

logical method of research. Although it is widely appreciated that in the archaeological studies of the last generation nothing has contributed more fruitfully to understanding of the culture of the stone age than the interpretation of the palaeolithic cave paintings of southern France and Spain by reference to the magical and religious beliefs of modern 'savages', nevertheless many archaeologists hesitate to press such analogies. They point to the unquestionable fact that the culture of the modern 'primitive' has not been static over a long period, but has itself been the subject of an evolutionary process, even though they may admit with Dr. Balfour that change has been slow, when no extraneous element has been implicated. Yet instances of the prolonged persistence of unchanged tradition do undoubtedly occur. An interesting illustration bearing on the argument is afforded by Mr. S. Casson's study in *Antiquity* of December last of survivals among ceramic types now current in Cyprus and the islands of the Ægean, belonging to a tradition which extends back not only to medieval times, but even in some instances to the bronze age. He points out how the methods of manufacture, marketing and distribution between the islands and to the mainland still followed at the present day may serve, with their Homeric flavour, to throw light on the obscure field of the early industrial and commercial organization of the eastern Mediterranean, about which so little is known in detail.

#### Research in Mental Disease at Birmingham

ON February 9, a memorial plaque to the memory of the late Sir Frederick Mott was unveiled by Lady Mott in the Medical School of the University of Birmingham at Edgbaston. The plaque, which is the work of Miss Phyllis Mott, the daughter of Sir Frederick, was the gift of Dr. H. A. Pullar Strecker. Sir Gilbert Barling, in an introductory address, said that the Joint Board for Research in Mental Disease has now found its home in the new Medical School of the University, where it has excellent laboratory accommodation. The laboratory was originally opened at Hollymoor in 1923 by the Minister of Health (the present Prime Minister) with Sir Frederick Mott as honorary director of the Joint Board of Research, and Dr. F. A. Pickworth as chief research officer. It was hoped that the mental hospitals in the surrounding counties would join in the research, and this hope is now fulfilled by Staffordshire, Leicestershire, Worcestershire and Shropshire. Sir Gilbert acknowledged the generous help of Sir Charles Hyde both in 1923 and at the present time. Funds are now available for the appointment of another full-time research officer of high standing to study the influence of viruses and hormones as causes of mental disease, and a surplus is to be used to provide the stipend of a research scholar for three or four years.

#### Roman Road near East Grinstead

A ROMAN road, which is described as "one of the most perfectly preserved of its type in Britain", has been discovered in a field at Holtye near East Grinstead (*The Times*, February 13). It is part of the

old Roman highway which ran from London to Lewes and here crosses a field. The land on which it is situated has been purchased by Mr. I. D. Margary, a Sussex archaeologist, for the purpose of investigation and later preservation. At present a stretch of the road, about 85 yards long and varying in width from 15 to 18 ft., has been uncovered. Wheel marks are plainly visible; but the iron-slag surface has rusted together so solidly as to form a mass almost as hard as concrete, and consequently in an excellent state of preservation. In certain places it has been necessary for the workmen to remove soil to a depth of three feet to reach the surface of the road. The remains of vegetation several inches in depth indicate that at one time a forest grew over the road.

#### Research in Electrical Industries

LORD STAMP, the new president of the British Electrical and Allied Industries Research Association, when addressing members at a luncheon which followed the annual meeting in London on February 10, laid stress on the value of research in industry. He pointed out that the electrical industry takes a leading place in research because it has no real industrial or commercial history apart from the history of research and invention. Most industries grow out of, and often cling to, primitive operations on raw materials to supply age-old needs. Scientific research, if added to them, complicates them; and many think that these additions are a doubtful advantage if they cannot be confined to benefit those who promote them. They think that it makes competition more keen in various branches of the industry and often, as well, creates unnecessarily rapid obsolescence in plants still working. The whole genesis of the electrical industry has been different; it was born out of research and is meeting the created needs of an advanced civilization. Continuous research is its natural sustenance. The work of this Association is an excellent example of co-operation between manufacturers and users; it pools their ideas, thus ensuring that both sides get full benefit from them.

#### Thermal Power Plants for Emergency Service

A MAJOR interruption of the electric supply in a city of any importance is nowadays attended with disastrous consequences. The provision of some reserve source of power, capable of supplying the vital services at least, is therefore imperative when such failures can occur. The main causes of failures are breakdowns of transmission lines, strikes or enemy bombardment. A paper read by Mr. Hvistendahl on November 10 to the Institution of Electrical Engineers distinguishes between the different classes of service to be furnished by stand-by plants. Descriptions are given of automatic and semi-automatic stand-by plants used in towns in Norway and Sweden. Although unthinkable a few years ago, the bomb-proof emergency service station is now a grim reality. Sandbags provide some protection against fragments of stray shells or bombs, but they are little use against repeated attacks from the air,