

Sir Charles Peers, C.B.E., F.B.A.

THE gold medal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of London has been awarded to Sir Charles R. Peers in recognition of his services to archæology in Great Britain. This medal, generally accepted as the highest award in archæology in Great Britain, has been awarded on three occasions only, the first recipient being Sir Arthur Evans, who was followed by the Abbé Breuil and then Sir Aurel Stein. Sir Charles Peers, who was educated at Charterhouse and King's College, Cambridge, and is by profession an architect, was appointed inspector of ancient monuments under the Board (now Office) of Works in 1910. His appointment was the result of prolonged agitation by archæologists and others interested in the preservation of antiquities in Great Britain. It marks an epoch in the history of British archæology. The inspectorship had been vacant since the death of General Pitt-Rivers in 1900, while the Ancient Monuments Acts, of which the first was passed in 1882, had long been virtually a dead letter. In 1913, three years after Sir Charles's appointment, a consolidating and amending Act was passed, which much enlarged the powers of the Commissioners, and he was given the standing and title of chief inspector of ancient monuments.

LARGELY through Sir Charles's activity, notwithstanding the interruption of the Great War, the growth of a public opinion in favour of the preservation of antiquities was fostered and the functions and duties of the Office of Works as the guardian of the nation's interests in its antiquities rendered familiar to a degree which made it possible still further to strengthen the powers of the Department, also recognized in the Town Planning Acts, by the further amending Ancient Monuments Act of 1930. Although Sir Charles retired in 1933, after receiving the honour of knighthood in 1931, he has since then still taken an active part in archæological administration. He continues to be a member of the Advisory Boards on Ancient Monuments of England, Wales, and Scotland, sits on the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, as well as on the Standing Committee on Museums, and is an elected trustee of the British and the London Museums. In 1933 he was awarded the Royal Gold Medal of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

Dr. A. E. Dunstan

THE Council of the Institution of Petroleum Technologists has awarded the Redwood Medal of the Institution to Dr. A. E. Dunstan in recognition of his distinguished services to the science and technology of petroleum. The medal was presented on April 12. Dr. A. E. Dunstan was born at Sheffield in 1878. In 1899 he entered the Royal College of Science, South Kensington. Later on he studied at University College, London, under Ramsay and at East London College under Hewitt. At University College, Dr. Dunstan collaborated with Trouton on investigations into the correlation of physical prop-

erties and chemical constitution. He had already published work on viscosity-concentration curves of mixtures. This work was continued at University College and elsewhere, and formed the subject of his thesis in 1910 for the degree of D.Sc. In the meantime, he had communicated numerous papers to the Chemical Society on the problems of viscosity in collaboration with Thole, Wilson, Hunt, Stubbs and others. From 1905 until 1915 Dr. Dunstan was head of the Chemical Department, East Ham Technical College. In 1915 he joined the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. From that time dates the important series of researches on the chemistry and refining of petroleum with which Dr. Dunstan's name is particularly associated. The first important paper relating specifically to the petroleum industry was presented to the Institution in 1916 by Dunstan, Lomax and Thole, and dealt with the pyrogenesis of hydrocarbons. It described the evolution of the process of cracking and of the principles underlying it. A period of intensive research followed on the chemistry of refining processes, during which experimental work was carried out at Abadan and Sunbury. Dr. Dunstan is chief chemist of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and a director of National Oil Refineries, Ltd. He was president of the Institution of Petroleum Technologists in 1929-31 and has been honorary editor of the Institution's publications since 1920.

The Magnetic Storm of April 16

THE magnetic storm which occurred during the Easter week-end appears to have been one of the most violent ever recorded. Particulars of the disturbance have been supplied to NATURE from the Abinger magnetic station of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, and from Edinburgh. The storm, as recorded at Abinger, considerably exceeded that of January 25 of this year both in range and in intensity. At intervals the photographic traces are difficult to follow on account of the rapidity of change in the earth's magnetic field. Beginning at 5 h. 48 m. U.T. with a sudden sweep of 45' in declination, the storm almost immediately attained dimensions sufficient to place it among the "great" storms of the past hundred years. Only the salient features are at present available. These may be summarized as follows: The period of most intense activity was from 6 h. to 8 h. U.T. and the storm had virtually ceased by 16½ h. The whole range in the vertical component of the field was approximately 500 γ —not very remarkable except for the short interval of fifteen minutes during which it occurred—between 7 h. 35 m. and 7 h. 50 m. The ranges in declination and horizontal intensity are at present subject to reservation. On account of the rapidity of change some doubt exists as to the identification of the auxiliary traces which are brought into the record in lieu of the displaced ordinary trace when large ranges occur. A tentative estimate of 5° in declination and 2250 γ in horizontal intensity (that is, nearly one eighth of the whole) has been made by the assistant in charge of the Abinger station.