

University Events

CAMBRIDGE.—Dr. L. E. R. Picken, of Trinity College, has been re-elected to the Balfour studentship, for research on the molecular morphology of living cells.

Grants from the Balfour Fund have been made to the following: D. A. Webb, of Trinity College, £20, for expenses whilst working at the Millport Marine Station; to D. A. Webb, of Trinity College, £40, for expenses whilst working at Prof. Krogh's Laboratory in Copenhagen; Dr. C. H. Waddington, £25, towards the expenses of visiting the Marine Laboratory, Woods Hole; M. G. M. Pryor, of Trinity College, a sum not exceeding £40, for expenses whilst working under Prof. Kühn in Berlin; Dr. V. J. Chapman, £25, towards the cost of an expedition to the West Indies; Dr. R. J. Pumphrey, £20, for expenses whilst doing research at the Plymouth Marine Station.

The Frank Smart studentship in botany will be vacant on October 1. Any graduate of the University is eligible for the studentship provided that not more than eighteen complete terms have elapsed after his first term of residence. Women also are eligible. The successful candidate must devote himself to research in botany under the direction of the Professor of Botany. A student may be appointed for one year or for two years. The value of the studentship is £210 a year. A candidate must send his name, with a statement of the course of research which he proposes to undertake, and such evidence of his qualifications as he thinks fit, to Prof. F. T. Brooks, at the Botany School, on or before September 30.

OXFORD.—At Encaenia on June 21, the following among others received honorary degrees: *D.Sc.*, Sir Edward Mellanby; *D.C.L.*, the Marquess of Lothian, Sir Maurice Gwyer, Admiral Sir Herbert Richmond and the Hon. Vincent Massey.

Dr. Robert Gunther has resigned his appointment as honorary University reader in the history of science at Oxford. He will remain in charge of the Museum of the History of Science. Work on the Oxford dictionaries, hitherto carried out in the lecture room of the old Ashmolean Museum, is being transferred to the new Bodleian extension.

Dr. E. G. T. Liddell, Trinity College, and Mr. D. L. Hammick, Oriel College, have been elected members of the Hebdomadal Council.

Prof. R. S. Troup is resigning the professorship of forestry on July 31, 1940.

E. F. Caldin, Queen's College, has been elected to a junior research fellowship (in chemistry) at Queen's College. Dr. A. H. Cooke, Christ Church, has been elected to a lectureship in physios (the equivalent of a research fellowship) at Christ Church. Miss A. Pellow, St. Hugh's College, has been elected to the Moberly senior scholarship (in engineering).

The following new appointments have been made: E. B. Ford, Wadham College, reader in genetics; C. F. W. R. Gullick, lecturer on economic geography; Dr. R. A. Hull, St. John's College, demonstrator and lecturer in physics; R. N. Chrystal, demonstrator and lecturer in entomology; A. C. Hoyle, Pembroke College, and Dr. N. V. Polunin, Christ Church, demonstrators and lecturers in botany.

SHEFFIELD.—Prof. R. P. Linstead has resigned from the Firth chair of chemistry, on his appointment to the chair of organic chemistry in Harvard University.

Science News a Century Ago

Giraffe Born at Zoological Gardens

ON June 25, 1839, Prof. Richard Owen read to the Zoological Society "Some Notes on the Birth of a Male Giraffe at the Zoological Gardens". The animal was born on June 19. The period of gestation, said Owen, had been, as nearly as possible, ascertained to be fourteen months, eighteen days, or fifteen lunar months. The young animal, when born, was perfectly motionless, and apparently dead, or strangulated, its lips and nose being tinged with blood; but after gentle friction had been used for a short time, breathing and motion quickly followed. The mother was in no way depressed or debilitated. The animal came into the world like other ruminants, with the eyes open, but the hoofs were disproportionately large, and very soft and white at their expanded extremities; the skin was marked as distinctly as in the adult; the horns were represented by stiff and long black hairs, and the mane was well developed.

Allan Cunningham (1791-1839)

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM, an eminent botanist and traveller, was born at Wimbledon, Surrey, on July 13, 1791, his father being a gardener. Having become connected with the Gardens at Kew, he became known to Sir Joseph Banks and on September 4, 1814, he was appointed botanical collector in the southern hemisphere for the royal gardens. Sailing from Plymouth in October 1814, he did not return to England until July 1831. In turn he visited Rio de Janeiro, and parts of Brazil, New South Wales, New Holland, Van Dieman's Land, New Zealand and Norfolk Islands. Though after his return home he was in somewhat indifferent health, he was offered the post of colonial botanist in New South Wales, but declined it in favour of his brother Richard, who, however, was killed by natives in April 1835. Cunningham now accepted the office and proceeded to Sydney, but his strength failed him and he died on June 27, 1839, at the age of forty-eight years.

Becquerel's Electrical Experiments

"M. BECQUEREL," said the *Athenæum* of June 29, 1839, "has read the first part of a memoir before the French Academy of Sciences, containing an account of his new experiments on the electric forces of contact. These led him to conclusions concerning the causes of certain effects which differ from those of Davy, who ascribed them to mere contact. M. Becquerel refers them to friction and hopes to prove it by the following experiments. First, two conducting plates made of platina were adapted to an excellent electroscope; one of them was touched with a very dry piece of chalk, and the other with the finger; on separating the plates, it was found that no electric effect had been produced. Secondly, a layer of calcined lime, highly dried, was spread on a piece of wood, equally dry; upon this was carefully placed, so as not to allow of friction, a plate of copper, fixed to a handle; it was then put in contact with one of the plates of the condensator, while the other was touched with the finger. After repeating this several times, no electric discharge was obtained, but if the copper disc were placed on the lime with friction, the condensator was charged after touching a few times, and the greater the friction the stronger the charge."