the west limb on January 12. Between January 2 and 4, the area increased tenfold and measured 1,300 millionths of the sun's hemisphere on the latter date. Still expanding on January 5, the spots were clearly seen with the naked eye through the morning mist. In structure, the group was a typical stream with leader and follower spots and subsidiary spots in between. This group is the largest since last September, and indicates that, although the maximum of the 11-year cycle is past, the sun is still generally active.

Royal Institution Discourses

THE following Friday Evening Discourses have been arranged by the Royal Institution to be delivered before Easter. The discourses begin at 5 o'clock: January 19, Sir Leonard Woolley, "The

Latest Excavations at Atchana in North Syria"; January 26, Sir Noel Ashbridge, "Long Distance Broadcasting"; February 9, Prof. L. C. Martin, "Ultra-Violet and Electron Microscopy"; February 16, Sir William Bragg, "Physics in War-time"; March 1, Lord Eustace Percy, "Peace-making after War: Past History and Future Problems"; March 8, Sir William Bragg, "Experiments from the Researches of Sir James Dewar"; March 15, Sir Frederick Keeble, "Agriculture and National Well-being".

Announcements

THE Harrison Lectureship Medal of the Pharmaceutical Society will be awarded to Mr. A. D. Powell at a meeting on January 9 at 7.30, when Mr. Powell will deliver the Harrison Memorial Lecture entitled "Drug Standards: their Development and Application".

THE next monthly meeting of the British Institute of Radiology will be held in the Reid-Knox Hall on January 19, at 2 p.m., when the following lectures will be delivered: Silvanus Thompson Memorial Lecture entitled "The Irradiation of Liquids", by Prof. F. L. Hopwood; Mackenzie Davidson Memorial Lecture entitled "Maternal Mortality and Radiology", by Dr. L. A. Rowden.

THE Friends of the National Libraries decided at their annual meeting to continue their activities during the War. Acquisitions during the year included a number of early and rare books on science presented to the Science Library at South Kensington, a volume of drawings by the architect, Edward Blore, of country houses and other buildings, given to the Royal Institute of British Architects, and the purchase of a collection of papers belonging to the publishing business of Robert Cadell, Stoneham and Houlston.

THE Paris Academy of Medicine has awarded the Jansen Prize to Prof. A. Bessemans, pro-rector of the University of Ghent, for his work on spirochaetes.

THE Albert Brachet Prize of 12,000 francs is awarded every three years for the best work on embryology published during this period in English, French, Dutch, German or Italian. Further information can be obtained from the Secrétaire perpétuel de l'Académie Royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux Arts de Belgique, Palais des Académies, Brussels.

THE Emergency Executive Committee of the International Congress of Mathematicians has decided definitely to postpone until some more favourable date the Congress which was to have been held in Cambridge in September 1940.

A EURASIAN YOUTH MOVEMENT has been launched in Singapore with a scheme to uphold and improve the social, moral, physical and intellectual welfare of the Eurasian youth when they leave school.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

The Editors do not hold themselves responsible for opinions expressed by their correspondents. They cannot undertake to return, or to correspond with the writers of, rejected manuscripts intended for this or any other part of NATURE. No notice is taken of anonymous communications.

IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, PROOFS OF "LETTERS" WILL NOT BE SUBMITTED TO CORRESPONDENTS OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN.

NOTES ON POINTS IN SOME OF THIS WEEK'S LETTERS APPEAR ON P. 73. CORRESPONDENTS ARE INVITED TO ATTACH SIMILAR SUMMARIES TO THEIR COMMUNICATIONS.

Anisotropy of Cellulose Sheet

IN view of the results just published by Spence¹ on the optical anisotropy of films prepared from various esterified celluloses, it may be of interest to record some recent measurements on 'Cellophane' (regenerated cellulose) sheet.

This material is observed to be optically bi-axial, the axes lying in the plane defined by the direction of extrusion and the normal to the sheet. The measurements made in this laboratory are not, as in Spence's case, direct measurements of birefringence, but are observations of the two principal refractive indexes in the plane of the sheet, and of the optic axial angle. From these the refractive index normal to the sheet and the birefringence have been calculated. Numerical results for two batches of material are given in the accompanying table, where θ is the angle between one optic axis and the normal to the sheet; n_γ is refractive index for electric vector along extrusion direction; n_β is refractive index for electric vector in plane of sheet at right angles to extrusion direction; and n_α is refractive index for electric vector along normal to sheet.

		θ	n_γ (obs.)	n_β (obs.)	n_α (calc.)	$(n_\alpha - n_\gamma)$ $\times 10^5$
Acid and water-washed sheet	Wetted	43.0°	1.413	1.408	1.403	-1000
	Air-dry	45.7°	1.534	1.526	1.519	-1500
Sheet undried during manufacture	Wet	56.5°	1.382	1.377	1.374	-800
	Freely dried	57.6°	1.531	1.521	1.517	-1400
	Stretched and dried	72.3°	1.535	1.521	1.520	-1500

For ready comparison with Spence's birefringence figures, the values for $(n_\alpha - n_\gamma)$ are given in the same units as used by him although, owing to the method by which the figures were obtained, they cannot have the same accuracy as his. They are not inconsistent, however, with the values to be expected—by extrapolation to zero acetyl content—from Spence's figures obtained on sheets prepared from cellulose acetylated to different extents.

It may be observed that, while the 'slow ray direction' and the direction of extrusion or stress are coincident in the regenerated cellulose sheet, Spence found them (with one exception) to be at right angles in sheets made from cellulose esters with various acyl groups. Moreover, in cellulose sheet, increase of the stress along the direction of extrusion leads to increase in the negative value of $(n_\alpha - n_\gamma)$, in contrast again to the behaviour of the esters.

These differences are probably to be ascribed to the absence of acyl side chains in regenerated cellulose, since any 'selective' orientation that may be induced by stress will presumably have less effect

on n_α and n_β in cellulose than in its esters. The values of n_α and n_γ in the material examined are nevertheless both increased by stress, while n_β remains remarkably constant.

D. G. DRUMMOND.

Photochemical Department,
British Cotton Industry
Research Association,
Manchester.
Dec. 8.

¹ Spence, J., *J. Phys. Chem.*, **43**, 865 (1939).

Heat Conductivity of Rubber at Low Temperatures

WHILST examining the possibilities of applying rubber in low-temperature work, we were hampered by the lack of available data of its physical properties at low temperatures. We were quite aware of the difficulties to be expected in making accurate measurements in that temperature region, and this applies specially to the heat conductivity in which we were particularly interested. In order to obtain at least an estimate of the order of magnitude, we carried out some measurements of the heat conductivity of commercial rubber (tyre rubber, North British) at room temperature and the temperature of liquid air.

We used (1) the standard method (heat transmission through a thin sheet) at both temperatures with a small vacuum apparatus which had a circular cross-section of about 7 cm.²; the specimen had a thickness of 0.9 mm.; (2) we checked the low-temperature measurement by the following method: a bag of the same rubber was immersed in liquid oxygen and filled with liquid nitrogen. The rate of evaporation of the nitrogen was measured and, together with the dimensions of the bag, allowed of an independent determination of the heat conductivity. The mean values obtained by both methods are as follow:

T	293°K.	83°K.
cal./sec.cm.°K.	0.00055	(1) 0.00018 (2) 0.00010

This considerable drop in the heat conductivity to, say, one fortieth from room to liquid air temperature does not seem to be confined to this particular rubber, as other specimens which we subjected to rough measurements show a similar behaviour.

ADOLF SCHALLAMACH.

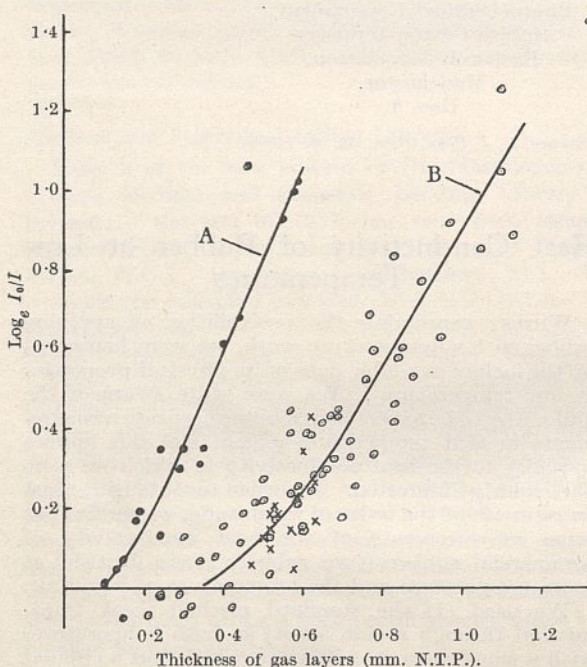
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Dec. 18.

Absorption of Hydrogen Lyman Radiation by Atmospheric Gases

THE absorption of the hydrogen resonance line at 1215.7 Å. has been investigated to obtain more exact information bearing on the theory of the production of short-wave radio fadeouts by solar eruptions¹. The following results have been obtained:

(1) Nitrogen is transparent in layers up to 3.2 mm. thick (N.T.P.), in agreement with the early observations of Hopfield² and more recent measurements by Preston³.

(2) Exact measurements on water vapour were difficult, but more than half the incident radiation is absorbed in a layer about 0.05 mm. thick. This agrees with Preston's observations.



•, oxygen; ○, air (energy in disruptive charge, 6 watts);
×, air (energy in disruptive charge, 3 watts).

(3) The absorption in oxygen and air was found to be much heavier than was expected from previous work. In the region where absorption commences, the densities of the parts of the hydrogen line in the absorption spectrum and the check spectrum without absorber, which was put on the same film, were compared directly as an approximate measure of the absorption. Lack of the characteristic curves for the emulsion should not cause serious errors in the comparison of nearly equal densities.

In the accompanying figure, Curve A shows the absorption of molecular oxygen in layers up to 0.6 mm. thick (N.T.P.). The ordinates are $\log_e I_0/I$ (I_0 being the unabsorbed and I the absorbed intensity); in the usual formula for mass absorption, $\log_e I_0/I = \mu x + c$. Since absorption appears to start only when there is a minimum gas layer amounting to about 0.10 mm., then c is not, in this case, zero. In addition, the absorption coefficient, μ , may not be constant for small values of the absorption.

