

Mr. Swynnerton's qualities as a naturalist have been described; no less than he, was Mr. Burt a lover of Nature, and a born observer; the great qualities of the latter in this respect, his delight in all such observations, and the enthusiasm which he gave to them, all combined to make him a companion whose presence not only lightened many an arduous day under the trying conditions of the tropics, but also increased beyond measure the profits gained from such toils; to travel with him through the African forests was an education, especially in the latter days as his own experience and knowledge grew. His eagerness to co-operate, his entire lack of selfishness, and the kindly enthusiasm with which he shared the fruits of his observations and experiences, often won at the expense of such arduous endeavour as one of lesser physical strength would have been incapable of exerting, made him the most valuable of colleagues, and one who inspired all with whom he came in contact with some measure of his own love of Nature. This led frequently to their stimulation to attempt similar observations on their own, so that his work was often extended and enriched beyond what he could have achieved alone. One who was ever impatient of red-tape, he found in his chief, Mr. Swynnerton, a sympathetic leader under whom his natural abilities could develop and flourish in a way which would have been difficult under the more rigid and stereotyped conditions so often associated with Government service.

The deaths of these two leave gaps in their Department which it will be impossible to fill entirely; their colleagues and friends suffer the bitter loss of two sources of inspiration and infectious enthusiasm which were a constant and quickening stimulus to them; the campaign against that plague of Africa—the tsetse fly—and the study of East African ecology in general, both so essential to the proper development of the latent resources of that country, are the poorer by the disappearance at one and the same time of an able and inspiring leader, and of a gifted and indefatigable worker, who both possessed in no small degree the power to stimulate others to contribute to the subjects in which they were themselves interested and which it was their main object in life to foster.

W. H. POTTS.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Lieut.-Colonel C. H. H. Harold, O.B.E., director of Water Examination, Metropolitan Water Board, on July 18, aged fifty-three years.

Miss A. T. Neilson, lecturer in geology in the University of Glasgow, on July 8.

Mr. E. M. Nelson, formerly president of the Quekett Microscopical Club and of the Royal Microscopical Society, an authority on microscopy and microscope construction, on July 20, aged eighty-seven years.

News and Views

Sir Gilbert Morgan, O.B.E., F.R.S.

SIR GILBERT MORGAN is retiring from the directorship of the Chemical Laboratory, Teddington, under the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, and is taking over a directorship in another important field of work. He was appointed director at Teddington in 1925, but had held previously the professorship of applied chemistry at Finsbury Technical College, the professorship of applied chemistry at the Royal College of Science, Ireland, the professorship of chemistry at the University of Birmingham, as well as the post of assistant professor of chemistry in the Royal College of Science, London. At Teddington, he was entrusted with the task of creating something out of nothing, and was successful in establishing an institution which has become a valued national possession. For this he received the honour of knighthood in 1936. Before his administrative duties limited the time which even he could find for research, Sir Gilbert published many papers in the *Journal of the Chemical Society* and other journals. In fact, his invention of the word "chelate" in connexion with co-ordination led his friends to name this branch of organic chemistry "Morganic Chemistry". To the Chemical Society he gave his services as editor, secretary and president, and he has been

president also of the Society of Chemical Industry. Sir Gilbert is one of those men who discreetly avoid giving the year of their birth in "Who's Who", but his age may be judged from the fact that he is now retiring under the usual Civil Service rules. He has the good wishes of all his friends in his new appointment and they are confident that the success which has crowned all his other activities will attend his new effort. Let us hope that, like Chevreul, he will have a medal struck in his honour on his hundredth birthday. Meanwhile, his "chelate" personal character will continue to attract the affection and admiration of all who come into contact with him.

Major F. A. Freeth, O.B.E., F.R.S.

MAJOR F. A. FREETH, who has been research manager of Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., since the formation of the company in 1926, is retiring from that position but has consented to continue his connexion with the company in the capacity of consultant. Major Freeth was educated at the University of Liverpool and at an early age gained considerable reputation as a physical chemist, becoming chief chemist to Messrs. Brunner Mond and Co. Ltd. in 1910. On the outbreak of the Great War, he went to France with the Cheshire Regiment, but was

recalled to England to undertake scientific work in connexion with the supply of munitions. He rejoined Messrs. Brunner Mond and for the remainder of the War he did very valuable work in developing new processes for the manufacture of explosives. For his services to the country he was honoured with the O.B.E. In 1924, Major Freeth was awarded the doctorate in the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics in the University of Leyden. He was elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 1925.

