

spontaneous generation. The golden lotus of Brahminic and Buddhistic mythology is the sun, which floats in the waters which are above the firmament, like an earthly lotus in the deep blue stream below. From it distils the Amrita, the first manifestation of Vishnu. Brahma and Buddha (the supreme intelligence) were born of this heavenly lotus. Lakshmi, the Indian Venus, is represented sitting on this flower. The Hindoos see in the form of the lotus the mysterious symbol, *Svastika*. The allusions to this flower by Indian poets are innumerable. No praise is too extravagant for it; it is the chaste flower, and its various synonyms are bestowed as names upon women. The red lotus is said by the poets to be dyed with the blood of Siva that flowed from the wound made by the arrow of Kama, the Indian Cupid. The face of a beautiful woman is compared by the poets to a lotus blossom, the eyes to lotus buds, and the arms to its filaments. The bee is represented as enamoured of the lotus. Although a humble little flower, the *Tulasi* is almost as great a favourite as the lotus; it is addressed to the goddess Sri or Venus. The heart of Vishnu is said to tremble with rage if a branch of his beloved is injured. The plant must be gathered only for medicinal or religious purposes, such as the worship of Vishnu or Krishna, or the wife of Siva. It is a kind of amrita, symbolical of the eternal essence; it protects the worshippers and gives children to women. The plant is often worshipped as a domestic deity, and its branches are placed on the breasts of the dead. The Champa is chiefly celebrated for its overpoweringly sweet odour and golden colour; so strong is its perfume that the poets affirm that bees will not extract honey from it; but they console it for this neglect by dedicating it to Krishna, who loves garlands of yellow flowers as becoming to his dark complexion. One of the greatest favourites of the poets is the Asoka; its flowers, which are yellow when they first open, gradually change to red. In March and April it is in its glory, and at night perfumes the air with its delicate odour. The tree is the *kul* or anthropogonic tree of the Vaisya caste, who call it Asupala. The Kadamba (*Anthocephalus cadamba*) is sacred to Kali or Parvati, the consort of Siva; it has many synonyms, such as "protecting children," "dear to agriculturists," &c. It blossoms at the end of the hot season, and its night-scented flowers form a globular orange-coloured head, from which the white-clubbed stigmas project. The flowers are fabled to impregnate with their honey the water which collects in holes in the trunk of the tree. In Delhi the goldsmiths are fond of imitating the flowers. The well-known prickly gold beads so often seen in Delhi jewellery are meant for kadamba flowers. In this part of India the Marathas will not gather the flowers for profane purposes as it is their anthropogonic tree. The Kadamba Rajas claim their descent from it, as recorded in the following legend:—"After the destruction of the demon Tripura, a drop of perspiration fell from the head of Isvara into the hollow of a kadamba tree, and assumed the form of a man with three eyes and four arms. He became the founder of Vanavasi or Jayantipur." There are other versions of the story, but all agree in connecting the origin of the family with this tree, a branch of which is necessary to represent the Kai at a Marathi marriage ceremony.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

CAMBRIDGE.—At the biennial election to the Council of the Senate held on November 7, the following were nominated (the * indicates retiring members):—Heads (2 seats)—*Dr. Atkinson, Clare, *Dr. Ferrers, Caius, Dr. Hill, Downing; Professors (2 seats)—*Dr. Cayley, Trinity, Dr. Sidgwick, Trinity, Prof. Ryle, King's; Members of the Senate (4 seats)—*Dr. D. MacAlister, St. John's, Dr. Forsyth, Trinity, *Mr. Whitting, King's, Mr. R. T. Wright, Christ's, Mr. E. H. Morgan, Jesus, Mr. C. W. Moule, Corpus, Mr. C. H. Prior, Pembroke. The voting was as follows:—Dr. Ferrers, 184, Dr. Atkinson, 137; Dr. Cayley, 191, Dr. Sidgwick, 127; Dr. D. MacAlister, 158, Mr. Whitting, 156, Dr. Forsyth, 153, Mr. Wright, 117. These were elected. Dr. Hill received 109 votes, Prof. Ryle, 103, Mr. Prior, 111, Dr. Lea, 82, Mr. Morgan, 81, Mr. Moule, 71. The newly-elected members hold office for four years. The result is interpreted as a gain for those who favour the modern development of the University.