Curve B shows the absorption in air. Several points falling below the axis of zero absorption indicate the possible magnitude of individual errors, and the general scatter of observations makes it difficult to define the absorption curve accurately. Its slope, however, is not constant, and again, there is no absorption until a minimum layer of gas is present. This minimum appears to be between 0.30 and 0.40 mm. (N.T.P.) and is not exactly five times the minimum in oxygen. For the strong bands at 1140, 1245 and 1450 Å. absorption is clearly apparent in the least amounts of gas used for observations on 1215.7 Å.

The absorption coefficients given for oxygen and air by Preston are about fifty times less. In the present case the absorbing gases were pure to within three parts in a thousand, and, in addition, water vapour, the most powerful absorber, was ruled out as an unobserved impurity by check experiments with saturated nitrogen. It is possible that Preston's observations were in error owing to serious dissociation of the oxygen in his apparatus (cf. the difficulties experienced by Ladenburg and van Voorhis⁴). In the present case reduction to half the energy dissipated in the discharge caused no observable difference in the absorption measurements, showing that dissociation of the oxygen was negligible.

With a fixed absorption path the pressure is varied in order to change the thickness of the absorbing layer, and it would appear from the two curves, therefore, that the partial pressure of the oxygen in the spectrograph is the factor determining the onset of absorption. This minimum pressure is about 0.04 mm. If absorption of 1215.7 Å. is only possible when an oxygen molecule is in a slightly perturbed state owing to its collision with another oxygen molecule, the absorption coefficient should vary as the square of the pressure until the population density of absorbing molecules is constant. In oxygen at very high pressures, Shalow and Steiner⁵ have found absorption bands which behave in this way, and attributed by them to the temporary formation of O_2-O_2 molecules.

If λ 1215.7 is emitted from the sun, no absorption will take place until it reaches levels in the upper atmosphere where the partial pressure of molecular oxygen is about 0.04 mm. (about 80 km.), except for attenuation due to the small amount of water-vapour above this height. According to the shape of the 'tail' of the absorption curve, the radiation would be absorbed more or less rapidly in dissociating oxygen molecules and producing ionization according to the process previously suggested¹. The resultant ionized layer would perhaps correspond to that found by Budden, Ratcliffe and Wilkes⁶.

This work has been made possible through a grant for research made by the Commonwealth Government.

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Nov. 30.

¹ Martyn, Munro, Higgs and Williams, *NATURE*, **140**, 603 (1937).

² Hopfield, *Phys. Rev.*, **20**, 573 (1922).

³ Preston, *Phys. Rev.*, **55**, 1125, 1939 (abstract only). An attempt to communicate with Mr. Preston privately regarding the discrepancy was unsuccessful.

⁴ Ladenburg and van Voorhis, *Phys. Rev.*, **43**, 315 (1933).

⁵ Shalow and Steiner, *Z. Phys.*, **99**, 137 (1936).

⁶ Budden, Ratcliffe and Wilkes, *Proc. Roy. Soc., A*, **171**, 188 (1939).

Does the Mesotron Obey Bose-Einstein or Fermi-Dirac Statistics?

WHETHER the mesotron obeys Bose-Einstein or Fermi-Dirac statistics is closely associated with what one assumes regarding the nature of the field, emission and absorption of which by the heavy particle is responsible for the interaction between elementary nuclear particles. If the field be a one-particle field, as postulated by Yukawa¹, the mesotron obeys Bose-Einstein statistics, and has a spin equal to unity (All momenta are expressed in units of \hbar .) However, in view of the fact that all known elementary particles obey Fermi-Dirac statistics and possess a spin $\frac{1}{2}$, one is rather reluctant to accept, unless experimental evidence points that way, that the mesotron obeys Bose-Einstein statistics and has a spin equal to unity. If we could suppose that the field involved is a two-particle field instead of a one-particle one, Fermi-Dirac statistics and a spin of $\frac{1}{2}$ could be attributed to the particle concerned. So we suppose that the mesotron is emitted or absorbed by a heavy particle always in conjunction with a neutrino or an antineutrino. In symbols

$$\begin{aligned} P &\rightleftharpoons N + \eta^+ + n^- & (1) \\ N &\rightleftharpoons P + \eta^- + n^+ \end{aligned}$$

where N and P stand for a neutron and a proton respectively, n^- , n^+ for a neutrino and an anti-neutrino, and η^- , η^+ for the negative and the positive mesotron, which now obey Fermi-Dirac statistics and possess a spin of $\frac{1}{2}$.

If we start with a neutron and a proton at r_1 and r_2 respectively, processes (1) obviously lead in the second approximation of the perturbation theory to an exchange interaction between the nuclear particles. If we suppose that the spin of the heavy particle is not affected during (1), the exchange force is purely a Heisenberg force; if, on the other hand, the spin of the heavy particle is reversed during (1), we get a purely Majorana force, so that the correct spin dependence of nuclear forces is obtained by choosing for the interaction between the heavy particles and the mesotron-neutrino field a form which combines the above two.

The forces between like particles, which are known² to be of the same order of magnitude, for anti-parallel spins at least, as the force between unlike particles, can likewise be explained by introducing the neutral counterpart of the mesotron.

The phenomenon of β -decay can be fitted into this theory if it is assumed that the mesotron disintegrates into a β -particle and a γ quantum; so that the emission of a β -decay particle during a β -decay is accompanied not by a neutrino alone, as on Fermi's theory, but also by a γ quantum. This departure from Fermi's theory should enable us to explain in a more satisfactory way the energy distribution curve for the β -particle transformation.

Detailed calculations will be published elsewhere.

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¹ Yukawa, *Proc. Phys. Math. Soc. Japan*, 1748 (1935).

² Tuve, Hafstad and Heydenburg, *Phys. Rev.*, 50, 806 (1936); 53 239 (1938)

Interpretation of Nebular Red-Shifts

IN a recent communication¹, M. E. J. Gheury de Bray discusses the possibility of explaining the red-shifts by assuming that the velocity of light (c_T) is constant throughout the universe at any given time but decreases with time (T).

This hypothesis implies the assumption (a) that the atomic frequencies remain constant throughout space and time and may therefore be used as clocks (atomic clock 'AC') for time measurements; (b) that measuring rods, other than light years (which contract with a decrease of c_T), can be found. For such measuring rods we may now choose the distances of the material points (for example, the nebulae) in the universe, as according to the hypothesis the universe neither expands nor contracts. Such measuring rods we call 'material rods' ('MR').

It shall be shown here that the proffered hypothesis, based on the measuring system $AC + MR$, is one of three alternative ways of formulating the hypothesis of the expanding universe.

The following clocks and measuring rods can be taken as basis of a measuring system for cosmological purposes:

(a) Clocks	(b) Measuring rods
AC (atomic clocks); or	MR (material rods); or
LC (light-clocks: the time taken by light over a given distance— c is here assumed as constant).	LR (light-rods, for example, light years: the distance covered by light in a given time— c is here assumed as constant)

Only the following three combinations of these clocks and measuring rods can be taken as basis of a measuring system: $AC + MR$, which is the basis of Mr. Gheury de Bray's hypothesis; $AC + LR$, a basis which leads to the expansion theory of the red-shifts, and $LC + MR$, which leads to what Milne² calls 'dynamical time scale', and to the 'speeding up' theory of the red-shifts.

($AC + LR$). The theory of the expanding universe states that the distances between material points, measured in LR , increase; in other words, it maintains an increase of MR against LR . This leads to the recession of distant nebulae and to the Doppler effect. The identity of the frequencies of characteristic spectral lines throughout the universe (atomic clocks) is thereby assumed; the measuring system of the theory is thus the $AC + LR$ -system. In tracing back the recessive movements it is found that 1.86×10^9 years ago the size of the universe was zero. Thus an absolute scale of time T (based on the atomic clock) is assumed in which the unit is the (atomic) year and the present value of T is $T_P = 1.86 \times 10^9$. (This 'age of the world' is confirmed by other measurements based on atomic radioactivity clocks.)

($AC + MR$). The above statement that MR increases if measured in LR is equivalent to saying that LR decreases if measured in MR . If MR is chosen and the clocks are not changed, the system $AC + MR$ is adopted. The decrease of LR means a decrease of the velocity of light (measured in MR). This permits an explanation of the red-shift of old light, since c_T was greater at the time $T - \Delta T$ when it was emitted and therefore $\lambda_{T-\Delta T}$ is longer than λ_T .

($LC + MR$). There is a third way to express the same facts. If we allow the light a longer time for its voyage, by defining our clocks in such a manner that they are slowing down as compared with the atomic clocks, then the decrease of c can be made to disappear. In other words, we adopt a new time scale τ in which the atomic frequencies throughout

the universe are speeding up; this explains the red-shift of old light.

The three alternative ways of expressing things agree in regard to the observable effects they describe. All predict the red-shift of old (distant) light. All therefore also predict a violet shift of characteristic spectral lines in the course of time to come (in $AC + LR$, that is, in the expansion theory, this has to be explained by an expansion of the spectroscope's grating). The three theories are logically equivalent, and therefore do not describe alternative facts, but the same facts in alternative languages. (To ask whether 'in reality' the universe expands, or c decreases, or the frequencies speed up, is not more legitimate than, when prices of goods fall throughout the economic system, to ask whether 'in reality' the value of money has increased or the value of the goods has decreased.) Nevertheless, the $AC + MR$ -language seems to offer a particularly simple mathematical treatment and, furthermore, an *observational approach* to Milne's 'dynamical' time scale. It shall therefore be briefly examined.

