

Garden. In 1931 he was appointed assistant director of Kew Gardens. During the Second World War he was seconded to the Petroleum Division of the Ministry of Fuel and Power, where he was principal officer during 1940-44. In 1946 he was made director of the Royal Horticultural Society's Gardens at Wisley. The experience gained in these exacting posts will stand him in good stead in the work before him. Mr. Gilmour has great energy and diverse interests. He is joint editor of the *New Naturalist*, and has been secretary of the Systematic Association and chairman of the Botanic Society and Exchange Club. Outside botany his main interests are music and books. Many will remember with pleasure the lunch-time concerts in his house at Kew. Mrs. Gilmour played a prominent part in these concerts.

Dr. H. R. Fletcher

DR. H. R. FLETCHER, who succeeds Mr. Gilmour, graduated at Manchester in 1929, and in the same year was appointed assistant lecturer in botany in the University of Aberdeen under the late Prof. Craib. There he became interested in taxonomy, especially in the flora of Siam, and in the administration of the Cruickshank Botanic Garden. After taking his Ph.D., Dr. Fletcher was appointed to the staff of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, in 1934. There for a time he continued his work on the Siamese flora, and graduated D.Sc. in 1939. But since Chinese plants are very richly represented in the Edinburgh Herbarium and Garden, he inevitably turned to the flora of China, and particularly to those plants of the Western Chinese Alps which have proved to be of outstanding horticultural importance. In collaboration with Sir William Wright Smith, he published a long series of papers on the sections of the genus *Primula* (*1 trans. Roy. Soc. Edin.*, *1 trans. Bot. Soc. Edin.*, and *J. Linnean Soc.*). Then followed a revision of the genus *Omphalogramma* and numerous articles in scientific and gardening journals on the genera *Codonopsis*, *Cremanthodium*, *Aconitum*, *Potentilla* and *Incarvillea*. Research apart, Dr. Fletcher has for many years acted as tutor to the botany class arranged by the Edinburgh Workers' Educational Association. He is also honorary secretary of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh. He has given courses of instruction to the student gardeners in Edinburgh on taxonomy and on the principles of botany as applied to horticulture, and was partly responsible for the planning of the syllabus of the Edinburgh diploma in horticulture.

Rutherford Memorial Fund

ON November 30, an appeal for a memorial to the late Lord Rutherford was launched by the Royal Society (see *Nature*, December 2, p. 917). A total of £100,000 was mentioned as the sum required to establish scholarships on an adequate scale, and it is very gratifying to learn that nearly £60,000 has been already received from companies, many of them industrial firms, and individuals in the United Kingdom. In view of the special difficulties of the times, this speedy response is very encouraging. The Dominions of Canada, Australia and New Zealand are taking special steps to collect funds in their respective countries. The Memorial Committee is, however, anxious that the total sum raised and the portion contributed by the United Kingdom shall be as high as possible, and it invites further contributions.

West African Institute for Trypanosomiasis Research

SIR JOHN MACPHERSON, Governor of Nigeria, opened the West African Institute for Trypanosomiasis Research on January 31. The Institute, which is partly at Kaduna and partly at Vom, will undertake further research into all aspects of human and animal trypanosomiasis, including studies on the insect carriers of this group of diseases and experimental work with the various trypanocidal drugs. It will maintain a central library and museum, and serve as an information and advice bureau on all problems connected with sleeping sickness and animal trypanosomiasis. The cost of the Institute, £234,000, has been met under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, which have borne two-thirds of it, and the remainder by the Governments of Nigeria, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and the Gambia. Colonel H. W. Mulligan, of the Indian Medical Service, formerly director of the Central Research Institute, Kasauli, was appointed Director of the Institute in 1947, and he has been responsible for acquiring sites and preparing plans for administrative, laboratory and ancillary buildings as well as for the other tasks of organization involved in starting an entirely new research institute. It is expected that men of science from other countries will visit the Institute as guest workers from time to time. The affairs of the Institute are in the hands of a statutory managing committee of which the Chief Secretary of the West African Council is chairman, and on which the director of the Institute also sits; the various members are nominated by the West African Governments, while the director and chairman are appointed by the Secretary of State.

British Museum (Natural History) : Acquisitions

THE Northern Rhodesian Administration has presented to the Department of Mineralogy of the British Museum (Natural History) a large number of meteoritic stones, the first recorded in Northern Rhodesia, which formed part of a shower of meteorites that fell some ten or fifteen miles north-west of Monze Township (between Livingstone and Lusaka) at 4.10 a.m. on October 5, 1950. A brilliant meteor was observed low over the district, and shortly afterwards a violent explosion was heard and a shower of small stones fell over a radius of about two miles, the majority of the stones having diameters of $1\frac{1}{2}$ - $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches. There were no casualties to man or beast. The Department of Botany has recently acquired two collections. The first has been presented by Colonel R. Meinertzhagen and consists of his valuable herbarium of more than five thousand specimens, including flowering plants, ferns and fern allies, and marine algae. The collection has been excellently preserved; and, as many of the specimens have been obtained from remote areas of Africa and Asia from which the Museum previously had no material and in which little collecting has been done, the material is thus a very valuable addition for the Museum. The second acquisition of the Department of Botany is the collection of approximately 650 botanical specimens (flowering plants, vascular cryptogams, a few mosses, hepatics and lichens) gathered in 1950 by Colonel D. G. Lowndes in the previously unexplored region of the Anapura Himal, Nepal. The bulk of the collection comes from a valley on the borders of Nepal and Tibet, screened from the monsoon, and it is anticipated that this material will provide data of considerable phytogeographical interest.