

CALCUTTA.

Asiatic Society of Bengal, April 3.—Specimens illustrating the fauna of certain brackish pools in the delta of the Ganges: Dr. N. **Annandale**. This fauna has become isolated recently, probably within the last half-century, and presents many features of interest. It includes typical fresh-water Entomostraca, as well as two cirripedes (*Balanus amphitrite*) and *B. patellaris*, the larvæ of a mosquito (*Anopheles rossii*), numerous fresh-water fish and molluscs, a hydrozoon (*Irene ceylonensis*), and an actinian (*Metridium schillerianum*). The last is probably the most interesting form now occurring in the pools, as it appears to have undergone a very distinct change, both in structure and in habits, since it was described by the late Dr. F. Stolezka thirty-nine years ago.—Note on the absorption of gases, vapours, and substances from solution by solids and amorphous substances: Dr. M. W. **Travers**. In this note attention is directed to the physical character of such phenomena as the absorption of moisture by organic materials. It has usually been considered that such absorption must be attributed either to surface condensation or to solid solution. It appears, however, that substances which absorb gases or vapours are invariably amorphous, and as amorphous substances must be referred to the liquid rather than to the solid phase, the use of the term solid solution is not permissible. It is the author's opinion that such phenomena as the absorption of water vapour by cotton or jute involve the formation of a simple solution, the supposed solid phase consisting really of a substance in the liquid phase, but possessing a high viscosity. The law of distribution in this particular case is exponential instead of linear, but it tends to become linear as the temperature rises.

DIARY OF SOCIETIES.

THURSDAY, MAY 2.

ROYAL SOCIETY, at 4.—Election of Fellows.—At 4.30.—The Spontaneous Crystallisation of Binary Mixtures. Experiments on Salol and Betol: Prof. H. A. Miers, F.R.S., and Miss F. Isaac.—On the Variation of the Pressure developed during the Explosion of Cordite in Closed Vessels: Prof. C. H. Lees, F.R.S., and J. E. Petavel.—Space described in a Given Time by a Projectile moving in Air: A. Mallock, F.R.S.
SOCIETY OF ARTS, at 4.30.—The Applicability to India of Italian Methods of Utilizing Silt: Sir Edward C. Buck, K.C.S.I.
LINNEAN SOCIETY, at 8.—The Fauna and Flora of Abyssinia compared with Those of West Africa: M. E. B. Poulton, F.R.S.—(1) Report on the Marine Biology of the Sudanese Red Sea (Communicated with an Introduction by the President); (2) Formation of the Shone Cliff near Alexandria; (3) Recent History of the Coral Reefs of the North-West Shores of the Red Sea: Cyril Crossland.—Polyplacophora collected by Mr. Cyril Crossland: E. R. Svkcs.—On Chelonethi (Pseudoscorpions) from Asia and Australia: C. J. With.—Note on the Function of the Spiracle in certain Elasmobranchs: A. D. Darbishire.—*Exhibits*: (1) Probate of the Will of Richard Anthony Salisbury; (2) Manuscripts of Dr. W. J. Burchell, Presented to the University of Oxford by Francis A. Burchell, Rhodes University College, Grahamstown, Grand-nephew of the Great Naturalist and Explorer: Prof. E. B. Poulton, F.R.S.
CHEMICAL SOCIETY, at 8.30.—(1) The Chemical Action of Exradio, Part I., Action on Distilled Water; (2) The Chemical Action of Exradio, Part II., Action on Copper Salts in Solution. Preliminary Note: Sir W. Ramsay.—Freezing Point Curves of the Menthyl Mandelates: A. Findlay and E. M. Hickmans.—The Constitution of Homo-eriodictyol. A Crystalline Substance from Eriodictyon Leaves: F. B. Power and F. Tutin.—The Relation between Valency and Heats of Combustion. Preliminary note: G. Le Bas.
INSTITUTION OF ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS, at 8.—The Use of Wooden Poles for Overhead Power Transmission: C. Wade.

FRIDAY, MAY 3.

ROYAL INSTITUTION, at 9.—Dexterity and the Bend Sinister: Sir James Crichton-Browne, F.R.S.
GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION, at 8.—The Igneous Rocks of the Bristol District: Prof. S. H. Reynolds.—The Carboniferous Limestone Sections of Burrington Combe and Cheddar: T. F. Sibly.—Recent Researches in the Lower Carboniferous Rocks: Dr. A. Vaughan.

SATURDAY, MAY 4.

ROYAL INSTITUTION, at 3.—Scientific Work in the Sea-Fisheries: Prof. W. C. McIntosh, F.R.S.

MONDAY, MAY 6.

SOCIETY OF CHEMICAL INDUSTRY, at 8.—The Works Chemist as Engineer: O. Guttmann.

TUESDAY, MAY 7.

ROYAL INSTITUTION, at 3.—Stimulation, Luminous and Chemical: Prof. William Stirling.

ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY, at 8.30.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8.