In $AC + MR$, where characteristic atomic frequencies are assumed constant and c_T depends in some way upon T ,

$$(1) \quad (d\lambda/\lambda)_{T+\Delta T} = (\Delta c_T/T)_{T+\Delta T};$$

on the other hand, the observational law of red-shifts (velocity-distance relation) can be written:

$$(2) \quad (d\lambda/\lambda)_{T_P-\Delta T} = (\Delta T/T)_P,$$

if the 'apparent distance' in light years, calculated on observed luminosities, is identified with ΔT . From (1) and (2) we get

$$(3) \quad (\Delta c_T/\Delta T)_P = (dc_T/dT)_P = - (c_T/T)_P.$$

Generalizing this and integrating we get the law of the decrease of c :

$$(4) \quad c_T = c_P T_P/T.$$

If we proceed from $AC + MR$ to $LC + MR$, we have to introduce a time scale τ so that $c_\tau = c_P =$ constant. In order to get the general formula for $d\tau/dT$, we make use of (4), which can now be written as

$$(5) \quad d\tau/dT = c_T/c_\tau = c_T/c_P = T_P/T;$$

integrating and choosing $\tau_P = 0$ (Milne chooses $\tau_P = T_P$), we arrive at

$$(6) \quad \tau = T_P \log(T_\tau/T_P),$$

which is essentially Milne's formula (A)²; the index ' τ ' in ' T_τ ' indicates the value of T at the instant τ of the τ -scale. Equivalent to (6) is $T_\tau = T_P e^{\tau/T_P}$. From this and (5) we get the law of the 'speeding up' of characteristic frequencies when measured in $LC + MR$, that is, on the τ -scale:

$$(7) \quad \nu_\tau = \nu_P dT_\tau/d\tau = \nu_P e^{\tau/T_P},$$

and from this and $c_\tau = c_P$ we get, corresponding to (2), the law of red and violet shifts in the form

$$(8) \quad (d\lambda/\lambda)_{\tau+\Delta\tau} = -\Delta e^{\tau/T_P}/e^{\tau/T_P} = -\Delta T_\tau/T_\tau.$$

In the above deduction we have identified the 'apparent distance' (calculated on observed luminosities, that is, energy densities ρ , and not corrected for departures) with ΔT . Thus our assumption regarding ρ is that it measures the square of the time ΔT the light travels, which in $AC + MR$ cannot be identified with the ('real') distance r ; for as the light was quicker when it was emitted, $r > \Delta T$. If the usual assumption that ρ measures not $(\Delta T)^2$ but r^2 is upheld, our deductions would have to be

altered and we would neither get (4) nor its equivalent (6), that is, Milne's scale of τ . Vice versa, if our assumption regarding ρ is upheld and if we consequently arrive in $LC + MR$ at Milne's τ -scale, in which $r = \Delta\tau$, then neither r^2 nor $(\Delta\tau)^2$ can be taken as being measured by ρ . Whether this behaviour of ρ in τ can be deduced *a priori* in Milne's theory I do not know. But available *empirical* data seem to speak at least not against our assumption that $(\Delta T)^2$ —which is smaller than r^2 —is a measure of ρ , for "present evidence points to observed luminosities (ρ) decreasing with distance *not even quite as rapidly* as we should expect. . . ."³

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Nov. 27.

¹ NATURE, 144, 285 (1939).

² Milne, E. A., *Proc. Roy. Soc.*, A, 153, 327.

³ Schroedinger, E., NATURE, 144, 593 (1939).

"The Relationship between Pithecanthropus and Sinanthropus"

THE article by Dr. G. H. R. von Koenigswald and Prof. F. Weidenreich on the relationship between Pithecanthropus and Sinanthropus in NATURE of December 2 is eminently satisfactory to those anatomists who have not been able to understand why these two hominids should ever have been separated generically. Probably my colleague, Dr. S. Zuckerman, was the first to express doubt on the justification for this distinction, in an essay on Sinanthropus¹, and I have on more than one occasion urged that the Peking hominid is but a Chinese variant of Pithecanthropus².

While for some years Prof. Weidenreich, with his first-hand knowledge of the Chinese fossils, has been insisting on their supposed distinctive characters, and has put forward the thesis that they represent an early type of man still more primitive than Pithecanthropus, he now agrees not only that Pithecanthropus and Sinanthropus "are related to each other in the same way as two different races of present mankind", but also that in some significant characteristics Pithecanthropus is the more primitive of the two. If these conclusions are accepted (as they certainly should be) it now becomes necessary finally to discard the generic term Sinanthropus. The Chinese fossils should logically be referred to the species *Pithecanthropus erectus*, or, if it should be thought more desirable as a temporary convenience for purposes of reference, they might be conceded a specific distinction with the name *Pithecanthropus pekinensis*.

The article of Dr. von Koenigswald and Prof. Weidenreich raises again the whole question of the validity of the morphological evidence upon which physical anthropologists often seem to depend for their taxonomic conclusions. For example, the authors use the remarkable argument that, because the femora ascribed to Pithecanthropus of Java show a marked degree of platymeria such as is not found in the femora of 'Sinanthropus', therefore they probably do not belong to Pithecanthropus. This statement would provide a pretty exercise in logical

analysis. A similar process of reasoning would also lead to the conclusion that, because a femur excavated from a Neolithic barrow shows more platymeria than the femur of a modern Englishman, therefore it cannot belong to *Homo sapiens*! In any event, an acquaintance with recent literature might have informed the authors of a short, but not unimportant, paper by the late Dr. Dudley Buxton on platymeria and platycnemia³ in which evidence is adduced in support of the thesis that these characters may have a nutritional basis, and no racial significance.

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Oxford. Dec. 17.

¹ *Eugenics Rev.*, 24 (1931).

² *Man*, 60 (April 1937); *Modern Quarterly*, 115 (April 1939); Presidential Address, Section H, British Association, 1939.

³ *J. Anat.*, 73, 31 (1938-39).

Influence of the Geology of the Virgin Islands on Local Agricultural Practices

WITH the exception of Anegada, Santa Cruz, and part of Virgin Gorda, the Virgin Islands are hilly and rugged. There is in most cases a long narrow backbone rising to about 1,000 ft. with numerous lateral spurs sloping steeply to the sea. Owing to centuries of cultivation and charcoal burning, there is no virgin forest. The predominant vegetation is dense secondary bush in various stages of seral development. Many of the hills are stark naked, while others exhibit a sparse retrogressive xerophytic vegetation.

According to Earle¹ and Hardy², the islands are largely composed of enormously thick dynametamorphosed sedimentary tuffs lifted up from the ocean bed by volcanic forces. To quote Earle: "The effect of these dynamic forces has been to lift the sedimentary beds bodily on end into a highly inclined position without obliterating the original stratification. These stratified metamorphic beds which cover by far the greater part of the presidency invariably strike East and West, which fact is doubtless responsible for the alignment of the islands in that general direction. They always dip very steeply, varying from 45° to 90° South and averaging 70°."

The tops of these highly inclined beds have frayed off and are scattered down the slopes in the form of flags of various sizes mixed with soil derived from them. This soil ranges from gravel to loam. The surface is thickly covered with denuded and weathered fragments. Such land at first sight appears extremely inhospitable. Yet owing to the scarcity of flat land, most of the cultivation is done on these talus slopes, which offer certain unique advantages.

After felling the secondary forest, the first step in the preparation of the land is the separation of flags from the soil. The disposal of the flags presents a problem which is easiest solved by placing them in rows along the contours. This is a common practice among the peasants. A few more alert individuals have made better use of the peculiar advantages to hand and have gone in for stone terracing out and out. Needless to say, all manner of terracing is seen, from the primitive arranging of stones in rows to admirable terraces.

To conclude, it will be seen that much of the land in the Virgin Islands can be stone terraced by the peasant himself at no cost apart from his labour. So far as I am aware, no inducement is offered to peasants in the British Virgin Islands to undertake such permanent improvement of their land.

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¹ Earle, K. W., "The Geology of the British Virgin Islands", *Geol. Mag.*, 61, No. 722 (August 1924).

² Hardy, F., "Notes on the Geology and Soils of the British West Indies", *Imp. Coll. Trop. Agric.*, Trinidad (1938).

Dioximaleic Acid Oxidase Action of Peroxidases

Banga and Szent-Györgyi¹ recently described a new enzyme, dioximaleic acid oxidase, which catalyses the aerobic oxidation of dioximaleic acid to the corresponding diketo acid.

It was shown in a previous paper² that hydrogen peroxide must play an important part in the mechanism of the ferment, because catalase inhibits the reaction between oxygen, ferment and dioximaleic acid completely.

We have undertaken preparations and purifications of the dioximaleic acid oxidases from different plant sources, such as *Rumex acetosa*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Prunus Padus*, *Syringa vulgaris* (leaves); horse-radish roots and cauliflower. Many different purification methods were used, as fractional precipitations with salts and organic solvents, absorptions, electrophoretic experiments and others. The removal of impurities by precipitation with lead acetate was especially successful in many cases. Thus the activity of the cauliflower juice was increased in one operation eight thousand times. Very high degrees of activity were obtained, that is, 40,000 c.mm. of oxygen per minute per mgm. of ferment from horse-radish. The



starting materials showed activities of 1 to 10. All of the purified preparations showed the typical peroxidase spectrum, 645, 550 and 500 μ .³

The ratio dioximaleic acid oxidase/purpurogallin number always remained practically constant in spite of all our attempts to separate the two activities from one another. Moreover, this ratio was nearly constant, whatever the source of the ferments. The purpurogallin number of the most active preparation from horse-radish was 900. The hæmatin content agreed with the figures of Elliott and Keilin⁴. Heavy metals other than iron were practically absent.

Determinations of the inhibitory effect of various reagents revealed remarkable differences between the dioximaleic acid and the purpurogallin tests. Hydrocyanic acid inhibits completely in the latter, incompletely and irregularly in the former. We think this irregularity, noticed first by Banga and Szent-Györgyi, must be connected with a strongly stimulating effect of hydrocyanic acid on the autoxidation of the dioximaleic acid with the subsequent formation of hydrogen of peroxides, which we have observed. Fluoride and azide inhibit in both tests though not to equal degrees, copper salts only in the dioximaleic acid test. Carbon monoxide inhibits only in the dioximaleic acid test. This inhibition is sensitive to light.

Heating ferment solutions to different temperatures caused qualitatively parallel inactivation in both tests.

The results mentioned indicated that the dioximaleic acid oxidase was a hæmin protein. Experiments with pure cytochrome *c* confirmed this conclusion⁵. We found previously² that cytochrome *c* + 2 γ of Mn²⁺ were able to catalyse the oxidation of the dioximaleic acid.

