

that originally appeared in a number of issues of the *Indian Forester* of the preceding months. The publication brings together information received in reply to a questionnaire sent out by Prof. Stebbing to forest services throughout the world, apart from Western Europe, and is prefaced by an introductory review covering sixteen pages setting out the reasons why the compilation was undertaken. This introduction aims at bringing out the need for fuller statistical information as a step towards fuller national and world recognition of urgently needed soil and water conservation measures, with particular reference to the part played by a forest cover; it collects useful and interesting data from scattered sources and reveals the critical situation which has been allowed to arise in the majority of countries. In the second part the statistical details given country by country and catchment by catchment can be of little interest except locally; but the descriptive notes of the history and present situation of forest denudation are often illuminating and of more general value. The publication should provide the conservationist with much useful ammunition in his campaign for public action in this vital field of water supplies.

Science at Christ's Hospital

THE recent celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of Christ's Hospital is marked by the publication of a quatercentenary number of the School's *Science Journal and N.H.S. Report*. This issue contains several articles having a historic flavour. M. Seakins writes of science four hundred years ago, that is, at the time that the School was founded. After referring to the scientific views of Paracelsus (who died twelve years before the signing of the charter of Christ's Hospital), the author deals in an interesting manner with other sixteenth-century pillars of science—chemists, physicists and biologists (who at that time devoted most of their attention to medicine). The founding of the Royal Mathematical School in 1673 is described by T. Dee. The proposal for such a School was originally made by Sir Robert Clayton and the idea was strongly supported by Pepys, whose work for naval education and reform is well known. The School, with a strong body of governors, was established within the framework of Christ's Hospital, and to-day it still provides places in Christ's Hospital for sons of naval officers. T. W. Hoskins, an Old Boy of Christ's Hospital, contributes an article showing how science, through the agency of the anatomist Prof. William Wright, and in collaboration with the historian Mr. Laurence Tanner, in 1933, tackled the problem of the identification of bones supposed to be those of the Princes in the Tower. Their findings are now well known to anthropologists and historians.

Other articles which assist in raising this school journal to a very high level of achievement include: "The Cutting of Gems" by A. E. Rouse; "Modern Weed Killers" by R. G. Hornung; "The Measurement of Strain" by D. J. Kluth; "Counting Butterflies" by M. G. Morris and C. J. Nunn; "Careers in Science and Engineering: (I) Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers" by Lieut. J. H. Tomkins (an Old Boy); "Evolution of Colour Photography" by C. L. Hicks; and "An Introduction to Diesel Engines" by N. S. Blake. Also included are the reports of the Entomological, Astronomical, Fishing and Bird Sections of the School's Natural History Society together with reports of other activities of that Society. Christ's Hospital, and especially the

editor, J. M. Tims, are to be congratulated not only on this quatercentenary number of its *Science Journal* but also on the serious and successful part that science plays in the School's activities as revealed by the *Journal*.

Excavations at Mycenæ

A SUMMARY by Prof. A. J. B. Wace of his season of excavation last summer at Mycenæ, the most important city of Greece in the Late Bronze Age, has been published in the *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* (97, No. 3, 248; 1953). As is his habit, Prof. Wace has produced not only useful data for the specialists, but also more startling discoveries. Of these, there are a fine ivory facing, carved with a pair of griffins and originally half a metre or more in length; a terra-cotta figurine of a man riding a horse, which shows that, after all, the Mycenaean Greeks used horses for riding as well as drawing chariots; and thirty-eight clay tablets inscribed in the so-called Linear B script. These tablets, the first collection to be found at Mycenæ and the first from a private house anywhere in Greece, have turned up most opportunely, since it seems that at last the script is being deciphered. But too much should not be expected from their decipherment; it will show what language the Mycenaans spoke, but the texts may well give no more than inventories of stores or the like. Prof. Wace is continuing his excavation this season.

Arctic Aerobiology

QUANTITATIVE and qualitative studies of the fungi in the air over various parts of Alaska and Canada are reported by S. M. Pady and L. Kapica (*Canad. J. Bot.*, 31, 3, 309; 1953). In winter, arctic air is apparently sterile; in summer, at Ft. Churchill, Man., ground-level samples varied from 0.5 to 4.4 per cu. ft. *Cladosporium* was the commonest fungus (average 0.5 per cu. ft.), followed by yeasts (0.16), *Penicillium* (0.06), and *Stemphylium* (0.03 per cu. ft.). Other fungi present were *Pullularia*, *Botrytis*, *Aspergillus*, *Verticillium*, *Pyrenochaete*, *Helminthosporium*, *Phyllosticta*, *Papularia*, *Cunninghamella* and *Sporormia*. Of 3,711 colonies, 57 per cent failed to sporulate. Silicone slide readings as high as 114.9 fungus spores per cu. ft. were obtained and included the following: yeasts (8.6), *Cladosporium* (3.8), smuts (2.5), *Fusarium* (0.6), *Alternaria* (0.06 per cu. ft.), *Venturia*, *Cercospora*, *Septoria*, rusts, *Leptosphaeria*, *Sordaria* and *Pleospora*, and many hyaline one-celled spores. In two flights to Resolute Bay, N.W.T., the flora was found to be similar to that at Ft. Churchill, but numbers did not exceed 1 per cu. ft. although readings up to 78 fungus spores per cu. ft. were recorded on slides in warm air over Hudson Bay. Most of the fungi are considered to be soil types originating in agricultural areas and carried northward by southerly winds. The majority are no longer viable when they reach the arctic. There is evidence that the numbers of fungi are correlated with air masses, not only in the arctic but also in air over other parts of Canada.

Coryndon Memorial Museum, Nairobi: Report for 1952

THE annual report for 1952 of the Coryndon Memorial Museum, Nairobi (pp. 26; 1953; 1s.), though referring to the set-backs due to Mau Mau activities, also records the opening of a new wing. This important addition contains five new