

Jacks and is concerned with the cleaning and preservation of bronze statues. He reviews what occurs during the weathering of bronze, and considers the most effective methods to prevent corrosion and to remove the disfiguring products which result when corrosion has taken place. The ultimate colour varies according to the particular impurity present in the atmosphere. For example, oxygen and chlorine give a pale green chloride or oxychloride, while sulphur will produce a dark brown or black sulphide. Also, since impurities in the atmosphere and climatic conditions vary considerably at different times, the resulting patina is often uneven in colour, and a patchy effect is produced. At present it is considered that the application of a thin coating of lanolin forms the best protection from corrosion.

#### Australian Timbers and Veneers

THE demand for plywood in Australia, as in other countries of the world, considerably exceeds the supply; extending production being accentuated by its wider use for housing, internal fittings, pre-fabrication and innumerable manufactured articles. In a paper entitled "Suitability of Australian Timbers for Veneers" (Bull. No. 260. Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, Melbourne, 1950), Messrs. A. J. Watson and H. G. Higgins summarize the results of investigations, extending over several years, into the suitability of Australian timber species for conversion into veneer, some fifty species having been examined, some systematically, others in a purely exploratory fashion. Certain of the species described are already in common use in plywood manufacture, others in limited quantities only and not for commercial purposes. It is these latter which should prove of importance, since the available supplies of the commonly used species is declining and it becomes necessary to look for new sources of veneer, both from indigenous forests and from plantations. In the case of the former, it has to be borne in mind that not only must the species be suitable, but also that it must be present in the (often mixed) indigenous forest in sufficiently accessible quantities to prove a commercially workable proposition. The data collected in the Division of Forest Products on the subject have been collated in tabular form. Information is given on some relevant characteristics of the trees and wood of the species examined, on their conversion into veneer from the log form, and on the recovery, characteristics and uses of the veneer. The general experimental methods of pre-treatment, conversion and drying are described in conjunction with certain recommendations to industrial operators, emphasis being laid on methods of determining suitable heating schedules for logs before peeling. Supplementary data are given on species recognized as sources of veneer, but which have not been investigated in the laboratory.

#### Forestry in British Guiana

FROM the forestry point of view, British Guiana has, perhaps, best been known for its greenheart; otherwise, although it has had a Forestry Department for nearly a quarter of a century, very little progress has been made, nor was much known about forests in the interior. The report of the Forest Department for the year 1949 (Georgetown, British Guiana) states that the previous year was a memorable one in the history of forestry in British Guiana, for it saw the announcement of the Colonial Development Corporation's forestry develop-

ment proposals in the Colony, and the introduction for the first time of systematic management conditions into new and renewed timber leases. Complete reorganization of the Department was impossible owing to the difficulties in securing senior professional staff. For almost the first time on record in Colonial administration, the Governor himself gave a clear statement of forest policy proposed for the future. He remarked on the heavy capital expenditure needed for the construction of basic extraction facilities and the orderly exploitation of the forest in a series of contiguous blocks based on a predetermined programme. There must be complete control of felling operations in order to prevent undue waste and ensure retention of immature trees for future exploitation, and the retention of seed-bearers to provide natural regeneration; provision must also afterwards be made for improvement operations to ensure optimum growth of economic species. This certainly appears most promising, and an assurance has been given that the Forestry Department will not be overshadowed by the Colonial Development Corporation but that under its present conservator, Mr. C. Swabey, formerly well known in Trinidad, it will hold the reins of progress.

#### Fisheries Researches in Singapore Straits

ONE of the chief difficulties confronting fisheries development schemes in undeveloped and underdeveloped areas—which, incidentally, are mainly tropical—is ignorance. For the proper exploitation of marine fisheries resources, adequate knowledge of the bionomics of the sea areas supporting those fisheries is essential. Such knowledge, for most tropical regions, is extremely meagre or even non-existent, and the appearance of a booklet, "The Food and Feeding Relationships of the Fishes of Singapore Straits", by Tham Ah Kow (Colonial Office Fishery Publication, 1, No. 1; pp. 35; London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1950; 3s. net), is therefore heartily to be welcomed. This publication embodies the results of an intensive study of the inshore fish fauna of Singapore Straits and of the environmental conditions in which it lives. No new tenets have emerged from this work, nor was any to be expected at this stage; but the application of old and well-tried techniques to a new area has produced useful preliminary knowledge of local conditions which can be amplified and supplemented by further researches of a more fundamental type. We look forward to the appearance of further Colonial Office fishery publications dealing similarly and progressively with this and other tropical regions.

#### Zoological Publications from Victoria University College, New Zealand

THE appearance of the first six Zoology Publications from Victoria University College, Wellington, New Zealand, has already been noticed in these columns (see *Nature*, 166, 1098; 1950), and four further papers are now to hand: No. 7, "A Study of the Marine Spiny Crayfish *Jasus halandi* (Milne Edwards)", by C. A. Bradstock (pp. 38, 1950); No. 8, "Keys and Bibliography to the Collembola", by J. T. Salmon (pp. 82, 1951); and No. 9, "Blood Parasites of Mammals in New Zealand", together with No. 10, "A Contribution to the Study of Fijian Haematozoa", both by Dr. M. Laird (pp. 14+15, 1951). No. 7 is an account of this very widespread crustacean based on the examination of 2,126 specimens, and it deals with various aspects of their