We now find that manganese produces hydrogen peroxide by stimulating the autoxidation of the substrate. (Fe²⁺-ions, but not Cu²⁺, Cr³⁺, Ni²⁺ and Co²⁺, stimulate the autoxidation, but practically no hydrogen peroxide remains in the solution, as it is removed by a secondary, peroxidatic reaction between Fe²⁺, hydrogen peroxide and dioximaleic acid.) Thus the manganese can be entirely replaced by the addition of a small amount of hydrogen peroxide. The hydrogen peroxide, which does not disappear during the reaction, seems to take part as well in the reduction of the Fe³⁺ as in the oxidation of the Fe²⁺. Analogous mechanisms have been proposed for the catalase⁶. The cytochrome remains mainly reduced until all of the substrate is oxidized. Then the cytochrome is immediately oxidized and partly destroyed by the hydrogen peroxide. Manganese or hydrogen peroxide can be replaced by hydrocyanic acid, which stimulates the hydrogen peroxide production and does not inhibit the reaction because cytochrome *c* gives no compounds with hydrocyanic acid at this pH. We have here interesting examples of hydrogen peroxide maintaining, or hydrocyanic acid stimulating, a hæmin protein catalysis.

On the basis of the experiments described above, the possibility was considered that the natural dioximaleic acid oxidase could be identical with the peroxidase. However, its manner of reaction in the dioximaleic acid and in the purpurogallin test might be different. In the latter the peroxidase is supposed to remain all the time in its ferric state³. In the former, on the contrary, we were able to demonstrate the reduction of the ferric to the ferrous state. If solutions of peroxidase preparations plus dioximaleic

acid are shaken with air the colour turns from brown to red with absorption bands appearing at 580 and 545 μ , belonging to the Fe²⁺-hydrogen peroxide-peroxidase II³ or to a hypothetical Fe²⁺-oxygen-peroxidase, or to a mixture of both. If the air is rapidly replaced by carbon monoxide the bands of the Fe²⁺-carbon monoxide-peroxidase (578,543) appear. Thus a valency change, ferric \rightleftharpoons ferrous, is involved in the reaction of the ferment with dioximaleic acid, but not with hydrogen peroxide plus pyrogallol.

The differences found in the experiments with inhibitory substances thus may be explained, and there is no sufficient reason for the assumption that the dioximaleic acid oxidase and the peroxidase are different ferments. Our results give an example of a ferment, acting in a different manner with different substrates. They also show that the characterization of ferments exclusively on the basis of the effect of inhibitory reagents may lead to mistakes. Differences may be due to the substrates and not to the ferments themselves. Finally, the dioximaleic acid is remarkable because it allows the peroxidase to produce the necessary hydrogen peroxide spontaneously. A detailed report will be published elsewhere.

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Dec. 7.

¹ Banga and Szent-Györgyi, *Z. physiol. Chem.*, **255**, 57 (1938).

² Theorell and Swedin, *Naturwiss.*, **27**, 95 (1939).

³ Keilin and Hartree, *Proc. Roy. Soc.*, B, **122**, 119 (1937).

⁴ Elliott and Keilin, *Proc. Roy. Soc.*, B, **114**, 210 (1934).

⁵ Theorell and Åkesson, *Science*, **90**, 67 (1939).

⁶ Weiss and Weil-Malherbe, *NATURE*, **144**, 866 (1939); with further literature references.

Diurnal Rhythms in the Axolotl Larva and in *Drosophila*

DURING spring and summer of this year, I made some experiments with the intention of throwing light on the physiological mechanism of diurnal activity rhythms. An account of some of the main results follows. It is hoped to publish full details of the experiments at a later date.

The motor activity of axolotl larvæ was recorded by means of a simple actograph. The animals were kept in a shallow layer of water. Their activity caused movements of the water surface, which were recorded on a slowly moving smoked drum, by means of a float connected with a light lever.

The larvæ showed a pronounced diurnal rhythm, under normal conditions of alternating daylight and darkness, being more active at night. If the larvæ were put in continual darkness, the rhythm persisted. If, however, they were subjected to alternating illumination and darkness, so controlled that the illumination phase was made later and later by gradual stages, the rhythm could be reversed. The animals were then active during the real day (this was by now the dark phase) and quiet at night (the artificially lighted phase). Evidently, the rhythm is primarily determined by light; but there is also an inherent rhythm revealed by the persistence of activity cycles in continual darkness.

I was unable to detect any diurnal activity rhythm in metamorphosed individuals.

Hypophysectomized larvæ are active by night and quiet by day, like normal ones; but only so long as the normal illumination cycle acts upon them. In continual darkness, the distribution in time of their activity at once becomes quite irregular. Thyroidectomy does not interfere with the activity rhythm. It appears then that the hypophysis plays an important part in the inherent rhythm revealed by normal animals kept in darkness.

The interrelations of internal and external factors in determining diurnal rhythms were also studied in *Drosophila*. Here a 'hatching rhythm' appears. Under normal lighting conditions, most of the adult flies emerge from the pupa in the hours just before sunrise. The interval between consecutive 'emergence peaks' is always twenty-four hours, whatever the temperature, and it appears that light is the primary controlling factor. If the culture is transferred to continual darkness, the rhythm continues unmodified at medium temperatures. At low temperatures the intervals are slightly lengthened, at high temperatures shortened.

By altering the temperature, the intervals between emergence peaks were varied between $2\frac{1}{2}$ days and 16 hours. The 'inherent rhythm' revealed by the persistence of emergence maxima in darkness is therefore sensitive to temperature. It appears to have a temperature coefficient obeying van't Hoff's rule.

If a culture is kept from the first in continual

darkness, no hatching rhythm appears. The rate of emergence is affected by temperature; less flies than usual emerge during and just after a rise, and more during and after a fall. However, temperature change does not induce a persisting rhythm. Light, on the other hand, can induce such a rhythm. One single illumination period, provided that it lasts for at least 4 hours, induces a 24-hour rhythm in a culture kept beforehand and afterwards in continual darkness. The temperature relations of the rhythm thus induced are as follows: (1) whatever the temperature at the time of illumination, the rhythm has a period of 24 hours, provided that the temperature does not afterwards change; (2) subsequent change has the usual effect (lower temperature slows, while higher temperature hastens, the rhythm). The fact that a 24-hour rhythm can be induced by a single illumination period, independently of temperature, is remarkable and the nature of the factors ensuring that the induced rhythm shall have a period of 24 hours remains, for the present, obscure.

The experiments were carried out in the Department of Zoology, University College, London. I wish to thank Prof. D. M. S. Watson for kindly allowing me to work in his Department, Mr. C. P. Wells for much helpfulness, and Mr. N. H. Howes for allowing me to use his intact and operated axolotls.

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Dec. 17.

HANS KALMUS.

Points from Foregoing Letters

REGENERATED cellulose sheet is shown by D. G. Drummond to be birefringent in a way which might reasonably be expected from extrapolation of Spence's results for sheets made from cellulose esters. The relative unimportance of side-chain orientation in cellulose itself results in a generally greater birefringence and a change in the 'slow ray direction' as compared with the ester films. Numerical results for regenerated cellulose sheets are given.

A. Schallamach finds that the heat conductivity of commercial rubber at the temperature of liquid air is about one fortieth of that at room temperature.

S. E. Williams has examined the absorption of the hydrogen line at 1215.7 Å. in nitrogen, water vapour, oxygen and air. Nitrogen is transparent and water vapour absorbs very strongly. Oxygen and air absorb much more strongly than has previously been believed. No absorption appears to occur until the partial pressure of oxygen is about 0.04 mm., and the absorption coefficient varies in the lower part of the absorption range. If the emission of 1215.7 is responsible for short-wave fadeouts, the radiation will penetrate to about 80 km. before it is absorbed in producing ionization.

Making the assumption that the field responsible for the interaction between elementary nuclear particles is a two-particle field, so that a mesotron is always emitted or absorbed in conjunction with a neutrino or antineutrino, P. L. Kapur states that it is possible to derive the forces between the particles and to explain the phenomenon of β -disintegration.

That the three theories (1) the universe expands, (2) c decreases, (3) atomic frequencies speed up, are all equivalent and must not be looked upon as alternative explanations is stressed by K. R. Popper.

The systems of measurements underlying these theories are compared and an observational approach to Milne's 'dynamical' time is mentioned. It is asked whether in (2) and (3), luminosities do not decrease with time (measured in frequencies) instead of distance.

Now that it is admitted that *Sinanthropus* is but a variant of the *Pithecanthropus* type, W. E. Le Gros Clark suggests that the generic term *Sinanthropus* should be discarded. The Peking fossils should be referred to the species *Pithecanthropus erectus*, or at the most they might be conceded a specific distinction with the name *Pithecanthropus pekinensis*. The argument that the femora ascribed to *Pithecanthropus* of Java do not really belong to this genus has no logical basis.

F. A. Squire states that, owing to geological peculiarities, the soils of the Virgin Islands are composed largely of flags. This makes stone terracing a practical, inexpensive proposition.

B. Swedin and H. Theorell have extracted and investigated the ferment recently described as new and called dioximaleic acid oxidase by Banga and Szent-Györgyi. From their observations, Swedin and Theorell conclude that this ferment is a hæmin protein and that it can act in a different manner with different substrates. They finally conclude that there is not sufficient reason for the assumption that the dioximaleic acid oxidase and the peroxidase are different ferments.

H. Kalmus describes experiments on the physiology of diurnal rhythms in axolotl larvæ and *Drosophila*, dealing with the relation between externally and internally determined rhythms, the action of light, temperature and endocrine factors.

RESEARCH ITEMS

Australian Shell Ornaments

A DETAILED study of shell ornaments in use by the aborigines over wide areas in Australia has been made by C. P. Mountford and Alison Harvey, ethnologists of the South Australian Museum (*Records S. Austral. Mus.*, 6, 2, 1939). These shell ornaments fall into two divisions, one made from the baler shell (*Mela diadema*) and the second from the shell of the pearl oyster (*Meleagrina maxima*) and the smaller pearl shell (*Meleagrina margaritifera*). The pearl shell ornaments are found almost exclusively in western Australia, while with a few exceptions the baler shell ornament is limited to Queensland, Western Central Australia and north-eastern South Australia. The pearl shell ornaments are used for decoration and as objects of ceremonial importance. For the former purpose they are suspended from a belt back and front, while both men and women wear several down the back suspended from a necklace of human hair. In Central Australia the chief aspect of their magical purpose is their potency in charms for women and their healing properties. Various myths are woven round the pearl shell, and a particular chant is sung when the designs, which appear on them, are being engraved. The ornaments are oval in shape and vary from two to eight inches in length. The baler shell ornaments vary in use according to locality; but they may be used as ornaments or for ceremonial purposes. In west-central Queensland, for example, they are used for personal adornment or as a decoration on the haft of a spear-thrower. Among the Dieri, however, the shell ornament had great magical value and was closely connected with the circumcision ceremony, in which it was worn by the initiate as a chest ornament. The Dieri were also the only tribe using the shell for evil magic. In appearance the ornament was an ovate piece of white shell from two and a half inches to five inches long. Designs were engraved on the concave face and red ochre rubbed in. These shell ornaments were intended for male use only, but in certain circumstances, more or less ceremonial, women were allowed to handle or use them.

