

is a conservationist, not in the sense that he seeks to protect wild life out of season, so that the mute and helpless creatures of wood and field can be indiscriminately maimed and slaughtered 'in season', but as a protector and preserver of all wild life in every season. In addition to being the author of numerous articles on natural history, he has had published several novels.

Dr. Tweedie John Todd

DR. TWEEDIE JOHN TODD, physician and naturalist, was born at Berwick in 1789, the son of the borough treasurer. He studied medicine at Edinburgh and for several years served as a surgeon in the Navy, chiefly in the East Indies and at the Cape of Good Hope, where he made some experiments on the electric ray (Torpedo), which were afterwards published in the *Philosophical Transactions*. He retired from the Navy in 1816, and after spending some years in Italy settled in Brighton, where he soon acquired an extensive practice. He was the author of several papers on natural history which were published in the *Philosophical Transactions* and the *Journal of Science and Arts*, such as "The Regeneration of Parts in the Aquatic Salamander" and "The Luminous Power of Some of the Lampyrids". His contribution to medical literature consisted of "The Book of Analysis. A New Method of Experience", in which he endeavoured to apply Baconian induction to medicine and the other natural sciences. For many years he was engaged in a series of microscopical researches on living animals illustrative of different parts of physiological and pathological science and especially of the processes concerned in the healing and regeneration of wounded and lost parts. He left a large collection of microscope slides at the time of his death, which took place on August 4, 1840.

University Students and Compulsory Service

DR. RAYMOND PRIESTLEY, vice-chancellor of the University of Birmingham, in the course of a circular letter addressed to head masters of a number of schools in the Midlands, has pointed out that the age at which undergraduates will be called up for military service has been fixed by the Government at twenty years. This will enable many men to complete their university training before entering the Services. With the object of enhancing the value of such men to the national effort, it has been decided by the University of Birmingham that all future entrants will be required to choose one of the following options as part of their university course: (1) compulsory physical education for one year; or (2) two years service in the University contingent of the O.T.C. Those who choose the latter will be accepted for the O.T.C. only if they are approved by an interviewing board set up by the Military Education Committee, the main criteria being personality and power of leadership (latent or developed). Training in the O.T.C. will be carried out with the view of developing powers of leadership rather than training technical experts, and should prove of great interest and value to all who join, in whatever walk of life they may afterwards find themselves. The advantages

of this general military training apply equally to those taking medical and dental courses, since the military background essential to an R.A.M.C. officer can be adequately acquired in this way. Those who obtain War Certificates A and B will have definite advantages when they are called up for military service; the scheme should go far towards ensuring that the best use is made of all those suitable as officers.

Fire Risk from the Smashing of Filament Lamps

EXPERIMENT shows that it is difficult to cause ignition of combustible material by means of smashing a filament lamp embedded in it. But the lamp-holder of a large lamp may rise to a fairly high temperature, high enough to explode certain compounds used for military purposes. It is well known that sudden breakage of a glass bulb may occur during heavy gunfire in a battleship or cruiser. It could also happen in a submarine when depth charges are exploding near it. This explains the interest now being taken in the United States Navy in fluorescent lighting for magazines and in other parts of a warship where explosives are handled. It is very difficult to set fire even to cotton-wool by smashing a lighted fluorescent lamp reposing on it.

A useful feature of the mercury fluorescent lamp is that it can easily be so graded as to emit the tone of blue light that is preferred for darkening a ship when in action at night. At present this reduced lighting effect is obtained by shading tungsten filament lamps and using a blue glass bulb, or one which has been sprayed in that colour. The *Electrical Times* of July 4 states that the U.S. Navy is having a series of experiments made with fluorescent lighting, and if it is found that this type obviates the danger due to filament lamps overheating in tropical atmospheres or when they are smashed by heavy gunfire, the mercury discharge type with fluorescent effect may find an extensive use in warships and elsewhere. It is also being recommended for mines, gasworks, petrol and benzine factories, hydrogen plant and all other places where the air is charged with explosive vapours or dust.

Daylight Observation of Venus and Jupiter

DR. A. L. PECK, of Christ's College, Cambridge, writes: "In view of the astronomical notes in *NATURE* of July 27, p. 128, it may be of interest to record that two planets were picked out here with the naked eye on July 28, at 9.40 a.m. B.S.T.—Venus (daylight observation of which is, of course, nothing unusual) and Jupiter. Observation of the latter was made possible by its proximity to the moon, with which it had been in conjunction a few hours before."

British Museum (Natural History): Acquisitions

THE Zoological Department has received as a donation from Admiral Sir Sidney Bailey, a series of mounted heads of North American ungulates, including a very fine moose and some exceptionally good wapiti and caribou. The collection also contains a head of a Rocky Mountain goat. Another interesting