

it may have been worn twined several times round the neck or waist. Both have the ends bent back to form the familiar interlocking hook. Of the armlets four are simple metal rods; the remaining two are heavier, one being hexagonal and the other lozenge-shaped in section. The find is assigned to the middle or late bronze age; but it is to be noted that the simple armlets do not show the thickening of the wire at the ends characteristic of the developed type of armlet, which, in the British late bronze age, expanded into the cup-shaped terminals.

THE number, character, and distribution of finds of prehistoric gold ornaments in Cornwall, of which that of a lunula, or crescent-shaped gold neck ornament, associated with a flat axe found at Harlyn Bay is the best known, would suggest that intercourse with Ireland, the undoubted source of these ornaments, began early, possibly at the very beginning of the bronze age, and was extensive. Not only did Cornwall provide tin, in which Ireland was poor, but it served as a stage in the voyage to Brittany and Iberia. Close intercourse between Ireland and Cornwall lasted well into Christian times, as is shown by the legends of the Cornish saints, though their many obviously mythical details point to a much earlier tradition. It is to be hoped that lack of funds will not stand in the way of the proposed excavation of the site on which this latest find was made. If it should prove a habitation site, as is conjectured, it should furnish much needed evidence corroborative of the dating of Cornish gold ornaments.

American Patent Law System.

UNDER the auspices of Science Service, Dr. E. J. Prindle gave, on Nov. 13, a radio talk on the American patent law system. He pointed out how backward agriculture and manufacturing were prior to the introduction of the patent system, which gave the inventor the exclusive right for seventeen years to make, use, and sell his invention. So great is the transformation made by the introduction of machinery, that in garnering wheat crops one man can, by its use, do the work formerly requiring ten men. Only one man is now required for every 250 acres. The making of agricultural machinery is a very large industry. The expense of developing a single invention often runs into hundreds of pounds, and sometimes, as in the case of the Curtis steam turbine, into hundreds of thousands of pounds. Without the possibility of recovering this sum and making a profit on the invention, neither individuals nor companies can afford to make and perfect inventions. Without the patent law, Edison could not have accomplished his great work which has benefited humanity. In connexion with electric lighting alone, Edison took out 375 patents. As a patent for an invention gives a monopoly, some think that it is therefore harmful, as many monopolies undoubtedly are. But a patent only gives an inventor a monopoly of that which he creates; it takes nothing from the public, and at the end of seventeen years the public receives the invention free. In normal times, the patent system has greatly increased the field of employment.

No. 3246, VOL. 129]

Hawks as Decoys.

MARTIAL's epigram on the hawk (Book 14, 216) has been taken as an indication that falconry was practised by the classical ancients; but as the hawk here deceives (*decipit*) the birds, it would seem rather as if it were used, like an owl, as a decoy to entrap birds coming to mob it; and in the *Field* for Dec. 26, 1931, Col. Nawab Malik Sir Umar Hayat Khan, in writing on falconry, indicates a similar practice in modern India; for he says that if a sparrow-hawk be kept under a net or in a cage and nooses made around, and the receptacle put where 'seven sisters' are common, these birds (the common Indian babbler *Turdoides terricolor*) can be caught by the dozen. Being weak flyers, they are particularly likely to be attacked by hawks, but being also sociable and strong in beak and claws, they often succeed in rescuing the bird attacked, so that the hawk is an enemy with which they contend on more or less equal terms. The use of the captive hawk as a decoy, however, is no more falconry than is the employment of wild hawks in fowling by bribing them to 'wait on' and make birds lie, a practice also followed in classical times and in India and Argentina in our day, when the former country is still the stronghold of the perfected art.

Statistics of Cancer in East London.

THE Ministry of Health has issued a report by Dr. Janet Forber (*née* Lane-Clayton) dealing with incurable cases of cancer in east London (*Reps. on Pub. Health and Med. Subjects*, No. 66. H.M. Stationery Office. 1s. net). There appears to be no shortage of medical and nursing care and hospital accommodation for these patients. The sample of 1933 cases investigated brings out (as other investigations have done) a contrast in sex incidence of the disease, namely, the great preponderance of cancer of the lip, tongue, mouth, pharynx, and larynx in the male, and cancer of the reproductive organs in the female. The mean age at death is low for fatal cancer of the uterus, ovary, and, in both sexes, the lung and pleura, and high for fatal cancer of the skin and prostate. The mean duration of in-patient care for those who seek hospital treatment is only 2.28 months, being less than one month for 46 per cent, suggesting that the terminal and troublesome stage of fatal cancer is, happily, of short duration.

Researches in Chemical Engineering.

WE have received the *Proceedings of the Chemical Engineering Group, Society of Chemical Industry*, vols. 11 and 12, 1929 and 1930 (in one volume). This contains a number of valuable papers, dealing with such subjects as surface energy, flotation, water treatment, alloy steels, gas and electric heating furnaces, and welding. The standard of the papers is high, and they are usually followed by interesting discussions. The *Transactions of the Institution of Chemical Engineers*, vol. 8, 1930, has also been received, and contains important papers on various subjects related to chemical engineering, such as cellulose products, crystallisation, high pressure reactions, tannery waste, wood pulp, pulverised fuel, and the recovery of metals from waste materials. Both these volumes are very