Scaphocephaly among Australian Aborigines

IN an examination of 2,000 skulls of Australian aborigines, Frank J. Fenner, honorary craniologist of the South Australian Museum, has found five cases of scaphocephaly (*Records S. Austral. Mus.*, 6, 2; 1939). Two forms of scaphocephaly are recognized, of which one is descriptive of the form of skull characteristic of the Eskimo, and found among the Australian aborigines, and the second is pathological—a premature, probably foetal, synostosis of the sagittal suture present in a very long narrow type of skull; this is a rare condition occurring in many races, European, Egyptian, Negroes, etc. The specimens here described belong to the second class. Premature closure may, of course, occur without any trace of scaphocephaly. Of the skulls examined three were adult (male) and two juvenile, 4–5 years and 6 years. Detailed observations and comparisons with such normal material as was available were made. In the result these observations would go to support the conclusion of Hamy that scaphocephaly is the result of the synostosis of the two parietal bones,

that this synostosis is the result of a pathological process, probably inflammatory, and that the deformation occurs only when the fusion begins during intrauterine life at a time close to the commencement of the ossification of the cranial vault. In two of the skulls and in one described in 1867, fine vascular pores covering the surface of the bone gave evidence of a pathological condition. Three of the skulls examined showed a synostosis of the squamous suture, but of 1,200 normal aboriginal skulls, three only showed fusion of the squamous suture—all aged individuals. Probably this condition is here related to the sagittal synostosis and an outcome of the same underlying pathological cause.

Doubling the Chromosomes of Nicotiana

H. E. Warmke and A. F. Blakeslee (*J. Hered.*, 30, 419–432; 1939) have successfully induced the doubling of chromosome numbers in *N. Sanderæ*, *N. Tabaccum* × *glutinosa*, and *N. glutinosa* × *N. sylvestris*, by treating with colchicine. Treatment of seed gave as high as 100 per cent tetraploids of *N. Sanderæ*. A new method of application by using an emulsion spray, consisting of stearic acid, morpholine and lanolin, has been found more efficacious than the water spray. It is noteworthy that mixtures of fertile and sterile flowers on one plant were not obtained from seed treatment, but the whole plant was either diploid or tetraploid in behaviour. On the other hand, stomatal size in these plants was not always correlated with fertility. This indicates that some of the plants may have been periclinal chimæras.

The Chrysanthemum Midge

A MINUTE, red, two-winged fly which produces small conical galls upon the leaves and stems of chrysanthemums has been recognized as a serious pest in the United States, and has appeared twice in Great Britain during the last decade. The present attack is, fortunately, somewhat limited, but Dr. H. F. Barnes has published a timely description of his studies of the insect (*J. Roy. Hort. Soc.*, 64, Pt. 2; Nov. 1939). The midge, which has usually been recorded as *Diarthronomyia hypogæa*, infests commercial late-flowering chrysanthemums, but will not apparently spread to the earlier summer kinds, nor to common, closely related weeds. Five generations appear every year in cool greenhouses, but in heated structures there are eight. The length of time spent in each stage of the life-history appears to depend directly upon temperature, being generally shortened by summer heat. Severely infected plants do not flower. Consistent spraying or fumigation with nicotine provides a complete, though very expensive, control. The most effective prevention, however, is the cutting of infected shoots to ground-level, for the stool cuttings which emerge later from such plants are found to be free from the insects.

Larvæ of British Coleoptera

IN the *Entomologists' Monthly Magazine* of November and December, Dr. F. van Emden, of the Imperial Institute of Entomology, contributes the first of a series of articles on the larvæ of British Coleoptera (beetles). The object of these contributions is to provide keys to enable the larvæ of the

British members of the order to be recognized as reliably as possible, and the first of these articles deals with the family Cerambycidae. The material upon which the account is based consists primarily of that available in the collections of the British Museum (Natural History). Important additions, however, were based upon the specimens obtained on loan from the Zoological Museum, Copenhagen. All the thirty-six genera of British Cerambycidae are included in these keys. Seven of the genera, however, have their characters taken from literature, since no larval material was available. While it will obviously be a lengthy business in dealing with the larvæ of even the chief families of British Coleoptera, the present account is a good beginning, and we hope to see many other groups similarly treated by Dr. van Emden.

Control of the Bean Rust Fungus

A RUST disease of the bean is widely distributed in Lower and Middle Egypt, and its control has formed the subject of a study by Dr. A. F. El-Helaly (*Min. Agric. Egypt, Tech. and Sci. Serv. Bull.* 236, Govt. Press, Bulâq, Cairo, P.T. 4, 1939). Spraying with Bordeaux mixture of half per cent strength was found most effective, and yielded the significant net profit of from one to four Egyptian pounds per feddan. Chocolate spot, caused by *Botrytis fabae*, was also controlled by the same treatment. Sulphur fungicides were tried, but were not found reliable against these particular parasites, and the Bordeaux treatment possessed the further advantage that no physiological check was administered to the foliage.

Vertical Air Currents

SCIENTIFIC Note No. 81 (7) of the India Meteorological Department, by K. P. Ramakrishnan, deals with vertical currents in the first few kilometres over Poona and their possible effect on the measures of upper winds made by pilot balloons assumed to rise at a known constant rate. The vertical currents were deduced from the height-time curves found for balloons by the tail method, which involves measurements of the angle subtended by a tail assumed to hang vertically beneath the balloon, with the aid of a special graticule in the pilot balloon theodolite. The method is probably accurate enough for the purpose of revealing vertical currents of the strength of those often observed at Poona in the hot season. A more serious source of error in computing the vertical currents arose from the assumption that the differences between the observed rate of ascent (V) and the rates given by the standard formula $V =$

$\frac{L^{1/2}}{(L+W)^{1/2}}$, where q is a constant for a particular size of balloon, L is free lift and W is weight of balloon, are measures of the vertical currents. Actually, the rate of ascent of a balloon is affected by its shape, which is never truly spherical, and, to judge from the performance of the 100-gm. Dewey and Almy balloon, by other factors not yet understood, for with this balloon, so far as observations have been made at the Meteorological Office, the rate of ascent varies roughly as $\frac{L}{(L+W)^{2/3}}$, and not

as the square root of that quantity, as is implied by the standard formula. Such sources of error probably do not invalidate two of the conclusions reached by Ramakrishnan; first, that the rate of ascent of a balloon for a given lift and weight is far more variable

in the afternoon than in the morning at Poona, and that this is due to the greater magnitude of the vertical currents in the afternoon, and secondly that a method of obtaining upper winds that involves the assumption of a constant rate of ascent of the balloon is thoroughly unreliable in a tropical climate like that of India. The values of vertical velocity found were mostly between 3 km. and 5 km./hour in the afternoon, and occasionally reached 10 km./hour.

Geography of Egypt

A VOLUME entitled "Contributions to the Geography of Egypt", written by J. Ball (Cairo: Government Press, 10s. 6d.), may be regarded as a comprehensive study of most aspects of the Nile and contains a great deal of new matter as well as facts that are scattered in various publications. Apart from the treatment of the physical aspects of the Nile basin and water, the Faiyum depression is the subject of a lengthy study. Much has already been written on this lake. Dr. Ball points out that the absence of Pliocene deposits proves that the depression cannot have been in existence in those times. The numerous lacustrine deposits of later ages show that a lake of varying height must have existed from early Pleistocene times to the present day, and since there can have been no erosional deepening of the depression while the lowest part was below the surface-level of the lake, its excavation must have been entirely accomplished between the end of the Pliocene and the beginning of the Pleistocene. But the Nile then flowed at much higher levels than to-day, so that its lateral stream could not have effected erosive action at such low levels. Thus, argues Dr. Ball, the Faiyum was hollowed out independently of the action of the Nile: some other agency must have been at work. He concludes that the depression is due to wind erosion in early Pleistocene times, and this theory is supported by what is known of the origin of other depressions in the Libyan plateau such as the oases of Kharga, Dakhla and Qattara.

Drainage of Southern Ireland

THE peculiar trellised pattern of the river system of southern Ireland has attracted considerable attention since Jukes postulated a superimposed origin from an elevated initial surface. Hull modified this hypothesis by invoking fault lines as controlling the right-angled deflections of the rivers. Austin Miller has re-examined the whole problem in a paper entitled "River Development in Southern Ireland" (*Proc. Roy. Irish Acad.*, 45, Section B, No. 14). One of the most difficult features to explain is the failure of the subsequent at the expense of the consequent rivers in the completion of the pattern which might be expected to have led to the outflow of the Blackwater to Dungarvan Bay and the Lee to Youghal Bay. Conditions appear to favour this completion, for there has been rejuvenation since the present mouths were acquired that would provide the subsequents entering these two bays with the increase in gradient necessary for headward encroachment. Mr. Miller suggests that the explanation lies in the acquisition by the present estuaries of a volume of discharge, by a long process of captures, so much greater than that of their competitors that they have been able to excavate sufficiently rapidly through the hard ridges that attempt to bar their courses and so outrival the strike streams in spite of the softer rock over which the latter flow.

AIR TRANSPORT, INSECTS AND DISEASE

By DR. A. D. IMMS, F.R.S.

MR. F. G. SAREL WHITFIELD has recently issued a comprehensive article on air transport, insects and disease (*Bull. Entomol. Res.*, 30, 365-442; 1939). The discovery by Shannon in 1930 of the presence of *Anopheles gambiae*, an insect native to Africa, in the city of Natal, Brazil, and its subsequent spread, directed special attention to the carriage of disease-bearing insects by aeroplanes. Whether *A. gambiae* was actually transported in a surface vessel or in an aircraft will probably never be known, but, as the result of its entry and subsequent spread, more than 90 per cent of the population around Natal were infected with malaria in 1938. The indexes of malaria-infected mosquitoes are said to be the highest in the history of malaria. The introduction of *A. gambiae* into South America seems to have had the disquieting results, just referred to, because possibly the native population has very little power of resistance to the African strain of the disease carried by the mosquito.

