

willing to do for these subjects as much as their separate resources allow.

It was with this object, after the War, that the British Association (which had been again pressing on the Government in 1914 the need for better training in ethnology for officials abroad) called a conference of representatives of institutions engaged in research and in teaching in these subjects. After a careful review of all existing facilities and current projects, this conference unanimously recommended that the proper body to act as clearing-house for matters of common concern in anthropological research and teaching was the Royal Anthropological Institute, with such assistance as each and all of the bodies represented at the conference might be able to supply. The Institute accordingly appointed the "Joint Committee for Anthropological Research and Teaching", on which every university, institution, and society in Great Britain engaged in this work, was entitled to be—and in fact normally is—represented.

This "Joint Committee" has continued to act as proposed until the present time. It meets as required; through its executive (the officers of the Institute for the time being) and with the voluntary help of its members, it is kept informed as to facilities offered and work undertaken or proposed, by each constituent body; and its first report, in 1923, was a complete survey of the teaching arrangements for anthropology and ethnology in Great Britain.

To the Royal Commission on the National Collections, the Institute was enabled by this means to give valuable evidence as to the requirements of teachers and research workers. It took a leading part in the movement for an Oriental Museum, as recommended by that Commission; and it has now in progress a similar inquiry about the position in ethnography. It has given careful attention to the anthropological training of officials destined for service among native peoples; and to the standardisation of anthropometric measurements in preparation for the international scheme inaugurated in 1932. It has supported the Royal Anthropological Institute in establishing the long-needed International Congresses for Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences (which met in London in 1932) and for Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, invited to meet in London in 1934.

By this simple and effective procedure the Royal Anthropological Institute has been enabled during the last twelve years to express, as accredited mouth-piece of British institutions concerned with these subjects, a considered opinion on current anthropological questions; and its utility as a centre of study and research has been recognised by the liberal grants from the Rockefeller Trustees which have enabled it to maintain its valuable library and other collections, and to keep open house for colleagues far beyond the limits of its own fellowship.

The general appeal which was being organised in 1928–29 was postponed—I think wisely—in anticipation of economic difficulties which have been more than realised. But the constitution and past activities of the Institute and its Joint Committee qualify it to make immediate use of any favourable turn in the situation, with the good-will of all whom it is constituted to represent, and, we may hope, with their active support when that moment comes.

JOHN L. MYRES

(Ex-President, Roy. Anthropol. Institute).  
New College, Oxford.

#### 'Hard' Seeds in *Panicum coloratum*, Stapf

*Panicum coloratum* is a grass which occurs naturally in East Africa in areas of comparatively low rainfall. In the course of a preliminary study of the indigenous pasture plants of Kenya, this species has shown considerable promise. Efforts to establish it from seed have, however, been unsuccessful, although an abundant crop of apparently good seed is produced. In small field experiments kept under observation for periods of from three to six months after sowing, no germination was observed. The caryopsis is extremely hard and is closely invested by hard shining paleæ.

As it appeared likely that failure to germinate was due to the impermeable nature of this covering, treatment designed to scratch the covering was attempted. Following a suggestion made by Williams for the treatment of 'hard' clover seeds and published in Bulletin Series H. No. 11 of the Welsh Plant Breeding Station, vigorous rubbing with coarse sandpaper was tried. The seeds were placed in a mortar and rubbed with a pestle covered with the sandpaper. This seed was then tested for germination against untreated seed and the results shown in the accompanying table were obtained:—

Number of days	Treated seed. Per cent germinated	Untreated seed. Per cent germinated
6	28	—
9	31	—
21	32	—
68	40	—

Afterwards a 1 per cent germination occurred in the untreated seed, 19 days later than the observations recorded above.

More thorough treatment may be expected to produce even better results as, from its appearance, it is believed that a very high proportion of *Panicum coloratum* seed is viable.

D. C. EDWARDS.

Scott Agricultural Laboratories,  
Nairobi, Kenya.

#### Sponges Without Collared Cells

ALTHOUGH chambers formed of collared cells may be a characteristic feature of sponges as a whole, it is probable that during certain phases of the life-history of some species they are entirely absent; and, further, it is possible that in other species they are completely wanting, at least during the adult stage.

While identifying the sponges of the Swedish Antarctic Expedition, I had occasion to examine five specimens of a new species of *Tenacia*, each of which was filled with embryos; and having cut stained sections in order to study further the structure of the embryos, it became apparent that no flagellated chambers or collared cells were present in the tissues, nor could any trace of such structures be found. It had been previously noted that no oscules were present and a very exhaustive search was made for inhalant pores with the same result, although the surface of the entire animal was searched with hand-lens and binocular microscope, and numerous sections of various kinds examined. Contraction due to preservation may sometimes cause an apparent absence of pores and oscules, but when the examination is sufficiently exhaustive, one or more pores or oscules, only partially closed, may usually be found