

Ascent of Beerenberg, Jan Mayen.

THE island of Jan Mayen in the Greenland Sea has been known at least since the early seventeenth century, when it was much frequented by whalers, and was the site of the Austrian meteorological station of 1882-83. The Austrians made an unsuccessful attempt to reach the summit of the volcanic peak of Beerenberg, being foiled by bad weather. In the summer of 1921, the Norwegian meteorological service sent an expedition to Jan Mayen to erect a wireless station. This afforded a passage to Dr. P. L. Mercanton, who was anxious to climb Beerenberg. He was joined by Mr. J. M. Wordie, Mr. T. C. Lethbridge, and three other Cambridge men. In *Écho des Alpes*, No. 8 (Lausanne), 1924, Dr. Mercanton gives an account of the successful climb.

The mountain arises at the north-east end of the small island, and although records occur of volcanic activity on the island in 1732 and 1818, there is no evidence that the main crater has been active during historic times. Certainly there is no sign of recent lava flow. The party ascended the mountain from the south-west by Ekerold Valley over barren ground strewn with volcanic tombs, and passing to the west of Esk or Vogt crater, reached the frontal moraines of the summit glacier at about 2770 feet. The route was then over a gentle ice slope without crevasses to a prominent nunatak at 5249 feet. This was marked by a cairn probably erected by the Austrians as a survey mark. Higher up, a crevassed surface was encountered, but the only real difficulty seems to have been when the bergschrund was reached. At 7448 feet the rim of the ice-filled crater was reached. This crater is about half a mile across, and from a gap on its northern side the Weyprecht glacier falls to the coast.

Beerenberg has two peaks, of which the higher is on the western side of the gap. This was reached along a snow *arête*. Dr. Mercanton gives the summit height as recorded by aneroid as 7661 feet (2335 metres). The figure obtained by the Austrians by theodolite measurement was 8350 feet (2545 metres). This may be compared with Mr. Wordie's figure of 8090 feet, which was also obtained by aneroid reading. The discrepancies between these figures are considerable, but the Austrian figures are not without doubt, largely because they worked with a very small angle. The paper is illustrated by a number of excellent photographs of the mountain and a reproduction of the Austrian map.

University and Educational Intelligence.

BRISTOL.—Their Majesties the King and Queen will open the new wing of the University on June 9. The new buildings are the gift of Sir George Wills and the late Mr. H. H. Wills, in memory of their father, and consist of an imposing tower and a building housing the administrative departments of the University, the main library of the Faculty of Arts and the medical works presented by the Bristol Medical and Chirurgical Society, as well as a number of lecture rooms. The provision of new accommodation for the Faculty of Arts releases a number of rooms adjoining the geological and biological departments, which will thus be afforded much-needed space for expansion.

CAMBRIDGE.—A grant of 25*l.* has been made from the Balfour Fund to Mr. J. T. Saunders, Christ's College, for an investigation of the diurnal movements of the zooplankton of the Swiss lakes. Dr. H. S. Pruthi, Peterhouse, has been nominated to use the University Table at the Zoological Station at Naples for one month.

Mr. D. Keilin, Magdalene College, has been appointed University lecturer in parasitology. Mr. J. A. Carroll, Sidney Sussex College, Assistant Director of the Solar Physics Observatory, has been appointed University lecturer in astrophysics.

The following grants have been made from the Worts Fund:—100*l.* to G. E. Barton, Gonville and Caius College, towards the expenses involved in a visit to Sumatra and elsewhere to complete a study of limestone denudations and other subjects; 100*l.* to A. B. Deacon, Trinity College, towards the expenses involved in a visit to the New Hebrides for ethnological study; 40*l.* to W. G. East, Peterhouse, for a visit to Vienna to inspect certain Foreign Office documents in connexion with historical research; 30*l.* to J. Needham, Gonville and Caius College, for researches on the oxidation-reduction potential of the cell-interior to be carried out at Roscoff in Brittany.