The situation as regards yellow fever is potentially far more serious than that concerning malaria. Shannon, Whitman and Franca in 1938 made a significant contribution to what is known of the vectors of yellow fever. They produced positive evidence of the mosquitoes *Aedes leucocelæmus* and *Hæmogogus capricorni* being concerned in the transmission of jungle yellow fever in Brazil. Until this discovery, evidence of any mosquito other than *Aedes ægypti* being implicated in the transmission of yellow fever was furnished solely on the results of laboratory experimentation. The aspect of most importance with regard to aerial transport, arising out of recent research on yellow fever epidemiology, seems to be

the discovery of vast areas in Africa and South America where the disease prevails in epidemic or endemic form. It is obviously of prime importance that aircraft operating within and from Africa and South America should be maintained free from all insects. Mr. Whitfield points out that the proposed reserve Empire war route across Africa to India and Australia will present an urgent problem in this connexion, and that it would be unwise to inaugurate such a service until the proper control of insects in aircraft has been achieved. In view also of the proved existence of considerable insect populations in the upper air, the question of the possibility of aircraft collecting insects while in flight arises. The ability of insects to survive air transit is another problem. *Aedes ægypti*, for example, has been proved to be able to endure a journey of at least 9,580 miles in length and of 6½ days duration.

Diptera are overwhelmingly the commonest insects found in aircraft. Species of *Musca* are very frequent and also many kinds of mosquitoes. The control of insects in aircraft is a difficult subject. As Mr. Whitfield remarks, it involves the co-operation of the entomologist, the chemist and the engineer, an airline operating company and a commercial aircraft manufacturer. Such joint approach to the problem, he holds, is essential if progress is to be made. No adequate and reliable method of control of insects in aircraft has yet been devised: the problem of controlling insect invaders of aerodromes needs also the fullest attention. Little will be gained, the author adds, from further research upon insects found in aircraft—the real problem being the effective means for their destruction.

THE ROTHAMSTED EXPERIMENTAL STATION

By E. J. ROBERTS

THE annual reports of the Rothamsted Experimental Station are of more than ordinary interest to farmers and research workers. The amount and variety of the fundamental investigations carried out in the laboratories, linked with the field work not only at the Rothamsted and Woburn farms, but also at a number of commercial farms scattered over England, give these reports a character and importance of their own. The improvements in the technique of field experimentation, evolved at the statistical department, have not only given more accuracy to the usual trials, but also have widened the scope of investigations by making it possible to detect small differences, and to measure, for example, the interaction effects of certain manures.

In the report for 1938*, published recently, an account is given of the experiments on wheat, including those on the continuous growing of this

crop, and those on the value of leys, green manures, and fallows for preceding the wheat crop. The experiment on the continuous growing of wheat has now been in progress for nearly a hundred years, and it is interesting to note that the land has not become what might be termed 'wheat-sick'; the main difficulty has been in the suppression of weeds rather than in the actual growth of wheat. This conclusion is important at the present time. Why, it is asked, when these experiments prove clearly that wheat can be grown continuously on the same land, should difficulties arise when the crop is grown for a few years in succession on certain mechanized farms? An explanation is offered to the effect that the nature of the soil is responsible. Wheat is a heavy-land crop, and, on the heavy Broadbalk soil, the crop remains healthy; diseases and pests are present; but they do little damage. The lighter soils, however, especially the light chalky soils on which many mechanized farms are situated, are more liable to

* Rothamsted Experimental Station, Harpenden. Report for 1938. (Harpenden: Lawes Agricultural Trust.) 5s.

contain diseases, such as take-all, lodging diseases and others, and the crop suffers more heavily.

The effects of temporary leys, green manures, and fallows as preparation for wheat are also under investigation, and the field trials are combined with work in the chemistry department to follow seasonal changes in nitrates, ammonia, and readily decomposed crop residues in the soil; an attempt is made to trace the form in which available nitrogen is carried over from one year to another.

Sugar beet is the subject of extensive investigations carried out on a variety of soils, in conjunction with the sugar factories; the extent of these experiments may be judged from the fact that, in 1938, there were 38 experiments, with 1,360 plots. These experiments are mainly concerned with manurial responses in the various soil groups. The year 1938 was disappointing as regards this crop, the yield, expressed in terms of sugar, having been 12.5 cwt. per acre less than the average of the previous four years.

Other long-term experiments recorded are those on organic manuring by means of green crops, town refuse and straw. The question of organic manuring, and of the use of town refuse in particular, is of more than ordinary interest to-day. It is interesting to note that a prepared town refuse gave encouraging results in a comparison with sulphate of ammonia, dung and rape dust. The refuse gave rather higher yields than farmyard manure providing equal nitrogen in three out of four comparisons, and did almost as well as sulphate of ammonia providing half as much nitrogen.

Other sections of the report also contain much of interest, for example, those on the farm, and the report on fungus diseases at Rothamsted and at Woburn. Details are given of the experiments at outside centres. It is interesting to observe that in such experiments, which are designed at the Station, the degree of precision compares favourably with that in the experiments carried out at Rothamsted and Woburn.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

THE rapid expansion in the practical applications of electricity in parts of Australia and New Zealand and the new problems to which it gives rise is well illustrated in the *Electrical Times* of November 23. In England we consider a 'County Council' as a body which has definite connexions with general public services as, for example, health, education, highways and the like. This is not the case at Sydney, New South Wales, where the 'Sydney County Council' was created in 1935, by a special Gas and Electricity Act, which enables it to assume ownership and control of the electricity department which up to that time had been in the hands of the City Municipal Council. This County Council has only five members, two of them elected by the City Municipal Council and the remaining three being shared by the municipal councils of thirty-two other townships. For election as a councillor, the candidate must be qualified by being eligible for aldermanship in one of these constituencies. This arrangement has points of similarity with that of our own Joint Electricity Authorities (J.E.A.). The Sydney County Council supplies electricity directly to the public in the city, thirty-two suburbs and for street lighting in the city. In addition it gives a bulk supply to fourteen other municipal authorities who do their own distribution, and to a company which distributes to two other municipal areas. The area throughout which a direct supply is given is about 150 sq. miles and its population is about 900,000. The 'bulk' areas are about 750 square miles and have about 150,000 inhabitants. Altogether the County Council supplies electricity over an area of approximately 900 sq. miles and having more than a million inhabitants.

The County Council co-operates with the railway department, which has a supply station of its own so as to level the output and so cheapen the cost. The interchange of energy between them is adjusted so as to be nearly equal at the end of each quarter. The main business of the County Council's Electricity Sales Branch is three-fold: first, to develop and advertise the use of electricity in commerce, industry

and the home, secondly to sell electrical apparatus and thirdly to deal with contracts for large supplies of energy. The sale of apparatus, ranges, water-heating systems and wash-boilers is arranged for cash or on hire purchase. Instantaneous heaters are sold for cash only. The installation work is also sold by the Council. Two forms of merchandizing are employed. In one the Council buys the equipment and sells it to the consumer. In the other the Council sells the apparatus for the supplier on a commission basis. The basis of the Council's service policy is "make friends with the consumers. This is effected by the advisory service, which not only develops the use of electricity but keeps the consumers satisfied".

Reports from the New Zealand municipalities, which largely utilize hydro-electric power, show that there is considerable anxiety in both North and South Islands as to how to meet the coming winter loads. Deputations have approached the Government and pointed out the limitations of the hydro-electric power available and the urgent need of steam-driven plant to cope with the expected peak load of 1941. The general manager of Christchurch Electricity Department ends his report with these words: "The city of Christchurch is now so completely dependent upon electricity supply in its public services, which include sewerage and water pumping, that the electricity supply intimately concerns hygiene and health as well as the general public life". It looks as if in a few years' time these words would apply to many cities spread over the whole world.

The electrical engineer of Lunedin says that they cannot always count on getting the same ample supply of water-power every year. In severe frosts in winter time very little water-power may be available. The great demand for instantaneous water heaters for baths shifts the maximum load from the afternoon to the early morning. This makes it difficult to devise an equitable multi-tariff meter system which will charge the consumer most at times when the load is a maximum at the supply station.

PALÆOLITHIC MAN IN THE NORTH MIDLANDS

NOW that the text of Mr. A. Leslie Armstrong's Wilde Memorial Lecture is available in full (*Mem. and Proc. Manchester Lit. and Phil. Soc.* 1938-39, 83, 1939. Separate, pp. 30, with plates. Price 1s.), the results of the investigations summarized in that lecture call for more extended notice than was possible at the time of its delivery on March 14 last (see *NATURE*, 143, 512; 1939). As Mr. Armstrong pointed out, the North Midland area, that is, the Trent basin north of Leicester, has yielded evidence which now makes it possible to demonstrate on a stratigraphic showing the presence of man here during every stage of the palæolithic period more completely than for any other part of England.

An important consideration, which Mr. Armstrong emphasized in the opening of his lecture, was the constant oscillation in climatic and environmental conditions during the Ice Age, while at the same time he dwelt on the distinction worked out in detail by the Abbé Breuil between the core culture peoples associated with inter-glacial periods and the flake culture races associated with glacial periods. The changing environment not only brought about racial movement, but also necessitated cultural development and the elaboration of new types of implements, although with the setting in of less favourable conditions once more old and traditional types at times were revived.

Mr. Armstrong's evidence was drawn in part from recent explorations of the Trent Valley gravels, still in progress, in part from his now well-known investigations in Yorkshire and Derbyshire caves and on certain sites in Lincolnshire.

LOWER PALÆOLITHIC AGE

The first record of Lower Palæolithic implements in the Trent Valley was made in 1928 in a gravel pit at Burton. Further investigation by Mr. Armstrong and others has now shown that all the recognized forms of both the core and the flake industries from Pre-Chellean to Mousterian occur here. These finds come from three horizons of gravel, comprising two old river-terraces and a high-level glacial gravel. The main interest of the investigation, therefore, lies not merely in the occurrence of this range of types here, but also in the correlations which it has made it possible to attempt.