SOCIETY OF ARTS, at 8.—The Production of Coke and its Application in Domestic Fires: Paul Schlicht.

NO. 1957, VOL. 76]

THURSDAY, MAY 9.

ROYAL SOCIETY, at 4.30.—*Preable Papers*: The Anatomy of the Julianicæ considered from the Systematic Point of View: Dr. F. E. Fritsch.—The Ascent of Water in Trees, Second Paper: Prof. A. J. Ewart.—Increase in the Complement-Content of Fresh Blood-Serum: Dr. J. Henderson Smith.
ROYAL INSTITUTION, at 3.—Spectroscopic Phenomena in Stars, (1) Chemistry: H. F. Newall, F.R.S.
INSTITUTION OF ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS, at 8.—Telephonic Transmission Measurements: B. S. Cohen and G. M. Shepherd.
IRON AND STEEL INSTITUTE, at 10.30 A.M.—Presidential Address.—Electrically Driven Reversing Roller-Mills: D. Selby-Bigge.—(1) Steel Making from High Silicon Phosphoric Pig Iron by the Basic Bessemer Process: (2) Steel Making from Pig Iron containing Chromium, Nickel, and Cobalt: A. W. Richards.—The Use of Steam in Gas Producer Practice: Prof. W. A. Bone and R. V. Wheeler.

FRIDAY, MAY 10.

ROYAL INSTITUTION, at 9.—Recent Excavations on Forum Romanum, and the Forum Ulpium: Signor Com^e Giacomo Boni.
PHYSICAL SOCIETY, at 8.—Stereoscopy with long Base-line illustrated on the Screen: Dr. T. C. Porter
ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY, at 5.
MALACOLOGICAL SOCIETY, at 8.—The Pairing of *Limnaea peugra* with *Planorbis cornuus*: W. D. Lang.—Notes on *Achatina dentisou*, Reeve, and *Achatina magnifica*, Pfr.: E. A. Smith.—Review of the New Zealand Acmeidæ, with Descriptions of New Species and Sub-species: Henry Suter.
IRON AND STEEL INSTITUTE, at 10.30 A.M.—Sentinel Pyrometers and their Application to the Heat Treatment of Tool Steel: H. Brearley and F. Colin Moorwood.—Induced Draught with Hot-air Economisers for Steel-Works and Blast-Furnace Boilers: A. J. Capron.—The Influence of Process of Manufacture on Some of the Properties of Steel: F. W. Harbord.—The Distribution of Sulphur in Metal Ingot Moulds: J. Henderson.—The Ageing of Mild Steel: C. E. Stromeyer.—Carbon-Tungsten Steels: T. Swinden.—The Nomenclature of Iron and Steel: Report of a Committee of the International Association for Testing Materials.

SATURDAY, MAY 11.

ROYAL INSTITUTION, at 3.—Scientific Work in the Sea-Fisheries: Prof. W. C. McIntosh, F.R.S.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

The Enigma of Life. By J. A. T.	1
Zoology of the Indian Ocean.	3
Medical Meditations. By T. C. A.	4
Optical Instruments	5
Our Book Shelf:—	
Simmersbach: "Die Eisenindustrie"	6
Massee: "A Text-book of Fungi"	6
English: Douglas English Nature Books. No. 1.	
"One Hundred Photographs from Life of the Shrew-	
mouse, the Dormouse, the House-mouse, the Field-	
mouse, the Meadow-mouse, and the Harvest-mouse";	
Lodge: No. 2. "One Hundred Photographs of Bird-	
life."—R. L.	7
Tinney: "Gold Mining Machinery: its Selection,	
Arrangement, and Installation"	7
Maxwell: "Memories of the Months"	7
Letters to the Editor:—	
On the Relationship of Lemurs and Apes.—Prof. G.	
Elliot Smith	7
Radio and Geology.—Prof. J. Joly, F.R.S.	8
The Astronomical and Archæological Value of the	
Welsh Gorsedd. (Illustrated.) By Rev. John Griffith	
Climatology of the United States	11
Dedication of the Carnegie Institute	12
Archæology and the Assouan Dam	13
May Meteors. By W. F. Denning	14
Notes	14
Our Astronomical Column:—	
Astronomical Occurrences in May	17
Comet 1907 <i>b</i> (Mellish)	17
The Ring of Minor Planets	17
Positions of Phœbe, 1898-1904	17
Observations of Thirty-three Variable Stars	17
The Italian Prominence Observations, 1877-1883	17
The Spectrum of Mira	17
The Harvard College Observatory	17
North Polar Problems. By H. E. Dr. Fridtjof	
Nansen, G.C.V.O.	18
Seismotectonic Lines. By Dr. C. Davison	18
Hydrates in Aqueous Solution. By F. M. P.	19
Production and Decay of Mediæval Stained Glass.	
(Illustrated.) By Noel Heaton	19
University and Educational Intelligence	21
Societies and Academies	21
Diary of Societies.	24