

A Medal-seeker's Guide

ALL that most scientists get for their hard work is a pay-packet and a vague feeling of satisfaction that one or two of nature's secrets have revealed themselves. Higher rewards, however, are available—medals and prizes. Since the cash is often not insignificant, we provide as a service to our readers a guide to landing some of Britain's plum rewards that they may have overlooked or thought inaccessible. There are no preliminary qualifications and in general the nationality of potential recipients is not taken into account in making awards. The selection of winners is entrusted to the Royal Society whose yearbook provides our information. As *Nature* goes to press, this year's winners are announced, so there are twelve months to make an impact before the next award. The most recent winners are not included in the statistics, which cover the last twenty years and may be helpful as a guide to prospects.

Copley Medal, 1731, silver-gilt. From legacy of Sir Godfrey Copley, Bt., F.R.S. (1653–1709). Annual. £100 added. An additional £1,000 comes from a Jaffé prize. Nobel laureates will recall that they are not eligible for Jaffé prizes, but for them £1,000 is available from 'another source'.

Given annually to the author of research published by the Society deemed 'deserving of that honour'. In the middle of the nineteenth century the medal was "recognized as the 'palm and laurel' of science" (*Nature*, 174, 1034; 1954) and thirty-two of fifty awards between 1851 and 1900 went to foreigners.

To two Foreign Members in the last twenty years, otherwise to Fellows of the Royal Society, generally of twenty years' standing.

Rumford Medal, 1800, silver-gilt. By Count Rumford, F.R.S. Biennial. £200 added.

Given to the author of the most important discovery in any part of Europe in Heat or Light.

To a Dutchman in 1964, otherwise to Fellows on each occasion in the last twenty years.

Royal Medals, 1825 and 1965, gold. Three available. Annual. No money.

Given for the most important contributions in pure and applied science published in Her Majesty's Dominions.

Of forty-eight recipients, forty-six were already Fellows. Helpful to have been one for at least ten years.

Davy Medal, 1877, bronze. Of obscure origin believed to be connected with pawning of Sir Humphry Davy's tableware. Annual. £200 added.

Given for the most important discovery in chemistry in Europe or Anglo-America.

Not much good chemistry outside Britain these days. Of last twenty recipients, one Swiss, two American and seventeen Fellows of the Royal Society.

Darwin Medal, 1890, silver. Biennial. £200 added.

Given for work of acknowledged distinction in the field in which Charles Darwin laboured.

No limitation of nationality or sex. One Foreign Member, nine Fellows in last ten awards. All male.

Buchanan Medal, 1897, silver-gilt. Quinquennial. £200 added.

Given for distinguished work in Hygienic Science or Practice.

No limitation of nationality or sex. Two of last four winners were not Fellows, but all were male.

Sylvester Medal, 1901, bronze. Triennial. £200 added.

For the encouragement of Mathematical Research, irrespective of nationality (sic).

Last six recipients should have needed no encouragement to carry on, as they had been Fellows for on average twenty years.

Hughes Medal, 1902, silver-gilt. Given by Professor David E. Hughes, F.R.S. Annual. £200 added.

Given for original research, particularly in Electricity and Magnetism.

No restriction on nationality or sex, but the last twenty recipients have all been male Fellows.

Leverhulme Medal, 1960, gold. To mark the tercentenary of the Society. Triennial. £500 added.

Given for the most significant contribution in chemistry or engineering.

In 1966, Sir Alec Issigonis won this medal before being made a Fellow.

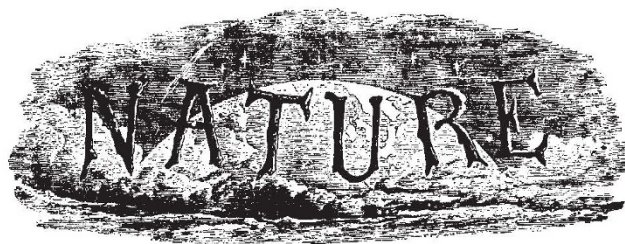
Mullard Medal, 1967, gold. Annual. £1,000 added.

The only medal for which Council formally takes outside advice.

Given for an outstanding contribution to science, engineering or technology leading directly to national prosperity in the United Kingdom.

Not awarded to a Fellow since 1967.

100 Years Ago



WE learn from the Journal of the Society of Arts, that one of the first results in the rise of the price of coal has been the formation of a company in France, whose object is to utilise the power of the ocean tides on the French coast by proper machinery. The first experiment is to be made at St. Malo, where the tide rises nearly 80 ft., and overflows many square miles of flats.

From *Nature*, 9, 54, November 20, 1873.