LONDON.—The three following courses of free public lectures have been arranged: "The Biological Aspect of Hydrographical Work," by Dr. J. Schmidt, at University College, at 5.30 o'clock, on June 8 and 9; "Blood and Circulation from the standpoint of Physical Chemistry," by Prof. L. J. Henderson, at University College, at 5.30 o'clock, on June 10, 11, and 12; and "Cardiology," by Prof. J. Hay, at University College Hospital Medical School, at 5 o'clock on June 11, 12, 18, and 19.

OXFORD.—An election to a fellowship in physiology at New College will take place in October. Particulars and the necessary form of application may be had from the Warden, to whom the completed form must be returned not later than June 15.

ST. ANDREWS.—The University Court has appointed Mr. David Jack, at present associate professor in the Carnegie Institute of Technology, Pittsburgh to be an assistant in the Department of Natural Philosophy.

THE Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland will announce in July next the allocation for the five years 1925-26 to 1929-30 of grants to universities and extra-mural colleges. For the quinquennium now expiring these grants amounted to 224,600*l.*, including 25,000*l.* for libraries, 156,000*l.* for new buildings and permanent equipment, and 43,000*l.* towards endowment of lectureships and other general purposes. Special additional grants were made last year towards the equipment of two hostels for women students at Glasgow (5000*l.*) and for the furnishing and equipment of a women students' union at Aberdeen (1500*l.*). Grants in 1923-24 for post-graduate study and research, including fellowships, scholarships, and grants-in-aid, amounted to 18,287*l.* Assistance for students (average 12*l.* each) amounted to 54,000*l.* and voluntary refunds to 1126*l.* A table of refunds since 1901 shows that the maximum (1623*l.*) was reached the year after the War.

APPLICATIONS are invited by the London County Council for two Robert Blair fellowships in applied science and technology, each tenable for one year and each of the value of 450*l.* The fellowships are for advanced study or research, tenable in the dominions, the United States or other countries. They are open only to British subjects. Further information and the prescribed application form (T.2.a 300) may be obtained from the Education Officer (T.2.a), The County Hall, London, S.E.1, upon receipt of a stamped addressed envelope. Completed forms must be returned by June 30.

IN our issue of February 21, p. 284, announcement was made of the foundation, by the Commonwealth Fund, New York, of twenty fellowships for British graduates. The fellowships are tenable for two years in American universities and are each of the annual value of about 600*l.* The committee of award has now issued the first list of appointments. The distribution of the new fellows among British universities, including two institutions where a fellow has worked at two, is as follows: Oxford 6, Cambridge 4, Edinburgh 4, St. Andrews 3, Durham 2, and Belfast, Leeds, London, Manchester, and University College, Swansea, one each. Grouping the new fellows according to subject studied, the following are included: economics, geology, mathematics, medicine, chemistry and physics, two each, and engineering chemistry and botany, one each. The American universities to which the fellows will go are Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Johns Hopkins, Cornell, and the universities of Pennsylvania, Chicago, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and California.

ON Saturday, Principal W. M. Childs, speaking at University College, Reading, upon the occasion of the annual conferment of the associatiaship of the College, announced that a letter had been received from the Clerk of the Privy Council stating that the Lords of the Committee of Council, after considering the further petition of the College for a charter under the title of the University of Reading, were prepared to recommend the grant of a royal charter by His Majesty in Council, subject to an assurance by the petitioners that they would take all possible steps to relieve the College of indebtedness and to increase still further its present income. The announcement was received with great enthusiasm by a large and representative audience. Speaking afterwards at a luncheon to the newly enrolled associates, the Principal stated that already, since the petition of the College was forwarded in January last, the income of the College had been substantially increased.

