

phases found in this species, one skin being buff and the other grey. A similar dimorphism exists in the bay cat of Asia, and at one time the buff-coloured specimens were thought to represent a species distinct from the grey ones. The Department of Entomology has received during the past twelve months a further 7,773 insects collected and presented by Mr. Rowland Turner, from South Africa. Most of these are small and little-known wasps, and the proportion new to science is extremely high. The Department of Mineralogy has acquired by exchange fragments of a meteoric stone which fell on August 27, 1931, near Yukan in eastern Kiangsi, China. Although the fall of stones from the sky has been mentioned in Chinese literature since 1808 B.C., none appears to have been preserved with the exception of three stones that have been described scientifically since 1923.

Botanical Acquisitions at the Natural History Museum

HIS MAJESTY THE KING has placed on loan a further collection of Nepal plants presented to him by His Highness the Maharaja of Nepal. The collection contains 182 specimens and was made in central Nepal by Prof. K. N. Sharma. The plants are excellently preserved, and include a fine series of *Primula*, *Gentiana* and *Mecanopsis*. Seeds of most of the plants have been sent for growing in the Royal Parks and Gardens. The British herbarium of the late Mr. Percy Moring has been presented by his widow. Mr. Moring was resident for some time at Dover and the herbarium is rich in plants of the neighbourhood. It also contains the specimens collected round Hampstead during the Hampstead Regional Survey. Many specimens from the London suburbs are valuable records of habitats now lost through building. The Department has purchased Part I of a copy of an edition of Philip Miller's "Figures of Plants described in the Gardener's Dictionary", published in 1798. So far, nothing is known further about this edition. The thirty plates are printed in various colours and are also coloured; the dates have been erased from the blocks and the Linnean system of naming has been adopted.

A British Film Institute

THE joint committee of the Commission on Educational and Cultural Films and the bodies representing the film trade has now reached agreement on a scheme for the setting up of a British Film Institute. The general purpose of this Institute will be to encourage the use and development of the cinematograph as a means of entertainment and instruction. Among its specific objects will be to advise educational institutions and other organisations and persons as to sources and conditions of supply, types of films and apparatus; to promote and undertake research into the various uses of the film and of allied visual and auditory apparatus; and to maintain a national repository of films of permanent value. The Institute will have a membership based on subscription, and its government will be vested in a council representative in equal proportions of the film trade, educational interests and

the general public. The membership of the governing council has not yet been completed, but it includes Sir Charles Cleland, Mr. A. C. Cameron and Mr. R. S. Lambert as representing the Commission on Educational and Cultural Films and Mr. Thomas Ormiston, M.P., Mr. C. M. Woolf and Mr. S. Eckman, as representing the film trade

Underground Lighting in Mines

THE paper on "Underground Lighting in Mines" read to the South Wales Branch of the Association of Mining Engineers by R. H. Campin and published in the *Mining Electrical Engineer* for February is a helpful and useful paper. Special stress is laid on the importance of miners' hand lamps. Mr. Campin points out that most of the hand lamps now in use are virtually of the same type as those developed before 1915. There are approximately 750 thousand hand-lamps in use in Great Britain. About fifty per cent of them are flame safety lamps. The popularity of the flame type is probably due to the fact that it automatically indicates the presence of inflammable gas. Most of the electric lamps in use are of a somewhat antiquated type giving only one candle power and supplied by a two volt battery in a celluloid case. The number of lamps supplied by alkaline batteries is about four per cent. There is no doubt that in many cases improved lighting would considerably increase the output as well as diminish the total number of accidents per annum on which compensation has at present to be paid. The author mentions the case of a German mine where the effect of doubling the illumination was to increase the output per man-shift by about 30 per cent. Doubling the light increased the cost of the lighting from a half-penny to a penny per ton of coal raised. Medical investigations have shown that nystagmus is practically a light deficiency disease. The collieries have to spend £440,000 annually in compensation to sufferers from it. If lights of not less than four candle power were used, the number of cases would be greatly diminished. The author thinks that the illumination of many of our collieries could be tripled or even quadrupled without increasing operating charges. Flood-lighting at localised spots is recommended.

Prehistoric Society of East Anglia

THE contents of the recent issue of the *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia* (vol. 7, pt. 1) are of exceptional interest. At the head is the presidential address in which Mr. J. Reid Moir surveys the evidence for the culture of Pliocene man which has been collected in the last twenty-five years. This is followed by a description by Mr. J. P. T. Burchell of hand-axes from the north of Ireland, upon which Mr. Reid Moir reports that a certain number are undoubtedly of high antiquity, ranging from eolithic to Clactonian I. Lieut. K. R. W. Todd enumerates stone age sites, mostly palaeolithic, from which he has obtained a considerable number of implements, in the neighbourhood of Bombay; and Prof. A. Barnes discusses the mode of prehension of some forms of upper palaeolithic implements. The important work

