

small committee of scientific workers and horticulturists is being set up, with headquarters at Kew, to discuss the practical value of the results obtained. It is hoped that the committee may serve as a medium for the exchange of ideas, and also as a body which may be consulted by those who are working at isolated centres and are not in a position to decide in what directions their researches might most usefully be carried out. If at any time it is felt that further open meetings could usefully be held, the committee will decide where and when these might take place.

University Events

CAMBRIDGE.—The title of Stokes lecturer in mathematics has been conferred on Dr. S. Goldstein.

The Vice-Chancellor gives notice that the Cavendish professorship of experimental physics is vacant by the death of Lord Rutherford. A meeting of the electors will be held on February 11. If a proposal which is at present before the University is approved, the stipend of the professor will be £1,400 a year or while the professor holds a fellowship of a College with dividend £1,200, in addition to a non-pensionable payment of £200 a year for administration. Candidates for the professorship are requested to communicate with the Vice-Chancellor, and to send him on or before February 1 ten copies of any statement or testimonial which they desire to submit to the electors. If testimonials and references are sent they should not, taken together, exceed four in number.

The Adam Smith Prize is awarded to S. R. Dennison of Trinity College.

OXFORD.—S. J. Wright, for some years assistant-director and recently acting-director of the Institute for Research in Agricultural Engineering, has been appointed director.

Dr. J. R. Raeburn has been appointed a research officer under the Committee for Rural Economy.

A. G. Ogston has been elected to a fellowship at Balliol College for work in the biological sciences.

Dr. A. G. Gibson, Nuffield reader in morbid anatomy, has been elected to a professorial fellowship at Merton College.

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood has been appointed Romanes Lecturer for 1938.

The numbers of those reading the various main subjects of study in the academic year 1936-37 have recently been compiled. The largest science 'schools' are chemistry (207), physiology (194) and mathematics (143). Then come the new school of geography (100), agriculture and forestry (76), physics (59), zoology (40), engineering, botany and geology. About nine per cent of those reading these subjects are women. These numbers are greater than the corresponding numbers of the last survey. They are still small, however, compared with those of many other subjects. History (931), 'Greats', philosophy, politics and economics, and modern languages have each more than twice as many students as chemistry. Then come, in descending order of numbers, law (405), English, theology, music and Oriental studies.

SHEFFIELD.—The following appointments have recently been made: R. W. John, to be research assistant to the Department of Pathology; Douglas Harrison, to be assistant lecturer in electrical engineering; Donald Havenhand, to be assistant lecturer in metallurgy.

Science News a Century Ago

An Ascent of the Peak of Demawund

At a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society held on January 8, 1838, extracts were read from three communications. One of these was an account of an ascent of the peak of Demawund in September 1837 by Taylor Thomson, the paper being presented by W. F. Ainsworth (1807-96), who had been surgeon and geologist to the Euphrates expedition of Colonel Chesney. The mountain, it was stated, was about 40 miles east-north-east of Teheran and previously there had been no account of its ascent by a European or any measurement of its height. Thomson left Teheran on September 4, and after obtaining guides at a village, ascended to the summit on September 9 and spent the night there in a cave which was heated to upwards of 76° F. by the sulphurous vapour which issued from the rocks. The geological formation of the mountain, from Gernah upwards for about 1,000 feet seemed, said Thomson, to be a bed of sandstone of the coal formation, with one seam of coal; above this limestone occurred with a thickness of about 1,200 feet, then came greenstone coloured with iron to within 100 ft. of the summit, which was a deposit of pure sulphur. "The geological results of this expedition," said Ainsworth, "possess great interest by establishing the existence of a pseudo-volcano in these central districts of Western Asia, and ally themselves with the observations which Baron Humboldt has made upon the evidences of volcanic action, which he has traced everywhere on the great continent of Asia. It is a remarkable fact that throughout those districts of Taurus, Amanus, Kúrdistán and the Persian Apennines, in which I have travelled, I have never yet met with rocks of the secondary series. The absence of every member between the chalk and the primary formations is one of the most remarkable features in the geology of Western Asia."

Fossil Discoveries in France

On January 13, 1838, the *Athenæum* again directed attention to the recent discoveries of fossils in a French mine, remarking that "Further inspection increases the importance of the discoveries of M. Lartet and others . . . and fresh arrivals from him at the Academy of Sciences in Paris, produce new wonders. They combine the remains of animals, which, in all probability, no longer exist in nature, with some which do not appear to differ from those actually in being: the mine is still far from being exhausted, and a more favourable opportunity for the observations of geologists never before presented itself. The bones of the rhinoceros most abound; after these come those of deer, with their horns, and if an estimation may be formed by their size, the remains of a small and elegant species of ass or horse must have been deposited. New fragments of *macrotherium gigans* have come to light, which show that its claws bore a strong analogy to those of the *Orycteropus*. The bears must have been totally different from any yet discovered; and those bones which belong to an animal called *Amphicyon*, by M. Lartet, show a strong analogy between it and the dog".

Samuel Woodward, 1790-1838

On January 14, 1838, Samuel Woodward, the Norwich geologist and antiquary, died at the age of forty-seven years. Born in Norwich on October 2,