Mr. A. G. Lowndes

MR. A. G. LOWNDES, who for the past seventeen years has been a science master at Marlborough College, is retiring at the end of the present term. Few science masters in public or other secondary schools devote themselves to original research, or have their contributions to knowledge published by scientific societies, but Mr. Lowndes, like the late Mr. Edward Meyrick, who was for many years also a master at Marlborough, but on the classical side, has had a number of original contributions published in the proceedings of scientific societies and also in the columns of NATURE. In 1934 he was awarded a Leverhulme research fellowship for his cinema-photomicrography. Immediately after the British Association meeting at Cambridge next month, Mr. Lowndes is going to the Leper Settlement at Oji River, Onitsha, Southern Nigeria, as a guest of the Church Missionary Society, to stay with an old pupil, Dr. David Money, who is the medical officer in charge, and to see if useful work can be done there by a trained biologist. He proposes to return to England in the spring and to work at least eighteen months at the Marine Biological Laboratory at Plymouth, where he will apply his method of finding the density of living aquatic organisms to the study of plankton.

Society for the Protection of Science and Learning

MR. DAVID CLEGHORN THOMSON, formerly secretary to the Oxford University Appeal Committee, has been appointed general secretary, in succession to Mr. Walter Adams, of the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning (formerly known as the Academic Assistance Council) which for five years has been handling the academic side of the international refugee problem. Mr. Cleghorn Thomson is a graduate of the Universities of Edinburgh and Oxford; a senior history exhibitioner of Balliol, he was for seven years the B.B.C.'s chief official in Scotland. The Society for the Protection of Science and Learning, of which the Archbishop of York recently became president in succession to the late Lord Rutherford, acts as a central bureau of information regarding professors, lecturers and research workers displaced in their own country on account of 'race', religious or political opinions, and aids in securing the continuation of their valuable work in other countries. So far, of the 1350 displaced scholars registered with this Society, 520 have been permanently placed in 38 countries, apart from more than 300 who have temporarily found work. Within the last three months, the Society has received 340 applica-

tions from scholars who have had to discontinue academic activity in Austria. The offices of the Society are at 6 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1.

Atlantic Flight with 'Pick-a-Back' Start

Mercury, the seaplane upper component of the Short-Mayo composite aircraft, arrived at the airport of Boucherville near Montreal on July 21 at 12.20 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, having flown from Foyne, County Limerick, in a little more than twenty hours. The actual time from shore to shore, Foyne to Cape Baulewn, Newfoundland, was 13 hours 29 minutes. Considerable rain and head winds were experienced during the flight, the machine arriving at Montreal with only about eighty gallons of fuel left. After refuelling, she took off for New York, reaching there about two hours later. Captain Bennett, the pilot, and Mr. Coster, the wireless operator, stated that they had experienced no unexpected difficulties during the journey, and had used their automatic pilot quite successfully as necessary. The machine carried a cargo of newspapers, newsreels, and photographs, principally of the royal visit to Paris. The newspapers were on sale in New York on the day following their publication. The successful finishing of this flight represents the completion of one of the experiments upon the problem of launching aircraft with excessive loading, due to the necessity for carrying considerable fuel and oil for long-distance flights. Other methods such as catapulting, topping up with fuel while in the air, etc., are being developed, and have been mentioned in NATURE as they have occurred.

Depredations of Property by Rabbits

A BILL to protect agriculture from the ravages of rabbits was introduced in the House of Lords by Lord Sempill on July 25. It follows the lines of the report issued by the Mersey Committee on this subject, and provides powers for enabling the county councils to take action against the owner or occupier of rabbit-infested land who fails to take precautions to prevent damage to neighbouring land. It also provides for action for damages on the part of the aggrieved party. To meet the difficulties of those who are unable to find the labour and equipment necessary for keeping down rabbits, the Bill enables county councils to provide staff and equipment for this purpose. Gin traps, however, are not to be used by the staff so provided. Some doubt has been expressed as to whether the destruction of rabbits by cyanide fumigation, which may now be regarded as the standard method of rabbit-control, is strictly legal, and a clause of the Bill puts the use of this method for rodents beyond doubt. The Bill also gives effect to the Mersey Committee's recommendation that "gin traps should in no circumstances be set in the open".

SPECIAL provision is made in the Bill for instances in which Scottish legal practice and administration differ from the English. The introduction of the Bill is in the nature of a reconnaissance and has been