It should have been stated that the election of Fellows referred to in our last number took place at St. John's College.

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Mr. Frank McClean, M.A., of Trinity College, has offered securities of the value of £12,000 to be held in trust for the University by Trinity College, for the purpose of founding three "Isaac Newton Studentships" in Astronomy, Astronomical Physics, and Physical Optics. The students are to hold their emoluments for three years, to be Bachelors of Arts, and of high mathematical attainments.

R. S. Cole, B.A., of Emmanuel College, has been appointed a Junior Demonstrator of Physics at the Cavendish Laboratory, in the place of Mr. L. R. Wilberforce, promoted to be Demonstrator.

The General Board of Studies propose the foundation of an additional Demonstratorship in Physiology, under Prof. Michael Foster, without stipend from the University Chest.

SOCIETIES AND ACADEMIES.

LONDON.

Royal Microscopical Society, October 15.—Dr. C. T. Hudson, F.R.S., President, in the chair.—Mr. G. F. Dowdeswell's note on a simple form of warm stage was read, and the apparatus exhibited.—The President said he had with great regret to record the deaths of two honorary Fellows of the Society—Prof. W. Kitchen Parker, F.R.S., and Mr. J. Ralfs. In place of these two gentlemen Dr. H. B. Brady, F.R.S., and Prof. W. C. Williamson, F.R.S., were nominated.—Mr. Mayall said he must ask the indulgence of the meeting to enable him to clear himself from possible ambiguity. In notifying the fact that at the first photographic trials of the new objective of 1.6 N.A. the visual and actinic foci had been found by Mr. Nelson and himself to be not coincident; and that when the objective was returned to Jena immediately after, Dr. Czapski found the foci were coincident; he had hazarded what he had imagined would appear a mere playful admission of the state of general puzzlement of both sides by suggesting that "the transit of the objective from London to Jena had somehow got rid of the 'chemical' focus." That sentence had unhappily been construed both in England and abroad into a reflection upon the good faith of Dr. Czapski, or Dr. Abbe, or the firm of Zeiss. Whatever blame was due to himself for the ambiguity of the expression, he must, of course, accept. At the same time he thought the Society would be interested to learn that upon his conveying his explanation to Dr. Czapski and Dr. Abbe, those gentlemen had expressed their complete satisfaction with it. He believed that the existence of a "chemical" focus was probably due to a slight difference in the adjustment of the front lens, especially, as Dr. Abbe had pointed out, in view of the fact that with an objective of such large aperture the colour correction was, as it were, "balanced on a needle-point" in the matter of an alteration in the distance of the front lens from the posterior combinations; and that a very minute alteration in that distance, though producing no perceptible difference in the visual image, was quite competent to lengthen or shorten the focus of the violet rays to such an extent as to exhibit a "chemical" focus non-coincident with the visual focus when tested photographically.—The President gave formal notice that a special general meeting would be held in the Library at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, October 22, for the purpose of considering alterations in the by-laws, the terms of which he read.—Mr. G. C. Karop exhibited and described an improved students' microscope, made by Swift and Son. The new instrument embodied Mr. Nelson's "horse-shoe" stage for convenience of readily seeing the condenser, and for estimating by the touch the approximation of the focus on the slide, and on which the Mayall mechanical stage was easily applied, together with a centring sub-stage focussed by sliding on the tail-piece, the whole of superior workmanship and design, and supplied at a moderate outlay.—Prof. J. W. Groves communicated a note by Mr. P. C. Waite on a new method of demonstrating intercellular protoplasmic continuity. A specimen in illustration was exhibited.—Mr. J. D. Aldous exhibited some early forms of microscope slides made of boxwood, similar to those formerly made of ivory, with the objects between pieces of talc.—The President called attention to some original drawings of a new Rotifer by Mr. W. B. Poole, of South Australia; also to a specimen of *Helistes mucicola* exhibited by Mr. G. Western.—Mr. E. M. Nelson exhibited upon the screen a series of thirty-one photomicrographs, which he described.—Dr. H. B. Brady's paper on a new type of Foraminifera was taken as read.