

Dr. Glazebrook, continuing, briefly sketched the history of the Laboratory as contained in the book, which he said was written by men who took part in the events they described.

The book has been written partly in the hope of enabling educated Englishmen who are not physicists to understand the meaning of the work done at the Cavendish Laboratory. . . . It covers a wide range of intellectual qualification from that of the M.B. student to that of the brilliant band Rutherford, Wilson, Townsend, McLellan, Langevin, Richardson, Zeleny, and the others who were research students ten years ago. The Master of Trinity in an eloquent speech a few months ago told his audience he was a dreamer of dreams, and in one dream he pictured a larger university with its portals opened wide and men of many nations and kindred flocking in from all lands to reap the rich harvest of ancient learning or modern science which only Cambridge can furnish, and to carry back to their distant homes the garnered sheaves to feed and fertilise the world. Sir J. J. Thomson has realised such a dream. The new regulations for advanced students passed in 1895 were accepted in large measure through his advocacy, and since that time an ever-increasing stream of men coming from every land has been directed towards Cambridge; the list of those who have carried on researches in the Cavendish Laboratory during the last forty years contains some 250 names; the list of published memoirs covers forty pages. Former students hold important posts in almost every great university; the fact that of the professorships of physics in the colleges of university rank in England all but one are held by Cambridge men shows the wide influence of the laboratory at home. Go where you will, not only in English-speaking lands, to any centre of physical study and you will find one or more who is proud to say he was a research student of the Cavendish Laboratory and a pupil of Sir J. J. Thomson.

As representing those pupils and in the name of the large assembly here present, in the name of the scientific world, I am here to express to you our high appreciation of the services you have rendered to science and to the University, to assure you of the affectionate regard for you personally of all your pupils, and to wish for you and Lady Thomson many years of fruitful activity and continued happiness. Can I do better than repeat the Chancellor's wish—that the future may resemble the past?

It is my privilege to ask you to accept this volume with its record of your great work as some slight recognition of all you have done.

Sir J. J. Thomson responded in a characteristic speech. There was no mention of his own work further than the expression of the wish, which raised a smile on all faces, that he had done more. His speech was an acknowledgment of all he owed to his College, his University, and those personal friends from whom, he said, he had received help without which there would have been no such celebration. He referred to the triumvirate Rutherford, McLellan, and Langevin, and mentioned that one of them had received the Nobel prize. No one was forgotten in the expression his thanks; the demonstrators, the students, the assistants in the Laboratory, were all remembered and many of them mentioned by name. To everyone full appreciation was accorded, and the one person not mentioned, whose work and influence were not alluded to, was the Director of the Laboratory, the Professor to whom all else was due.

The Vice-Chancellor briefly declared the proceedings ended, and passed, "as a business man," to the next item of the agenda, "Cavendish Laboratory Afternoon Tea," an institution of Sir J. J. Thomson, which has accompanied Cambridge Physicists to all parts of the world and, conversation becoming general, the afternoon ended most pleasantly.

S. J. D. S.

MR. W. R. FISHER.

AS announced with regret last week, Mr. W. R. Fisher, assistant professor of forestry at Oxford, died on November 13, after an operation. He had not been in good health for some time past, but his death occurred rather suddenly.

Mr. Fisher was born in 1846, at Sydney, New South Wales, where his father was Crown Solicitor, but became afterwards the first Attorney-General of New Zealand. He came to England quite young, and was educated at Cambridge, the home of his father and grandfather, the latter having been a banker in Petty Cury. He joined St. John's College, and took his degree in 1867, being placed 17 senior optime. Soon afterwards he became a mathematical master at Repton School.