of exploration at Grimes' Graves has been continued and Mr. Leslie Armstrong reports on the examination of five pits, one still unfinished, since the date of the last report in 1926. Two communications deal with different aspects of related problems. Of these, one by Mr. Stuart Piggott and Prof. Gordon Childe describes and discusses the affinities of neolithic pottery from Larné, now in the Ashmolean Museum. The authors conclude that in decoration this pottery is a reflex of the current round the north of the British Isles that is supposed to have brought the passage-grave idea to Denmark, while in form it is the most distinctively Iberian in the whole Windmill industry. In the second communication, Mr. J. G. D. Clark examines the distribution of the curved flint sickle blade in Britain, and deriving it from the Nordic culture area, thinks it is to be associated with the Peterborough pottery folk, while it is probable that the Windmill Hill people used a composite sickle. In addition to other communications, there are some useful notes and references.

Barrages on the Niger

ONE of the most important irrigation schemes in the African Sudan is being carried out in the Upper Senegal district of French West Africa, where the project is to irrigate the Macina district from the flood waters of the Niger. A few details are given in *Terre Air Mer* for February. At Bamako the Sotuba barrage, 1,340 yards long, irrigates about 15,000 acres on the right bank. The chief barrage, however, is in course of construction below Segu about 200 miles farther downstream at Diamarabougou. This will be about 1,300 yards long and will feed a number of canals on the left of the river. Some of these are already cut and embanked. A navigation canal with locks will be built round this barrage. It is estimated that this irrigation scheme will eventually allow the population of the area affected to be increased five-fold with crops of rice, cotton, forage plants and live-stock.

Sir Patrick Geddes

A SUPPLEMENT issued with the recent number of the *Sociological Review* (vol. 24, No. 3) consists of tributes to the late Sir Patrick Geddes by friends, former pupils and fellow-workers, in which his many-sided genius, his fertility in ideas and his gift for inspiring enthusiasm in others are commemorated. Sir D. M. Stevenson, Lord Provost of Glasgow, writes of "the Social Reformer"; Mr. Edward McGegan, writing from the Outlook Tower, Edinburgh, with which the name of Geddes will always be associated, speaks of him as a man of action; Lord Sandwich records his part in the saving and re-erection of Crosby Hall; Dr. R. S. Buist tells of his work at University College, Dundee; while intimate views of his enthusiasms, with which he fired others, are given in accounts of his schemes for forming a university students' quarter in London, of his work in town planning in India and in Palestine and his Collège des Ecosais at Montpellier, by writers who were closely associated with him in these undertakings.

Moles Storing Worms

REFERRING to notes in our Calendar of Nature Topics of Feb. 25, Mr. Lionel E. Adams, Wheatley, Shide Cross, Newport, I.O.W., who contributed a valuable paper entitled "Observations on a Captive Mole" to the *Proceedings of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society* of May 31, 1906, and later, an illustrated article entitled "Moles and Molehills" to NATURE of March 10, 1910, p. 37, writes: "A farmer on whose land I was trapping moles, informed me that while digging out a 'fortress' he came across a mass of dead worms in the nest cavity close to the nest. He described the quantity as 'three spadefuls'. I have frequently watched captive moles bury worms when their hunger was satisfied. The mole would bite the worm with quick bites along its whole length and then cram it into the earth and scratch the earth over it with his fore paws."

Australian Entomology

AMONGST many valuable references to papers in all branches of science, *Australian Science Abstracts* (No. 4, Nov. 1932) records a "Bibliography of Australian Entomology, 1775-1930", published by the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales (1932, pp. 1-380). In the list of papers and works touching on Australian insects during that period are references to scientific expeditions which have visited Australia and information concerning authors, collectors and collections. Invaluable to entomologists, the work will be found useful also by zoologists and botanists. An index classifies papers written on various orders of insects, as well as papers on economic, medical and veterinary entomology, and on Australian fossil insects.

The Faraday House Journal

THE part played by the Faraday House Electrical Engineering College in providing Great Britain with electrical engineers has been a very important one. Its old students are found occupying many of the highest positions in the electrical industry, and the recent issue of the *Faraday House Journal* states that more than 2,000 students have passed through the College. The virtual founder of the College was Robert Hammond, who in 1882 opened the Hammond Electrical Engineering College. In one of the notes in the *Journal* reference is made to the attempt to light Cocker-mouth with electricity in 1881, the opening function being attended by Hammond. That same year Godalming was lighted by electricity, but whereas this proved successful the scheme at Cocker-mouth failed. The *West Cumberland Times*, however, looking ahead, said that electricity would revolutionise the world, that the maturing of fruits and vegetables would be speeded up by its use and that the dynamo would be as common on the farm as the threshing machine.

The Ray Society

AT the annual general meeting of the Ray Society, held on March 22, the following officers were re-elected: *President*, Sir Sidney Harmer; *Treasurer*, Sir David Prain; *Secretary*, Dr. W. T. Calman.