ON Tuesday, May 26, Sir Robert A. Falconer, President of the University of Toronto, delivered a lecture at the University of Edinburgh on "The United States as a Neighbour—Manners of Life and Thought." This was one of the lectures for 1925 of the Sir George Watson chair of American history, literature and institutions. Sir Robert Falconer discussed the effect of the environment of the new world and instanced the struggle which the settlers had in the new conditions of life, out of which issued virtues which have been reproduced in their descendants who kept moving out into the unknown regions of the West. The common school has been from early days one of the most powerful influences for the moulding of the character of the American people, among whom there is a deeply rooted conviction that the freedom of their democracy depends upon their education. On the whole, however, there is less freedom of speech than in Britain. The common school system in Canada took much from the practice and organisation of the schools of Massachusetts and New York, but was adapted so as to meet local requirements. In secondary education also Canada has adopted the American system, but Sir Robert stated that the results are not altogether satisfactory; pupils enter upon their high school work some two years too late, so that those who go on to the University at eighteen do not possess the liberal training necessary for recruits to the learned professions. The tie of a common language he considered to be the greatest and best of all influences moulding the life of Americans and Canadians to similar issues.

Early Science at Oxford.

June 7, 1687. A letter from Mr. Humphrey to Mr. Lloyd, dated Lhandowhyn May 26, 1687, giving an account of some Natural Curiosities from Anglisy was communicated.

Mr. Molineux his letter to Dr. Plot desiring some account of the great fall of Thames near London Bridge on May the 10th, which occasioned the Doctor to inform the Society that himself saw horses and also boys of 12 or 14 years of age pass ye River; that three parts of ye Channel was without water. The manifest cause of which was ye violence of the Winds which then blew at S.W.

Nux de Bhen, yeilding an oyl much used by painters, and Semen Macalep, used in perfuming of gloves both from E. Indies, were communicated by Dr. Plot.

June 8, 1686. A Letter from Dr. Bagley to Mr. Musgrave was read; giving an account of the *Dissections* of four bodys.

Dr. Plot shewed the Society, the Curiosities following: A peice of Corktree nine foot long, and about five inches diameter, which grew in Cambridgeshire; A small stone changing colour according to the different reflections of light, appearing green and sometimes blackish; Oyl of Camphire made with water; A Liquor distilled from some bituminous strong scented earth digged at Hogsdon in Middlesex; *Labdanum liquidum* of a greenish colour.

June 10, 1684. Dr. Plot acquainted ye Society, that, haveing put some of ye *Nalyon* into a glass about a month since, he observed, that, at ye beginning of June, it was somewhat encreased in weight. He presented ye Society with a spirit of this salt mixed with salt of tartar; it was very volatile, urinose, and had something of an oiliness in its tast. He mentiond severall other experiments, which he had tried on this salt, but haveing not as yet put his last hand to them, he was desired to prosecute them, as he shall thinke fit; and bring in an account of them, when completed.

Dr. Plot also brought in an account of ye *weather* ye last month here at Oxon, taken according to Dr. Lister's Scheme: if this design be carried on, in ye severall quarters of ye land, it will inform us more particularly as to ye coasting of winds, and how rains etc depend on them. He also presented to us a pattern of a very rich *Gold-ore* from Hungary, lately presented him by Mr. Lawson, a Dane; it was of that sort, which is termed *Aurum statim suum*; it needs no refining, but may easily be separated from ye alabastine substance, with which it is mixed, barely by powdering.

Dr. Smith communicated, and read, a discourse *de Longitudinum differentiis inveniendis*, composed many years since, by Dr. John Bainbrigg, formerly Savilian Professor in this University.

June 12, 1688. A Certificate from Mr. Morgan Jones a Minister, dated at New York Mar. 10th 1685-6. was read concerning some Natives of the West Indies near Cape-Ahas that understand the British Tongue.

A letter from Mr. Hillyer to our President dated Jan. 3. 1687-8. was read, which gave a large account of the country of Cape Corse in Guinea and of some customes of the natives there.

Dr. Plot communicated a stone that was brought out of Cornwall called the Soap-stone.

Mr. Musgrave gave an account that a very good sort of Vinegar is made thus; put 2 lb. of the best Mallaga Raisons cleansed into a gallon of spring water in an earthen jar, covered with a slate and set in the sun for about two months in the heat of summer, or till it is sharp enough, then draw it off with a syphon without jogging.