In 1869 Mr. Fisher competed for an appointment in the Indian Forest Service, being bracketed first. After the necessary training in forestry, chiefly at Nancy, and partly in Scotland, he joined the Bengal Forest Department in 1872. On the establishment of the Assam Chief Commissionership, in 1874, he was transferred to that administration and remained there until 1878. During that time he started the Charduar Rubber Plantation (*Ficus elastica*), which was extended to an area of about 1000 acres. Mr. Fisher was thus one of the pioneers of artificial rubber plantations. In 1878 he was specially selected for the appointment of deputy-director of the newly-established School of Forestry at Dehra Dun, and he rose subsequently to become the director of the school and conservator of forests of the school circle.

In the year 1889 he came home on furlough, and in 1890 he joined the staff of the School of Forestry at Coopers Hill College. In the year 1905 he went with that school to Oxford, where he became a member of Brasenose College.

Mr. Fisher has left his mark upon forest science and practice. At Dehra Dun he taught chiefly forest botany, and he brought out a volume on plant physiology. After he joined at Coopers Hill, he taught silviculture, forest protection, and utilisation. He joined Sir W. Schlich in bringing out the latter's "Manual of Forestry," of which he undertook the preparation of vol. iv. on "Forest Protection," and of vol. v., on "Forest Utilisation," now in their second edition. Although these two volumes are adaptations of Hess's work on protection and Gayers's book on utilisation, Fisher's books are more than the original works, since he adapted the material to British and Indian conditions. They may be considered the standard works on the two subjects.

Throughout his life Fisher was an active writer, and it would be difficult even to enumerate the many articles on forestry which he published. He was an active member, and president for two years, of the Royal English Arboricultural Society, and editor of the society's *Journal*. After his arrival at Oxford, he started an arboretum of indigenous and exotic trees on land belonging to Magdalen College.

During his leisure time he advised many British proprietors on the management of their woods, and thus helped forward the question of forestry and afforestation in these islands. He was, in 1907, a member of the Departmental Committee of the Board of Agriculture in Ireland on afforestation, and lately of the committee sitting in London, dealing with agricultural and forestal education in Britain.

Mr. Fisher was a man of very simple character, with a warm heart, and he was universally liked, not only by the students, but also by a large host of friends. He conducted the annual excursion to France, and it was quite touching to see how French

forest officers and subordinates admired and honoured him.

He married, in 1876, Mary, eldest daughter of the late Dr. Briscoe, civil surgeon of Cooch Behar, in Bengal, and leaves one son, a lieutenant in a Ghurka regiment, and two daughters. By his death the Empire loses an enthusiastic forester, who can ill be spared at the present time.

NOTES.

WE regret to see the announcement of the death on November 11, at sixty-two years of age, of Prof. Jules Tannery, the distinguished French mathematician.

COUNCILLOR WIEHL has just bequeathed, says the *Revue scientifique*, the whole of his fortune, of about a million crowns, to the Bohemian Academy of Sciences at Prague to encourage scientific and technical research.

A SHORT time ago it was suggested that the Eiffel Tower should be used as a station for the daily transmission of time-signals to ocean-going vessels by means of wireless telegraphy. The Paris correspondent of the *Times* reports that this service was inaugurated on November 21 with satisfactory results. In future, time-signals will be sent out twice daily, at 11 a.m. and 12 midnight. Three signals will be made on each occasion at two-minute intervals. The morning transmission will not, however, take place on Sundays and holidays.

THE Earl of Stair has accepted the presidency of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society in succession to Prof. James Geikie, F.R.S., who has held the office of president for the last six years. The anniversary meeting of the society was held on November 11, and was addressed by Sir John Murray, K.C.B., F.R.S., who chose for his subject "The Deep Sea." Before the address Prof. Geikie was presented with the society's gold medal in recognition of his distinguished services to geographical science, and Sir John Murray with the Livingstone medal in recognition, not merely of his prolonged and valuable oceanographical research, but also in commemoration of the completion of the great national work "The Bathymetrical Survey of the Fresh-water Lochs of Scotland."

