

Coryndon Memorial Museum, Nairobi

THE annual report of the Coryndon Memorial Museum for 1956 (Pp. 28. 1s. Nairobi: Coryndon Memorial Museum) reports the welcome fact that during the year, and especially toward the end of it, the lifting of restrictions on travel from many parts of the reserves to Nairobi made it possible for many more schoolchildren and others to visit the Museum. In fact the total number of visitors for the year was 144,076 compared with 109,011 in 1955 and only 87,662 in 1954. A great deal of work has been accomplished in placing further exhibits on view and improving some of the older habitat groups. Special exhibits, such as one dealing with the life-cycle of the several species of snails which transmit bilharzia, have proved attractive to visitors. Quarters for the African staff of the Museum on a site provided by the City Council have been erected at Makadara.

Preserving Rural England

THE debt owed by the people of England to the Council for the Preservation of Rural England and its branches is unknown to most and immeasurable by all. For thirty-two years those who represent the Council have worked incessantly to see not only that encroachments on the countryside should be done with the least harm to beauty and amenity but also that the standards of all people should be built up to protect and appreciate their heritage. Its success is well known but its task will never be finished. This is well shown in the annual reports of the Central Council and of the Sheffield and Peak District Branch. The Central Council has kept a critical eye on the Service Departments' use of land, on the control of advertisements, electricity undertakings, atomic energy establishments, deviations to existing roads and footpaths, the disturbing growth of petrol filling stations and many other matters, and the Council's vigilance has resulted in the preservation of amenities the proposed removal of which was often unknown to the general public. The work of the Sheffield Branch has helped to prevent a steel rolling mill being established in an attractive hamlet and other disturbances to its lovely green belt. Information may be obtained from the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, 4 Hobart Place, London, S.W.1.

Excavations at Chupicuaro, Guanajuato, Mexico

THE results of the excavation of a large cemetery in an area on the Lerma River, which belongs archaeologically to the west, although it has links with the Valley of Mexico, are reported by Muriel Porter (*Trans. Amer. Phil. Soc., Philad.*, 46, 515; 1956). Fine polychrome pottery and peculiar figurines from this area have long been known in museum collections, and the report places them in their context. It is established that the site was occupied continuously through the latter part of the Formative and the beginning of the Classic Periods, from about 500 B.C. to A.D. 400. This is a useful study, which adds materially to our knowledge of an archaeologically important but little-known part of Mexico.

Forest Policy in Kenya

A RECENT White Paper entitled "A Forest Policy for Kenya" (White Paper No. 85 of 1957. Pp. 9. Nairobi: Government Printer, 1957) issued by the Colony and Protectorate of Kenya begins with a description of the objects of forest policy, although

there has been a forest department in existence in the Colony for more than half a century. The White Paper states that the forest estate of Kenya ranks high as one of the country's most important national assets in its protective aspects of conservation of climate, water and soil, as a source of supply of forest-produce for all uses by the inhabitants and as a revenue earner of high potential. The methods of attaining the objects of the forest policy are explained at length in a recapitulation of what in recent times has often been stated in forestry reports, both in the Dominions and Colonies. It is a welcome reminder that the forests were regarded during the greater part of this century as a mere source of revenue and when this revenue failed in any year recruitment stopped. The total area of Government-reserved forest in Kenya amounts to 2.91 per cent of the land area of the territory. The Government, quite correctly, regards this as a dangerously low proportion, and its policy is to increase it. The first step to achieve success will be to recruit a numerically strong and highly trained staff.

Australites

AUSTRALITES are small pieces of natural glass found scattered over the southern and western half of Australia. They represent an intriguing problem because their origin has never satisfactorily been explained. Although related in chemical composition, physical form, glassy physical state and mode of occurrence to natural glasses found in other parts of the world, it is almost certain that australites are extra-terrestrial in origin; they differ from natural glasses in having symmetrical shapes. Australites have almost the same chemical composition as granites; they differ from stony meteorites in composition in the same way that granites differ from 'basic' rocks. W. A. Cassidy (*Austral. Mus. Mag.*, 12, No. 6) suggests that australites, possessing the typical characteristics of meteorites, were glassy bodies before they entered the Earth's atmosphere and possessed one of the following rotational shapes: oblate spheroid, general ellipsoid, dumb-bell, teardrop. They were greatly different from the crystalline, irregular-shaped, stony meteorites before they entered the Earth's atmosphere.

Radioactive Carbon Compounds

A FURTHER bibliography, covering the years 1953 and 1954, of syntheses of compounds containing carbon isotopes, has been compiled by J. C. Nevenzel, D. R. Howton, R. F. Riley and G. Steinberg of the University of California (Los Angeles) School of Medicine, and issued as an Atomic Energy Project report (No. U.C.L.A. 395). About 550 additional references to the original literature are given in the report, supplementing those of the original report (U.C.L.A. 316), which covered the literature to 1952, together with a comprehensive formula index of all the compounds mentioned. The commercially available compounds and their suppliers (according to the manufacturers' catalogues) are also given. The report, which can be obtained from the Office of Technical Services, Department of Commerce, Washington 25, D.C., for one dollar, will be useful for those who require isotopically labelled carbon compounds.

Dalton Lecture and Exhibition

THE tenth Dalton Lecture of the Royal Institute of Chemistry, entitled "Coal and Coal Chemicals in