

opinion was nervous; in fact, conditions were exactly as described in the Australian official papers before the Australian Government had decided to encourage private efforts.

Provided that no enemy (such as the Australian beetle) is found in Africa, it will be advantageous to employ biological control, because it introduces no poisons into the soil, and in the long run it enables a specified amount of labour to deal with the maximum area. For very intensive action, it might pay to cut tracks through dense areas by chemical means to facilitate broadcasting of the insects.

C. T. JACOB.

Glemham, Harpenden Road,
St. Albans, June 28.

The late Sir Francis Ogilvie.

SIR FRANCIS GRANT OGILVIE, who died last December, was Principal of the Heriot-Watt College from 1886 to 1900, taking office when the fortunes of the Watt Institution and School of Arts were merged with those of George Heriot's Hospital.

The work which Sir Francis did was of a pioneer character in the College and he laid down the lines which have since been successfully developed. He touched other fields of activity in each of which his scientific knowledge and administrative genius were of great service. In the Royal Scottish Museum, of which he was director from 1900 to 1903, as principal assistant secretary for Science and Art in the Board of Education from 1903 to 1910, as director of the Science Museum, South Kensington, from 1911 to 1920, and as chairman of the Geological Survey, he left his mark on each branch of activity. His work in organising the Forth Division Submarine Miners from 1887 to 1900, and in the Trench Warfare Research Department, 1915 to 1917, gives an indication of the wide range of his interests and the usefulness of his services.

It has been thought desirable by a number of old students that Sir Francis Ogilvie's connexion with the College should be recognised in some definite way. The suggestion of a fund to establish an annual prize has found favour, and I have received donations towards such a fund from a number of old students and members of the College, and from former colleagues and friends of Sir Francis. There are, no doubt, others who would wish to be associated with this memorial fund, and I should be glad to receive and acknowledge any contributions which they might wish to make. In this way the name of the first principal will be definitely brought before future students year by year.

J. CAMERON SMAIL.

Heriot-Watt College,
Edinburgh, June 29.

Alchemical Apparatus.

My colleague Prof. Earp has directed my attention to an article in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* (vol. 1, p. 109; 1930) by F. S. Taylor, entitled "A Survey of Greek Alchemy", in which the suggestion is made that the apparatus called a 'water bath' (bain-marie) by Berthelot ("Introduction à l'étude de la chimie des anciens", Paris, 1889, p. 146) is really a small charcoal brazier. I had already explained this point in some lectures given three or four years ago in connexion with the course in the history, principles, and method of science in the University of London, and it is quite clearly stated in my book, "Everyday Chemistry" (Macmillan, 1929, p. 68), published in the year preceding Mr. Taylor's paper. The use of the apparatus in the operation of *kerotakis* is connected with the practice of encaustic painting, in which the four colours, black, white, yellow, and red,

were (according to Pliny) the first to be used. These four colours are very important in the theories of Demokritos of Abdera, and reappear in an alchemical sense in the traditions ascribed to Demokritos in the earlier treatises, in which the process of transmutation is closely related to painting and dyeing.

J. R. PARTINGTON.

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Forestry Research in Great Britain.

MR. J. RAMSBOTTOM in a letter in *NATURE* of June 20, p. 927, states that little or nothing has been done in Britain concerning investigations on tree mycorrhiza, and that no one has been wholly engaged in its study. Mr. Ramsbottom has overlooked the fact that Dr. M. C. Rayner has been engaged whole-heartedly on these problems for several years, having previously given much attention to the mycorrhiza of other plants. At the Johannesburg meeting of the British Association in 1929, a research committee was appointed to facilitate Dr. M. C. Rayner's whole-time researches on "Mycorrhiza in Relation to Forestry", and this Committee was reappointed in 1930. Valuable results have been obtained in these investigations, which will be published in due course.

F. T. BROOKS

(Chairman, British Association
Research Committee on

Mycorrhiza in Relation to Forestry),
Botany School, Cambridge.

THE Editor of *NATURE* has kindly submitted the above letter to me for any comment I may care to make upon it. The object of my letter was to direct attention to the need of greater opportunities for research, which by taking a wider view of the interrelations of different organisms will benefit forestry in the only way which will count with practical men. I took into account the work mentioned by Mr. Brooks, with other investigations which are in progress. In so far as one investigator is 'whole time' (though not in the sense I meant), the necessary small correction may easily be made in my previous letter.

J. RAMSBOTTOM.

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Cromwell Road, London, S.W.7.

The London Skull.

I HAVE read with particular interest Prof. Elliot Smith's remarks on the 'Lady of Lloyds' skull in the review entitled "Human Palæontology".¹ When he first described this skull in 1925, I pointed out² that on stratigraphical grounds I considered the Terrace in which the skull was found to be that on the surface of which Mousterian working floors have been found at many localities, and that I had shown the Terrace as such (that is, Middle or Taplow Terrace) on the Geological Survey maps. There was, however, some discrepancy between this view, based mainly on the mapping of the deposits, and that of the palæontologists, who assigned the Central London deposits to a post-Mousterian date. When making the geological survey of the area I considered this view and concluded that it was based on grounds insufficient to outweigh the stratigraphy. It is therefore highly satisfactory to me to find that in Prof. Elliot Smith's weighty opinion the human palæontology confirms my decision.

C. N. BROMEHEAD.

Geological Survey Office,
14A Parliament Street, York, June 30.

¹ *NATURE*, 127, 963, June 27, 1931.

² *NATURE*, 116, 819, Dec. 5, 1925.