

Mr. Ford will take over scientific staff and equipment greatly exceeding what existed before the War. Apart from Dr. A. P. Orr, recently appointed deputy director, and Dr. Sheina M. Marshall, who did so much to establish the reputation of the Laboratory before the War, the staff now consists of three zoologists, a chemist and an algologist, while a further post has been authorized but is not yet filled. A new research vessel, the *Calanus*, has recently been acquired and is now operating from the Laboratory. She is a motor fishing vessel, 75 ft. long, of which the hull only was built when she was purchased from the Admiralty, so that it has been possible to fit her out as a research vessel with all the modern equipment needed for both physical and biological investigations in the sea. She carries a permanent crew of five, and will enable the Millport Laboratory to extend the range of its work from the Clyde sea area to the west of Scotland generally. A much belated addition to the facilities of the Laboratory is the provision recently of electric current from the hydro-electric grid system. It will now be possible to use standard electrical equipment; further, a workshop with power-driven tools is being constructed. The Millport Laboratory, which has always had the advantage of being adjacent to clean waters with a rich fauna and flora, has now both the research vessel and the laboratory facilities for making full use of its natural advantages.

#### Prof. P. C. Mahalanobis, F.R.S.

PROF. P. C. MAHALANOBIS retired from the Indian Educational Service and from his post as principal of Presidency College, Calcutta, on June 30. He is chiefly known as a mathematical statistician with wide interests, and particularly as a pioneer in the theory and practice of sample survey. His work in building up the Statistical Laboratory at Presidency College is appreciated throughout the world, and it is undoubtedly one of the best centres for statistical research and advanced teaching. In recent years, Prof. Mahalanobis has been largely engaged on the Statistical Commission of the United Nations. He is still carrying on his scientific work, especially in the Indian Statistical Institute, of which he is honorary secretary.

#### Plant Physiology at Ghent: Prof. Paul Froeschel

DR. PAUL FROESCHEL has been appointed professor of plant physiology at Ghent State University as a successor to the late Prof. G. L. Funke. Dr. Froeschel was born in Vienna in 1888. He studied botany and especially plant physiology with Julius v. Wiesner, Richard v. Wettstein and Hans Molisch, and became known for his work on plant irritability and especially short phototropic presentation times. After graduating, Dr. Froeschel worked with Prof. Linsbauer (Czrnowitz), Prof. Goebel (Munich) and Prof. Wasitzky (Vienna). At the end of the First World War he took up agriculture; he worked on the cultivation of medicinal plants, and as an agricultural consultant he had the opportunity of becoming closely acquainted with agricultural problems. In 1938, Dr. Froeschel emigrated to Belgium, where he was given a place in the department of Prof. Funke, director of the plant physiology laboratories of Ghent State University. There Dr. Froeschel in the first place worked on the growth-inhibiting substances of plants, and furnished valuable contributions not only to the physiology of these substances, but also to their practical use.

#### Cocoa Disease in the Gold Coast

THE Secretary of State for the Colonies has appointed the following commission to visit the Gold Coast and report on the measures necessary for the eradication of swollen shoot disease of cocoa trees: Dr. G. Berkeley, of the Dominion Laboratory of Plant Pathology, Canada; Dr. W. Carter, head of the Department of Entomology, Pineapple Research Institute, Hawaii; and Prof. van Slogteren, of Holland. Their terms of reference are: "Having regard to the research work in swollen shoot disease of cocoa trees in the Gold Coast being carried out by the West African Cocoa Research Institute, to study the incidence and nature of the disease and to report on the technical measures necessary for its speedy eradication".

#### British Museum (Natural History): Acquisitions

THE following acquisitions to the British Museum (Natural History) have been announced: Sir Sidney Harmer, director of the Museum from 1919 to 1927, has presented 374 volumes of reprints and zoological publications dealing principally with Cetacea and Polyzoa, together with card-indexes of authors and subjects. The Governing Body of King's College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, have given about 10,000 slides of Crustacea and Foraminifera containing the type specimens of many species collected by the *Challenger* and other expeditions for the exploration of the sea; these slides were prepared by the late Prof. G. S. Brady. The extensive collection of Diptera formed by the late Colbran J. Wainwright, a recognized authority on the study of this order of insects, has been presented by his daughters, Miss Wainwright and Mrs. Reid; the collection is estimated to contain approximately 65,000 specimens, of which the greater part are from the palæarctic region, although some 18,000 are from other parts of the world. Finally, three important bequests have been made to the Department of Botany, the first being the remainder of the late Colonel A. H. Wolley-Dod's herbarium and consisting of about 10,000 sheets of British plants mainly of his own collecting (Colonel Wolley-Dod was the author of "Flora of Sussex", and his herbarium contains many of the specimens on which records were based). Second is the very important collection of British and European plants estimated at 30,000 specimens and brought together by the late Mr. Herbert William Pugsley; the material is excellently preserved and the alpine plants are exceptionally good. The third bequest is that of the late Mr. J. W. Long's herbarium of about 15,000 sheets of British and European plants.

#### Marconi Jubilee Congress

THE publication is announced of the *Proceedings* of the International Congress held in Rome last September in connexion with the Marconi Jubilee (see *Nature*, November 29, 1947, p. 473). The volume, which comprises some 970 pages and 470 illustrations, is published by Dr. Giovanni Bardi, Salita de' Crescenzi 16, Rome, at the price of 4,000 lire. In a preface, Prof. Gustavo Colonnetti, president of the Italian National Research Council, describes the aims of the Congress, and the success which accompanied it with the interested support of many participants from various nations. The full texts of the fifty-nine papers, of which ten are by British authors, are reproduced in the volume, classified in four sections under the titles of electromagnetic waves, electric