

as president of the Prehistoric Society in 1937, and occupies no less than 175 pages in quarto of that Society's recently published *Proceedings* for 1937 (3, 2).

#### Royal Geographical Society: Medals and Awards

H.M. THE KING has approved the award of the Royal Medals as follows: Founder's Medal to Mr. John Rymill, for his organization and leadership of the British Graham Land Expedition 1934-37; Patron's Medal to Mr. Eric Shipton, for his explorations around Nanda Devi and Mount Everest and his conduct of the Shaksgam Expedition of 1937. The Council has made the following awards: Victoria Medal to Mr. A. R. Hinks, for his contributions to the study of geodesy and the figure of the earth, map projections, and photogrammetric survey; Murchison Grant to Mr. Martin Lindsay, for his journey across Greenland in 1934; Back Grant to Mr. Thomas Hay, for his contributions to the physical geography of the Lake District; Cuthbert Peek Grant to Mr. Bradford Washburn, for his explorations and glacier studies in Alaska; Gill Memorial to Mr. Ivan Champion, for his explorations and surveys in Papua.

#### The British Association and Australia

THE Australian Government has decided not to proceed further at present with the proposal to invite the British Association to meet again in the Commonwealth. As it is desired, however, that leading men of science should from time to time be afforded opportunity to visit Australia, it has been decided to issue invitations to a party of six to attend the jubilee meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science at Canberra in January 1939. It is hoped that the precedent so set will become regular practice at each succeeding biennial meeting of the Association. A grant of £A1,500 towards the expenses of the guests in 1939 has been promised by the Government.

#### Man and Animals in Great Britain

A MEETING arranged by the University of London Animal Welfare Society (ULAWS) was held in the Beveridge Hall of the University of London on March 22 to discuss "Man's Relation to Nature and his Response" with reference to "the Survey and Regulation of British Fauna". The chairman, Sir P. Chalmers Mitchell, said that the so-called 'balance of Nature' is a myth and has not existed since glacial times, when there were no animals in Britain to be balanced. We interfere too much for there to be one and interference is no good without knowledge. The Marquess of Tavistock showed how conflicting interests make legislation difficult. Fruit farmers and the owners of grouse moors oppose the protection of bullfinches and peregrine falcons respectively. There is no need to fear the introduction of wild birds for, unlike alien rodents, they find competition too strong. As regards method of control, there is no difficulty in shooting deer in the Highlands, but in the wooded Lowlands hunting is kinder. Shooting is often unkind to foxes owing to the uncertainty of aim. Otters are

neutral in sporting streams, killing some game fish but keeping down eels; but they are harmful in trout hatcheries and to ornamental wild fowl. Protecting stoats and weasels to keep rabbits down is a fallacy. Prof. F. A. E. Crew referred to the need for research on the ecology of British mammals; he suggested that we should have something like the U.S. Biological Survey, that the Bureau of Animal Population should be supported, and the staffs of museums and university departments should be enlarged. Sir Roy Robinson, chairman of the Forestry Commission, said that complaints about his treatment of animals were sentimental and not based on knowledge. Rabbits should be exterminated. There are too many deer and foxes. The only mammal in need of protection is the pine marten, and he would like to harbour them. All birds, except black-game and caper-cailzie, should be encouraged in forests. Other speakers referred to the desirability and the difficulties of rabbit extermination in various parts of Great Britain.

#### Roman Fortifications in Yorkshire

RECENT evidence of the varied methods of construction adopted by the builders of Hadrian's Wall (see NATURE, March 19, p. 505) lent additional interest to the account of the defensive system of Roman Aldborough, near Boroughbridge, Yorkshire, which was presented to the Society of Antiquaries on March 24 by Mr. J. N. L. Myres and Miss Mary Kitson Clarke. This site, known to the Romans as Isurium Brigantium, was the capital city of the British tribe of the Brigantes, an important people, whose territory covered nearly the whole of the northern part of what is now England south of the Border. The excavation was carried out by Mr. Myres and Miss Clarke for the Roman Antiquities Committee of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society. In the course of the excavation, it was found that the north-west wall did not run as shown in the Ordnance Survey map, but that its angle lay farther to the north-west. The main scheme of the defences, it was found, consisted of the wall itself, backed by a bank of clay and sand. This, however, was not constructed until the second century A.D. Previously there appears to have been no system of defence, and Roman occupation had been haphazard. Later, perhaps in the early part of the fourth century, a large bastion had been added to the angle, and at least one small bastion built on to the west wall, not far from the angle. Still preserved to a height of nine feet in parts is the lower story of an internal angle tower, which was a striking feature of the wall in its original form. This had supported some structure rising above the wall. Pottery indicates that a lean-to hut at the back of the tower was occupied in the third century. The excavations will be carried further in the coming season.

#### Clifton College Scientific Society

THE Clifton College Scientific Society held a conversazione in the Science School on Thursday, March 17. About 350 guests were present, as well