

and archaeological objects of exceptional interest. Among these is a war-drum presented by H.M. the King, which was captured from the Khalifa at Khartum in 1898 and given to Queen Victoria by Lord Kitchener. It is of the split-gong type, is made of wood, and is some seven feet long. It is shaped like an animal with a horned head at one end, and is carved with geometrical ornament in relief on the sides. A ceremonial staff from Ashanti, formerly the property of Nana Kobina Amponsah II, Ohene of Busumtwi Stool, has a gold top surmounted by a bird pecking two skulls. Sir Aurel Stein has now decided that the objects allotted to him by the Persian Government from the finds of his journeys of archaeological exploration in Iran should be sent to the British Museum, and the pottery and sherds from his third journey in 1934, on which he traversed the modern province of Fars in south-west Persia, have now been received. They date from well before 3000 B.C. and are of importance as showing affinities with such early sites as Susa and El Obeid in Irak.

THE Department of Oriental Antiquities has received an accession of exceptional importance in the form of five sculptured stone heads from the Buddhist cave temples of T'ien Lung Shan, near Taiyuanfu in Shansi, dating from the sixth to the tenth centuries A.D. They represent a highly developed phase of Chinese religious sculpture, of which very few examples are to be found in British collections. They were given through the British Ambassador in Tokyo by Mr. Kachiro Nezu as a token of friendship to the British nation. Among the British antiquities is a large Roman pottery basin, about seventeen inches in diameter, with figures of horsemen and floral design, which appear upside down. It was found by Colonel and Mrs. A. Ogilvie, by whom it is presented, inside a larger vessel in a kiln at Linwood in the New Forest. It dates from the third century A.D.

Fruit-Cooling Plant at Cape Town

IN *Electrical Industries* of August 11 a description is given of the largest pre-cooling plant in the world, dealing with the fruit exported from Cape Town docks. This installation, which was completed twelve years ago, has made it easy to ensure the low-temperature preservation of fruit as soon as possible after picking. It ensures also that the temperature of the fruit when loaded is comparable with that maintained in the ship's storage chambers on the voyage. Thanks to the Government policy of insisting on high standards and of providing research and educational facilities for fruit growers, the plant is now working at its full capacity and more accommodation is urgently needed. To meet this need, large pre-cooling chambers were projected, and when the entire scheme is completed next year they will have a capacity of 6,000 (shipping) tons. When the fruit trains reach the store from the country, they are shunted into the 'air-lock', a large asphalt-floored shed 74 feet wide by 900 feet long. The fruit is examined and tested there by the Government in-

spectors, and that which does not reach export standard is rejected. The standard fruit is then transferred by battery vehicles to the ship's side and by crane to the hold. The ammonia method being economically impracticable, the underground storage chambers are cooled by brine circulated through coils. At a considerably lower level is the large engine room containing electric transformers and ammonia compressors. An automatic recorder keeps a visible record of the temperature in every cooling chamber taken every eight minutes. The engine room is provided with an emergency lighting battery plant.

New "North-West Passage"

A BULLETIN from the office of the High Commissioner for Canada announces the receipt of a radio-telegram from the S.S. *Nascopie*, a vessel now under charter to the Canadian Government for the 1937 Arctic Expedition, in which it is stated that the vessel has effected the first crossing of Bellot Strait, forming a second North-West Passage across the Canadian Arctic. The strait separates Somerset Island from the Boothia Peninsula, the northern tip of Canadian mainland. The original "North-West Passage", the discovery of which was for many years the dream of Arctic navigators, as a short route from Europe to Asia, runs farther north than the Bellot route. So early as 1585, John Davis set sail to locate this passage, but it was not until 1903-7 that Captain Roald Amundsen made the voyage along Lancaster Sound, Barrow Strait and Peel Sound which defined the route. The Bellot route, a shorter and possibly better passage, has engaged the attention of Arctic explorers since 1858, when Captain Thomas McClintock, searching for the lost Franklin expedition, endeavoured to make his way through. The attempt, unfortunately, was futile, and other later attempts were equally unsuccessful. The Strait was discovered by Captain W. Kennedy in 1852, when he crossed it by dog-team. The appearance of the waterway is that of a Greenland fjord. It is about twenty miles long and barely a mile wide at its narrowest part. The shores are of granite formation of bold and lofty elevation, with a fair sprinkling of Arctic vegetation. Some of the hill ranges attain heights of 1,500-1,600 feet.

Symbols for Thermodynamical Quantities

THE report of a joint committee of the Chemical Society, Faraday Society and Physical Society on symbols for thermodynamical and physico-chemical quantities and conventions relating to their use has been published. It contains symbols for use in thermodynamics and physical chemistry, with explanatory matter. The objects of the joint committee, it is stated, were to correlate the views of chemists and physicists with regard to the use of symbols for thermodynamic quantities and to deal similarly with symbols for other quantities which are of interest to both chemists and physicists. The committee was very representative, and the report, which is a document of sixteen pages, is of considerable interest. The symbols and conventions of the report have