The Forestry Commission, to which has been entrusted the task of restocking vast areas despoiled in the course of the two World Wars, has extended its service by providing national forest parks in those high-level parts of its estates where planting would be unprofitable. The preservation of scenes and woodlands calls for similar action to save their wild life, that is to say, precariously balanced assemblages of plants and animals. To attempt this there has come on the Scottish scene the new Nature Conservancy; but to achieve it will call for prolonged and conscientious observing, collecting and recording by a field force of amateurs. This is a clear call to action which the Corresponding Societies must not ignore.

NEWS and VIEWS

Genetics at Adelaide: Dr. D. G. Catcheside, F.R.S.

THE Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization has recently made arrangements for the strengthening of animal genetics in the School of Zoology of the University of Sydney, and has guaranteed to the University of Adelaide, for the first ten years, a chair of genetics which will be held at the Waite Agricultural Research Institute of that University, where a programme of plant breeding has been in existence for some years, and where a postgraduate school in plant genetics has been recently developing. Dr. D. G. Catcheside, reader in plant cytogenetics in the University of Cambridge, has accepted the new chair and will take up his duties in 1952. Dr. Catcheside graduated at King's College, London, in 1928 under Prof. R. Ruggles Gates. His first post was as assistant in botany in the University of Glasgow. He returned to King's College as assistant lecturer in 1931 and later became lecturer. R. P. Gregory had started the teaching of cytology and genetics at Cambridge before the First World War. After Gregory's death at the end of 1918, Prof. F. T. Brooks, then lecturer in mycology, carried on the work until Dr. Catcheside arrived to relieve him. Under Dr. Catcheside's leadership the subject rapidly developed at Cambridge and became a prominent part in the training of students in botany for the Natural Sciences Tripos. Dr. Catcheside's growing reputation attracted an increasing number of research students to Cambridge. In 1944 he was elected to a fellowship at Trinity College, Cambridge, and in 1950 he was made reader in plant cytogenetics. In 1951 he was elected to fellowship of the Royal Society. His interests are wide and include the cytology and genetics of *Oenothera*, the cytological and genetical effects of ionizing radiation, and the biochemical genetics of *Neurospora*. His work is well known in the United States, where he spent the year 1936–37 as a Rockefeller Foundation Fellow at the California Institute of Technology under Prof. T. H. Morgan and his sabbatical leave at Stanford University in 1947. Dr. Catcheside's promotion to the chair at Adelaide will be a serious loss to the Botany School at Cambridge.

Astronomy in the University of Manchester: Prof. Z. Kopal

DR. ZDENEK KOPAL has been appointed to a newly created chair of astronomy in the University of Manchester. Dr. Kopal was born in Czechoslovakia in 1914 and graduated as a doctor of science of the Charles University, Prague, in June 1937. He held the Ernest Denis Fellowship of the Czechoslovak Government during January–June 1938 at Cambridge, working under the late Sir Arthur Eddington. From September 1938 he held a research fellowship at the Harvard College Observatory, Cambridge, Massachusetts, becoming a research associate in Harvard University in 1940. During August 1942–June 1946 Dr. Kopal was on leave of absence, undertaking war work at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he became in 1946 a research associate; in 1947 an associate professor of applied mathematics; and in July 1949 head of the Institute's Computation Laboratory. Since 1949 he has also been an honorary lecturer at Harvard University. The majority of the large number of scientific papers published by Dr. Kopal have dealt with the theory and observation of variable stars. His monograph, "An Introduction to the Study of Eclipsing Variables", is the standard work on the subject. He has also studied the oscillations of various stellar models. He became a naturalized citizen of the United States in 1948, since when he has been chairman of the Commission on Close Binary Systems of the International Astronomical Union and a member of the Commissions on Meteors and on Variable Stars, as well as of the sub-committee on the upper atmosphere of the National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics of the United States. Since 1950 he has been consulting editor of the *Journal of Mathematics and Physics*.

Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture: Mr. A. B. Killick, C.M.G.

MR. A. B. KILLICK, at present director of agriculture in Uganda, has been appointed professor of agriculture and director of studies at the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, Trinidad, British West Indies, and is expected to take up his duties early in 1952. Mr. Killick graduated from Wye College (University of London) and is also a past student of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture. He spent the early part of his career in Uganda, where he served as an agricultural officer from 1924 until 1936. He was then appointed deputy director of agriculture in Trinidad, leaving there in 1939 to take up a similar appointment in Tanganyika; in 1947 he was appointed to his present post in Uganda.

Lorenz Oken (1779–1851)

DESPITE his remarkable learning, Lorenz Oken, who died a century ago, on August 11, 1851, is remembered chiefly as the exponent of doctrines long since abandoned. He was born at Bohlsbach in Swabia on August 1, 1779. When a medical student of two years standing, he published his "Grundriss der Naturphilosophie" (1802)—an attempt to construct a biology which reflected the action of the mind. Regarding man as the summit and crown of Nature, his exaltation of the male led him to declare that "Ideally every child should be a boy". Though he was groping toward something which he understood but imperfectly, he showed some conception of protoplasm and cells in his essay "Über das Universum" (1808), describing the first transition "from the Inorganic into the Organic" as "the transformation into a *cell*".