IN the interests of precision in scientific diction, a correspondent asks that the familiar expression "thunder and lightning" should be inverted in accordance with the natural sequence of cause and effect, and become "lightning and thunder." He adds:—"I never could grasp how the confusion originated, considering that, in agreement with the transmission of light and sound, the flash is seen before the thunder is heard."

THE eighty-fifth Christmas course of experimentally illustrated lectures adapted to a juvenile auditory, to be given at the Royal Institution by Prof. Silvanus P. Thompson, F.R.S., promises to be of exceptional interest. The subject is "Sound, Musical and Non-musical." The dates and subjects of individual lectures are:—1910, December 29, production of sound; December 31, transmission of sound; 1911, January 3, reception of sound; January 5, combination of sounds; January 7, registration of sounds; January 10, reproduction of sound.

At a meeting of the executive committee of the British Science Guild, held on November 16, on the motion of Mr. A. Moseley, C.M.G., it was decided to form a special combined education committee to deal, in the first instance, with education of the governing classes of England. It was resolved to defer the circulation of the synchronisation report until a later date. It was decided to consider

further the reduction of the rate of postage on scientific literature. It was also suggested that the annual meeting should in future be held in the month of April, and that the annual dinner should, if convenient, be held on the same day.

WE regret to announce the death, at sea, at the age of thirty-one, of Mr. Richard Froude Tucker, Archæological Surveyor of the Northern Circle, India. Mr. Tucker held the post of curator of the Delhi Museum, and the catalogue of the archæological collections deposited there was recently prepared by him in collaboration with Dr. J. Ph. Vogel. Appended to this catalogue is a memoir by Mr. Tucker on the elephant statues at the Delhi Gate of the Delhi Fort. The untimely death of this promising archæologist is a severe loss to antiquarian research in India.

DURING the summer of this year excavations were carried on, under the superintendence of Dr. Felix Oswald, at the site of the Roman station of Margidunum on the Fosse Way, midway between Leicester and Lincoln. Some local pottery, Samian ware, coins of Victorinus, Carausius, Constans, and Eugenius, dated between 265 and 395 A.D., have been discovered. The main feature of the finds was the relative abundance of iron objects, such as swords, knives, a bolt of a spring-lock, rings, and nails. A skeleton of an old man and three infants was associated with bones of the Celtic ox (*Bos longifrons*) and other domesticated animals. These antiquities have been deposited in the museum at Nottingham Castle, where it is hoped they may form the nucleus of a Romano-British section.

THE Rome correspondent of the *Times* announces that a decree was published on November 20 creating a commission to examine the view that pellagra is produced by a protozoal infection conveyed by an insect, and to formulate any changes in the existing law of protection that may be considered desirable. The commission consists of nine members, all doctors with the exception of Prince Teano, deputy, who was chiefly instrumental in directing the attention of the Italian Government to the work of the English Pellagra Investigation Committee. An article upon the investigations made by Dr. Sambon for this committee appeared in NATURE of October 27.

ON November 12 an extension of the natural history section of the Hull Public Museums was opened by Mr. T. S. Taylor, Mayor of Hull. In the ornithological section of the museum there is an unusually extensive collection of British birds. The extension consists of three large rooms, the largest of which is occupied by a collection of British birds containing more than 900 specimens. In the second room is a collection of local mammals, including the group of otters, badgers, stoats, weasels, and so on. The third room contains a collection of skeletons—animals and birds. The museum is fortunate in having been presented with the collection of birds formed by the late Sir Henry Boynton. This collection consists of about 200 cases containing 450 birds.

ATTENTION has already been directed in NATURE to the scheme of the British Empire League for the erection in London of a memorial to Captain Cook. We are glad to notice that the secretaries of the Royal Society have written to Lord Brassey, the honorary treasurer of the fund, expressing, on behalf of the Royal Society, approval of the scheme, and enclosing a subscription of twenty-five guineas from the society. Their letter includes the following paragraph:—"We are instructed to express the gratification of the Royal Society that public opinion has at