

Brunton professorship in the University of Liverpool in 1923, Peet was appointed to succeed him, and in the same year was elected Laycock student of Egyptology of Worcester College, Oxford. From that time onward Peet ceased to take an active part in field work, but devoted himself to teaching and research, also editing the *Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology* (Liverpool) and the *Journal of the Egypt Exploration Society*. His "The Egyptian Dynasty" appeared in 1930 and his Schweich Lectures, on "Comparative Study of the Literatures of Egypt, Palestine and Mesopotamia", in 1931. On the retirement of Prof. F. Ll. Griffith from the chair of Egyptology at Oxford last year, Peet was appointed as reader; being also elected to a fellowship by his own college.

At the very outset of his career, Peet was recognised as a brilliant archaeologist, and at no time did his performance fall below expectation.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Dr. F. A. Bather, F.R.S., formerly keeper of the Department of Geology, British Museum (Natural History), on March 20, aged seventy-one years.

Prof. Davidson Black, F.R.S., professor of anatomy in Peiping Union Medical College and honorary director of the Cenozoic Research Laboratory, National Geological Survey of China, on March 15, aged forty-nine years.

Prof. F. Ll. Griffith, emeritus professor of Egyptology in the University of Oxford, on March 14, aged seventy-one years.

Dr. Walter Rosenhain, F.R.S., formerly superintendent of the Department of Metallurgy and Metallurgical Chemistry in the National Physical Laboratory, on March 17, aged fifty-eight years.

## News and Views

### Liquid Crystals

WE are publishing as a special supplement this week an account by Sir William Bragg, director of the laboratories of the Royal Institution, of those substances which in Great Britain are usually called 'liquid crystals'. Their very striking appearances on the microscope stage are fairly well known; but this is the first time that a coherent story has been made of the optical principles by which their characteristic behaviour is exhibited. The authors of even the most modern books on optics have not given this matter their attention; and until recently only superficial notice had been taken in Great Britain of this class of substance. The examination and explanation of their behaviour links them on one hand to the large class of oriented liquid films, and suggests on the other hand that more regular structure which X-ray analysis is daily revealing to us in so many directions. By means of new photographs, diagrams and drawings of models, Sir William Bragg has with appealing directness given us a statement of the problems which these bodies have yielded. The optical behaviour of the main groups is thus seen to be related to a varying degree of regularity of arrangement while in the mobile phase. Sir William's article, which gives a clear picture of the subject without going greatly into detail, will provide a stimulus to the growing interest which Friedel's 'mesomorphs' are attracting among physicists and others in Great Britain.

### Sir Robert Greig

SIR ROBERT GREIG, Secretary of the Department of Agriculture for Scotland, is about to retire from that position, as he attains his sixtieth year on March 23. He has only held the post for about five years, but that has been long enough for him to prove himself an excellent chief who has backed all scientific development in his Department. After leaving the University of Edinburgh, Sir Robert was for a

time a ranch manager in north-west Canada. After returning to England he was for two years lecturer at the Cheshire Agricultural College, passing on for four years to the Durham College of Science. In 1903-10 he was the Fordyce lecturer in agriculture at the University of Aberdeen. In 1911 he returned south to become staff inspector in agriculture at the Board of Education, but not for long, for in the same year he became a commissioner at the Board of Agriculture, Scotland, of which body he was chairman in 1921-28. The combination of technical knowledge and administrative ability exemplified by Sir Robert goes far to explain his success; and general regret is expressed at his impending retirement.

### Technical Officers and Administrative Posts

ON or about the same date that Sir Robert Greig retires, one of the four assistant secretaries of the Scottish Agriculture Department is also due to retire, in the person of Mr. H. M. Conacher. It may almost be assumed that their successors will be Scotsmen, or there would be 'wigs on the green' at Westminster. It is to be hoped also that on this occasion full consideration will be given to the claims of technical officers in Government departments to be selected for these posts, instead of assuming, as is usually done, that they cannot be capable administrators. The functions of the Scottish Department of Agriculture are of a character which render technical knowledge and experience, in addition to administrative ability, highly desirable qualifications for the controlling posts. The Department's work is largely concerned with the scientific development of agriculture, the organisation of agricultural education, and the carrying out of schemes of land settlement. For these purposes it employs a variety of technical experts, and it is not too much to ask that senior members of these technical staffs should definitely be brought under review in the filling of the impending vacancies in the controlling posts.