Recent investigation has also determined that the gravels, though they have been described as "Old Valley Gravels", are actually of sub-glacial origin. The low terrace comprises the infilling of an ancient valley of which the floor lies far beneath the bed of the Trent and through which that river has cut its channel. The most important deposits of the series are the high-level gravels, which mantle extensive areas on both sides of the valley. In the deposits three zones are distinguished, of which A, the oldest, in certain of the Hilton sections, rests upon bed-rock, the Kéuper marl, while in others it thins out until B rests on that rock. In other sections B and C zones, separated by a band of sand in gravel particles, alone are present.

As regards archaeological content, artefacts found in Zone A *in situ* fall into two well-defined groups, of which the first, consisting of pre-Chellean, Chellean

and a Levallois flake are patinated a deep chocolate-brown, heavily rolled and evidently derived from an earlier deposit; while the second is patinated bluish-white and appears to be contemporary with the gravel. In the latter group were a typical Acheulean hand-axe, as well as a late Clactonian (or Tayacian) flake and two slightly rolled Levalloisian flake tools. The contents of Zone B, though less numerous, are the same as in A, but differ materially in condition. All are heavily rolled, but some Levallois and Clacton types are only slightly abraded. The patination suggests that the abraded artefacts are derived from Zone A.

Zone C exhibits extreme contortion, suggesting lateral pressure, or collapse under the influence of melting snow and ice. It has not yielded any Acheulean types, but two heavily rolled Clactonian and a Levalloisian flake, both only slightly abraded and, therefore, possibly contemporary with the gravels, have been found. The latter are important for correlation purposes.

For these conditions certain tentative interpretations are put forward by Mr. Armstrong. In the first place, he suggests that the co-existence here of core and flake may be due to the fact that they are not, as concluded by the Abbé Breuil, two distinctive cultures, but two techniques; and in that event, while the flake industry was indeed almost exclusively employed by the ancestral Mousterian race, Acheulean and later peoples may have employed Clactonian and Levalloisian techniques where necessary or expedient. Secondly, that Zone A represents a deposit laid down at the end of the great Acheulean inter-glacial—possibly a remnant of the Little Eastern glaciation equated with Würm—which has been ploughed away and incorporated in Zone B. Thirdly, that Zones A and B respectively correspond with the two glacial phases separated by an interglacial phase, associated with a Mousterian (Late Clactonian or Tayacian or Micocquean in its earlier phase) observed in the Pin Hole section, Cresswell Crags. Fourthly, Zone C may be either a melt-out of Zone B, or a local re-advance of the ice after the B stage, or the final glaciation (Hessle) of the northern region.

MIDDLE PALÆOLITHIC AGE

In dealing with the Middle Palæolithic Age, Mr. Armstrong's evidence is chosen entirely from the cave explorations on which he has been engaged with the assistance of a Research Committee of the British Association for more than thirteen years. The Pin Hole Cave, Cresswell, has given a type cave section for Britain with occupation ranging from Mousterian I to the developed Aurignacian of the Upper Palæolithic which is preserved as an 'ancient monument'. The deposits consist of two beds of cave earth, of which the lower and earlier extends from Early Mousterian to the proto-Solutrean which with Aurignacian appears in the base of the upper bed.

As already mentioned, the lower deposit affords evidence of two glacial phases with a warm interglacial. If indeed these levels are correctly correlated with the Little Eastern glaciation and thus with Würm, this interglacial affords evidence of a North Midland retreat of the ice in relation to the Little Eastern which has not previously been recorded.

UPPER PALÆOLITHIC AGE

The highly significant evidence for the Upper Palæolithic period, drawn in part from cave deposits, in part from north Lincolnshire open sites, must here be dismissed in brief. Among the more interesting conclusions to which excavation has led, is the confirmation of the absence of any gap in continuity

between Upper Palæolithic and Mesolithic, and at the close of the Aurignacian period the remarkable local variability in type of the elements of the culture. Two finds which must not be passed over are a fragment of mother-of-pearl skilfully shaped, possibly part of an amulet, and a cowrie shell, *Cypræa moneta*, from the Pin Hole Cave.

HEARING TESTS

IN the December number of the *Bell Laboratories Record*, Mr. H. C. Montgomery, of the Acoustical Research Department of the Bell Laboratories, discusses results obtained by subjecting many of the visitors at the World's Fairs to tests of the quality of their hearing. The records obtained enabled him to get nearly three-quarters of a million of records carried out in the same way.

The Bell system deals in hearing, and to get the best service it is important that it have available trustworthy data on the hearing characteristics of the American people. The tests are given in sound-proof rooms arranged to seat seven visitors, each partially screened from the others. Both the tests and the instructions are given through telephone receivers; the visitor holds the receiver to his ear with one hand whilst he marks the results on a card with the other. Two types of tests are given, with separate booths for each. In one the visitor hears spoken words, which are two numbers, such as "eight-six". The numbers heard are written on the card, and each successive pair is at a lower volume. Twelve pairs of numerals are spoken at successively lower volumes; and then the test is repeated with a different series. In the other type of test, the two numbers are replaced by pure musical tones, each tone being sounded from one to three times, and the listeners write down the number of times they hear the tone. Five tests, each consisting of nine sets of tones at successively lower volumes, are given. The first is a moderately low pitch, 440 cycles per second, which corresponds to *A* above middle *C* on the piano. Each following test is one octave higher in pitch and thus the hearing is tested at 440, 880, 1,760, 3,520 and 7,040 cycles.

At the San Francisco Exposition were three booths, one arranged for word tests, one for tone tests, and one that could be used for either. At New York eight booths were provided for each type of test. Only the tone tests were recorded. The word tests give only a check on one's ability to understand spoken words, while the tone test, by providing data at five frequencies over the most important part of the aural range, is more suitable for study and analysis. Before a record is made on the test card the attendant puts a mark on it to indicate whether the visitor is male or female, coloured or white, and to which of the five age groups the person belongs, the age groups extending in five groups between 10 and 60. The cards are then run through a Recordak machine which analyses the curves marked on them. The cards are then run through tabulating machines which analyse and sum up the data. The results of this survey indicate a definite falling in hearing acuity with age. This is in harmony with

previous data, which indicate a definite falling off in hearing acuity with age, particularly noticeable at the higher frequencies. A rather remarkable fact is that at the low frequencies the falling off with age is less for men than for women, while at the higher frequencies it is less for women than for men. In the lowest age group the difference between men and women is small, but even here the advantage is slightly with the men at low frequencies and with the women at high frequencies. In the age group 50-59 years the difference becomes much more pronounced.

The curves show that for young ears and low frequencies, the tests are grouped fairly closely around the average. For older persons or higher frequencies, the distribution spreads and the number with average hearing becomes small; most differ from the average in both directions and in varying degrees. The interpretation of the losses at various frequencies needs a specialist, since the evaluation of the effect on one's ability to hear in any particular band of frequencies is a function of many factors. It has been found that one's ability to understand speech can be determined from the average of his hearing losses at 440, 880 and 1,760 cycles per second as compared with good young ears. If this average is 25 db. (decibels), there may be some difficulty in hearing in auditoriums and churches, while if it is 45 db. there may be difficulty in hearing in direct conversation. Only if the hearing loss is as much as 65 db. will there ordinarily be much difficulty in hearing over the telephone.

By use of these figures, the tests indicate that about one out of twenty-five persons have difficulty in hearing in auditoriums; one in 125 will have some difficulty in direct conversation; and one in 400 over the telephone. Two out of five men between 50 and 59 will have a loss of at least 25 db. at 3,520 cycles, while only one in five women will have as great a loss at this frequency. It was found also that about one in 25 of the group from 10 to 19 had a loss of at least 25 db. at 7,040 cycles. This figure is important, because it has been found that young people with a hearing loss of this amount will often be found to become progressively worse in later years, but if remedial measures are taken immediately, impairment may be largely checked. No significant difference was found between the visitors to the Fairs who were resident in New York and those resident in San Francisco. The time of day at which each test was taken was marked on the card and permits a comparison of the results for different periods of the day. No consistent difference was found between early morning and late afternoon. There is thus no indication of any effect being produced in the hearing by fatigue.

SEVENTY YEARS AGO

NATURE, vol. 1, January 13, 1870

Government Aid to Science

ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE, in a letter to the Editor, writes: "The public mind seems now to be going mad on the subject of education; the Government is obliged to give way to the clamour, and men of science seem inclined to seize the opportunity to get, if possible, some share of the public money. . . ."

"Now, sir, I protest most earnestly against the application of public money to any of the above specified purposes, as radically vicious in principle, and as being in the present state of society a positive wrong. . . . I uphold national education, but I object absolutely to all sectional or class education; . . . The broad principle I go upon is this,—that the State has no moral right to apply funds raised by the taxation of all its members to any purpose which is not directly available for the benefit of all. . . . If we follow this principle, national education is not forbidden, whether given in schools supported by the State, or in museums, or galleries, or gardens, fairly distributed over the whole kingdom, and so regulated as to be equally available for the instruction and amusement of all classes of the community. But here a line must be drawn. The schools, the museums, the galleries, the gardens, must all alike be *popular* (that is, adapted for and capable of being fully used and enjoyed by the people at large), and must be developed by means of public money to such an extent only as is needful for the highest attainable *popular* instruction and benefit. All beyond this should be left to private munificence, to societies, or to the classes benefited, to supply."

A New Thames Subway

THE importance of geological data on the extent of the London Clay was emphasized in an article by J. Prestwich, F.R.S., on the second Thames subway. "The first to apply this knowledge was Mr. P. H. Barlow, C.E., F.R.S., who fixed upon a spot intermediate between London Bridge and Limehouse (where the thickness of London Clay must be about 80 ft.), and at a sufficient distance below London Bridge to render an underground passage of the Thames a work of great public utility. . . . The tunnel is 7 feet in diameter, and is formed by cast-iron tubing in lengths of 1½ feet each, each ring being composed of thin segments with a key piece. An iron shield, devised by Mr. Barlow, was pushed on in advance of the work. . . . The passage under the river will be made in an omnibus, by means, probably, of a stationary engine; and lifts on either side will take the passengers up and down [the shafts]." The tunnel, 1320 feet long, was begun on April 26, and finished on October 8, 1869, without a single fatal or even serious accident to any of the men employed. It is no longer in use.

