

NEWCASTLE.—The Council of Armstrong College has made the following appointments: Mr. Clement Heigham to be professor of agriculture, in succession to the late Prof. D. A. Gilchrist; Dr. J. W. Heslop Harrison to be professor of botany in succession to Prof. J. W. Bews, resigned; Mr. James Holmes to be lecturer in geography (a new appointment).

Mr. Heigham was educated at Wellington College and Caius College, Cambridge. He was for some time director of studies in agriculture at Caius College, Cambridge, and during 1923 and 1924 was director of the Norfolk Agricultural Station. Since 1925 he has been farm director at the Ministry of Agriculture's Experimental Station at Rothamsted.

Dr. Harrison is an old student of Armstrong College. He was at one time head of the science department at Middlesbrough High School, and since 1920 has been lecturer in zoology in Armstrong College. In 1926 he was given the honorary title of reader in genetics. His researches on genetics, particularly on the question of the transmissibility of acquired characters, have made him widely known.

Mr. Holmes is a graduate of the University of Glasgow, and for the last four years has been senior assistant in the Department of Geography there.

OXFORD.—The great utility of the private laboratories belonging to Balliol, Trinity, Jesus, Queen's, and Christ Church has been recognised by the University in a recent decree authorising the payment of money grants to these laboratories which are to be equal to the normal laboratory fees paid by students working therein. It has long been recognised that Colleges which have scientific laboratories of their own have a very great advantage over those which are not so provided.

The preamble to a statute providing that there shall be an Aldrichian praelector in chemistry to be held by one of the University demonstrators has been approved.

ON June 7, in the presence of a great gathering representative of the west of England, and amid memorable scenes of enthusiasm, the Prince of Wales, president of the University College of the South-West of England, laid the foundation-stone of the new arts and administrative building of the College. The ceremony was of a peculiarly picturesque character and was enhanced by the magnificence of the exceptionally beautiful site which, known formerly as the Streatham Estate, forms one of the beauty spots of the south-west. The deputy-president of the College, Sir Henry Lopes, in welcoming the Prince, outlined the history of the rapid growth of the College, and explained that the increasing number of students and the rising standard and volume of academic work has impelled the College to find fresh quarters, more suited to the expanding needs. He stated that the appeal for a building and endowment fund, launched a few months ago, is evoking from month to month an increasing response. The greater part of the first £100,000 required has already been subscribed, and the lists show that all classes are contributing to the fund. The Prince in his reply congratulated the College on the support which the plans of expansion has evoked throughout the whole area. A people's university, created by the wishes and efforts of all classes, deserves the best that can be provided both as regards building and teaching, and he expressed the hope that the building would be a worthy monument to the hopes and ambitions of the people. His unexpected announcement that Lord Glanely is giving £25,000 to the appeal fund was received with enthusiasm.

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Calendar of Discovery and Invention.

June 26, 1794.—The balloon was invented by the French, and the French were the first to use balloons in warfare. In 1793 a company of military aeronauts was formed, Jean Marie Joseph Coutelle (1748–1835) was made captain, and at the battle of Fleurus, June 26, 1794, he made observations from a balloon which it is said contributed to the success of the French. Coutelle and his company accompanied Bonaparte to Egypt, but their whole equipment was destroyed in the burning of *l'Orient* at Aboukir.

June 27, 1889.—The statue of Leverrier at the Paris Observatory was inaugurated on June 27, 1889. In his discourse Tisserand said: "The celestial world gets larger every day. . . . Yet our curiosity is inexhaustible; and however splendid may be the heaven which we are permitted to contemplate, we want to attain to greater knowledge still. We strive to realise what it was like in the most distant past, and what it will become in the most distant future. In this way—so it seems to us—our mind takes its revenge upon the shortness of our span of life and the frailty of our existence."

June 28, 1903.—It was at a meeting held at the Academy of Sciences, Munich, on June 28, 1903, that the Deutsches Museum von Meisterwerken der Naturwissenschaft und Technik was founded. Its inception and development owe much to the acumen and energy of Dr. Oskar von Miller, and its purpose is to represent physical science and its application to industry from the earliest times to the present day.

June 30, 1820.—Among the numerous papers contributed to the Linnean Society by Robert Brown was that read on June 30, 1820, on *Rafflesia*, the largest known flower.

June 30, 1866.—For centuries a barrier to human intercourse, the Atlantic is now crossed by steamships, submarine cables, aircraft, and radio signals. The first submarine cable, laid in 1858, failed after being in use a month, while the second, laid in 1865, was damaged in the laying. On June 30, 1866, however, the *Great Eastern* left the Medway with 3000 miles of new cable. The shore end was spliced on July 13, and on July 27 the ship steamed into Heart's Content, Newfoundland. No one contributed more to the final success of the project than Prof. William Thomson, afterwards Lord Kelvin, who for his share was raised to the knighthood.

July 1, 1858.—On July 1, 1858, Lyell and Hooker communicated to the Linnean Society papers which they described as relating to the same subject, namely, "The Laws which affect the Production of Varieties, Races, and Species," and as containing the results of the investigation of two indefatigable naturalists, Mr. Charles Darwin and Mr. Alfred Wallace, who "independently and unknown to one another, conceived the same very ingenious theory to account for the appearance and perpetuation of varieties and of specific forms on our planet. . . ." Of his own share Wallace said, "The one great result which I claim for my paper of 1858 is that it compelled Darwin to write and publish his 'Origin of species' without further delay."

July 2, 1919.—The only aircraft which has flown to and fro across the Atlantic was the airship R34. With a crew of 26 she left East Fortune, near Edinburgh, on July 2, 1919, and reached New York in 4½ days. Her return was made in 3 days 3 hours. She was 645 feet long and 79 feet in diameter, contained nearly 2,000,000 cubic feet of gas, and was driven by five Sunbeam engines of 285 H.P. each. A year or two later she was damaged and then dismantled.

E. C. S.