On the Periodicities of the Solar Spots

"Messrs. De la Rue, Stewart, and Loewy have for some time past been engaged in investigations [at Kew Observatory], which . . . go to show that there is an intimate and, as yet, unexplained connection between the configuration of the planets and the position and number of the spots on the sun. This result, which at once seems to land us in a sort of modern astrology . . . is . . . questioned

by many European astronomers". Accordingly, a digest is given of independent investigations carried out by Dr. Kirkwood and published in the *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*. Among his conclusions were that the theory "has been placed beyond reasonable doubt", and the "11-year cycle of spot variation is mainly dependent on the influence of Mercury".

THE oxy-hydrogen light is now largely used in Paris for illuminated advertisements and theatrical purposes. Carts with metal reservoirs containing the compressed oxygen for the supply of customers may be seen in the streets. At the Gaieté Theatre, which is one of the largest consumers, cylinders of magnesia or zirconia take the place of the lime cylinders ordinarily used for this light.

PROF. HELMHOLTZ, of Heidelberg, has been elected a corresponding member of the Physical Section of the Paris Academy of Sciences.

APPOINTMENTS VACANT

APPLICATIONS are invited for the following appointments on or before the dates mentioned:

UNIVERSITY ASSISTANT IN BOTANY—The Secretary, The University, Aberdeen (January 20).

UNIVERSITY GRADUATE AS TEACHER OF ENGLISH for British-Peruvian Cultural Association, Lima—The British Council, 3 Hanover Street, W.1 (quoting 'Lima') (January 24).

LECTURER IN GEOGRAPHY in the University of Cape Town—The Secretary, Office of the High Commissioner for the Union of South Africa, South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, W.C.2 (February 5).

LECTURER IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING in the Witwatersrand Technical College, Johannesburg—Frank Ross and Co., 9 Fenchurch Avenue, E.C.3.

REPORTS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

(not included in the monthly Books Supplement)

Great Britain and Ireland

Scientific Proceedings of the Royal Dublin Society. Vol. 22 (N.S.), No. 18: On a Recent Bog-Flow in Powerscourt Mountain Townland, Co. Wicklow. By A. D. Delap and G. F. Mitchell. Pp. 195-198. (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis and Co., Ltd.; London: Williams and Norgate, Ltd.) 6d. [2712]

Board of Trade. Statistical Abstract for the British Empire for each of the Ten Years 1929 to 1938 (Trade and Commerce Section). Sixty-eighth Number. (Cmd. 6140.) Pp. xv+234. (London: H.M. Stationery Office.) 3s. 6d. net. [2712]

Royal Meteorological Society. Bibliography of Meteorological Literature. Prepared by the Royal Meteorological Society with the collaboration of the Meteorological Office. Vol. 4, No. 7 (January-June 1939). Pp. 351-414. (London: Royal Meteorological Society.) 2s. 6d. [2712]

Other Countries

Ministry of Agriculture, Egypt: Technical and Scientific Service. Bulletin No. 231: The Incidence of Contagious Abortion in Domestic Animals in Egypt. By Dr. Mohamed Ragheb Ahmed. Pp. 29. P.T. 4. Bulletin No. 236: Further Studies on the Control of Bean Rust, with some Reference to the Prevention of Chocolate Spot of Beans. By A. F. El-Helaly. Pp. 24. P.T. 4. (Cairo: Government Press.) [2712]

Meddelanden från Oceanografiska Institutet i Göteborg. 2. The Radioactivity of Seawater. By Ernst Föyner, Berta Karlik, Hans Pettersson and Elisabeth Rona. Pp. 44. 3: Large-scale Plankton Cultures. By Hans Pettersson, Fabius Gross and Friedrich Koczky. Pp. 25. (Göteborg: Elanders Boktryckeri A.-B.) [2712]

Carnegie Corporation of New York. Report of the President and of the Treasurer for the Year ended September 30, 1939. Pp. 168. (New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York.) [2812]

Catalogues, etc.

Pocket Diary for 1940. (Bonnybridge: John G. Stein and Co., Ltd.)

Desk Engagement Pad for 1940. (London: W. Edwards and Co.)

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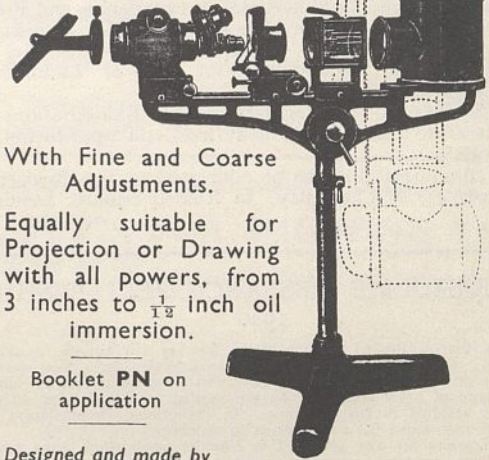
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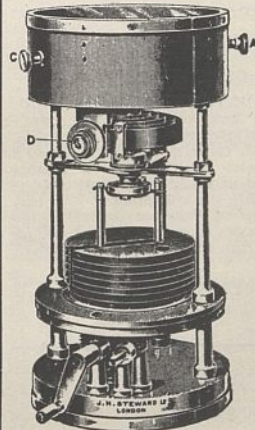
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All communications to be addressed to The Registrar, the Institute of Chemistry, 30 Russell Square, London, W.C.1.

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The duration of the awards will not normally extend over more than two years or less than three months, and the amount will depend on the nature of the research and the circumstances of the applicant.

Forms of application may be obtained from the Secretary, Dr. L. Haden Guest, M.C., M.P., Leverhulme Research Fellowships, Kingscote House, 1 Watergate, Blackfriars, London, E.C.4.

Applications must be received on or before March 1, 1940. Awards will be announced in July and will date from September 1, 1940.

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Candidates must have reached their 25th birthday but not their 35th birthday on January 1, 1940. Candidates must possess a Science Degree, preferably with physics or applied mathematics or meteorology. The possession of an Honours Degree will be an advantage.

Remuneration will be by a fixed salary of £260 per annum. After a period of training entrants who have shown exceptional merit will be considered for promotion to the post of Temporary Forecaster, Grade I, at a fixed salary of £315 per annum.

Candidates should apply for an application form by postcard to the Under-Secretary of State, S.2.B. (Met.), Department Q.A., Air Ministry, Adastral House, Kingsway, W.C.2.

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
LECTURER IN GEOGRAPHY

Applications are invited for the post of Lecturer in the Department of Geography. The appointment will be for a period not exceeding three years and the salary will be at the rate of £400 per annum.

Applications must reach the Secretary, Office of the High Commissioner for the Union of South Africa, South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, London, W.C.2 (from whom forms of application and a memorandum giving further particulars may be obtained), not later than February 5, 1940. Applicants, in addition to submitting copies of testimonials, must give the names of three referees.

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The University, Aberdeen.

H. J. BUTCHART, *Secretary*.

The International Tin Research and Development

Council invites applications for the post of Research Assistant, to undertake work on the casting of bronzes. Candidates should have a degree in metallurgy and some research or works experience. Salary £300—(×£25)—£400. Applications should be received by the Secretary, The International Tin Research and Development Council, Fraser Road, Greenford, Middlesex, not later than January 27, 1940.

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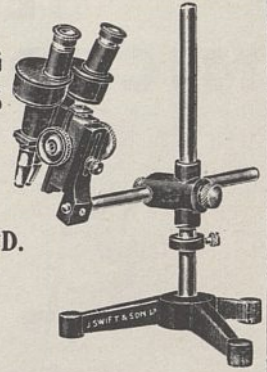
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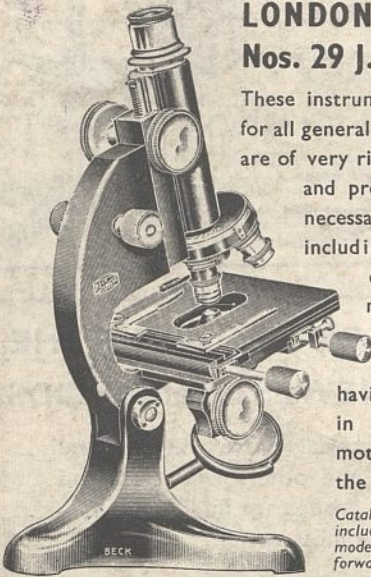
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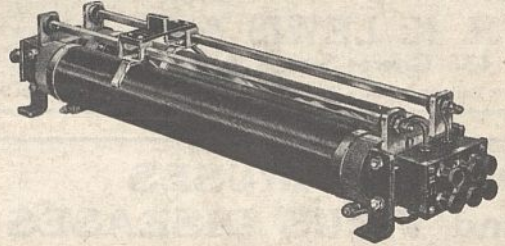
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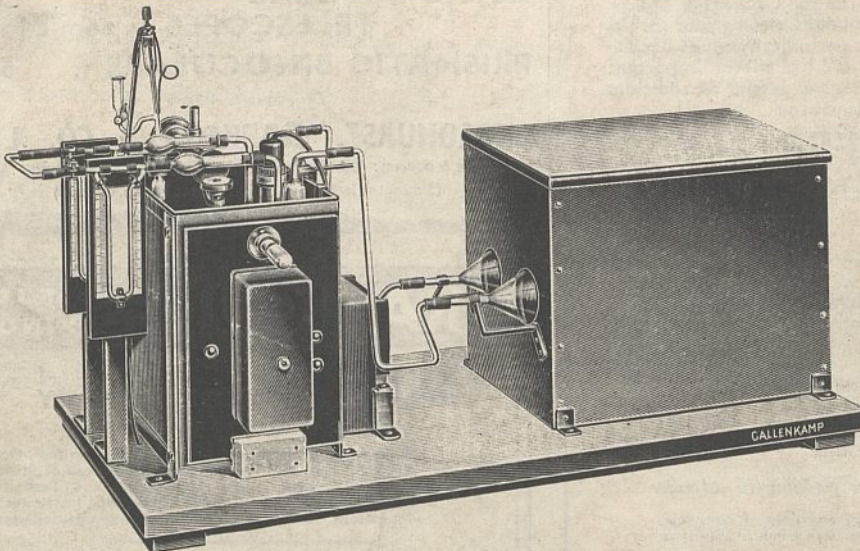
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