

recalled to England to undertake scientific work in connexion with the supply of munitions. He rejoined Messrs. Brunner Mond and for the remainder of the War he did very valuable work in developing new processes for the manufacture of explosives. For his services to the country he was honoured with the O.B.E. In 1924, Major Freeth was awarded the doctorate in the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics in the University of Leyden. He was elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 1925.

Mr. A. G. Lowndes

MR. A. G. LOWNDES, who for the past seventeen years has been a science master at Marlborough College, is retiring at the end of the present term. Few science masters in public or other secondary schools devote themselves to original research, or have their contributions to knowledge published by scientific societies, but Mr. Lowndes, like the late Mr. Edward Meyrick, who was for many years also a master at Marlborough, but on the classical side, has had a number of original contributions published in the proceedings of scientific societies and also in the columns of NATURE. In 1934 he was awarded a Leverhulme research fellowship for his cinema-photomicrography. Immediately after the British Association meeting at Cambridge next month, Mr. Lowndes is going to the Leper Settlement at Oji River, Onitsha, Southern Nigeria, as a guest of the Church Missionary Society, to stay with an old pupil, Dr. David Money, who is the medical officer in charge, and to see if useful work can be done there by a trained biologist. He proposes to return to England in the spring and to work at least eighteen months at the Marine Biological Laboratory at Plymouth, where he will apply his method of finding the density of living aquatic organisms to the study of plankton.

Society for the Protection of Science and Learning

MR. DAVID CLEGHORN THOMSON, formerly secretary to the Oxford University Appeal Committee, has been appointed general secretary, in succession to Mr. Walter Adams, of the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning (formerly known as the Academic Assistance Council) which for five years has been handling the academic side of the international refugee problem. Mr. Cleghorn Thomson is a graduate of the Universities of Edinburgh and Oxford; a senior history exhibitioner of Balliol, he was for seven years the B.B.C.'s chief official in Scotland. The Society for the Protection of Science and Learning, of which the Archbishop of York recently became president in succession to the late Lord Rutherford, acts as a central bureau of information regarding professors, lecturers and research workers displaced in their own country on account of 'race', religious or political opinions, and aids in securing the continuation of their valuable work in other countries. So far, of the 1350 displaced scholars registered with this Society, 520 have been permanently placed in 38 countries, apart from more than 300 who have temporarily found work. Within the last three months, the Society has received 340 applica-

tions from scholars who have had to discontinue academic activity in Austria. The offices of the Society are at 6 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1.

Atlantic Flight with 'Pick-a-Back' Start

Mercury, the seaplane upper component of the Short-Mayo composite aircraft, arrived at the airport of Boucherville near Montreal on July 21 at 12.20 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, having flown from Foyne, County Limerick, in a little more than twenty hours. The actual time from shore to shore, Foyne to Cape Baulewn, Newfoundland, was 13 hours 29 minutes. Considerable rain and head winds were experienced during the flight, the machine arriving at Montreal with only about eighty gallons of fuel left. After refuelling, she took off for New York, reaching there about two hours later. Captain Bennett, the pilot, and Mr. Coster, the wireless operator, stated that they had experienced no unexpected difficulties during the journey, and had used their automatic pilot quite successfully as necessary. The machine carried a cargo of newspapers, newsreels, and photographs, principally of the royal visit to Paris. The newspapers were on sale in New York on the day following their publication. The successful finishing of this flight represents the completion of one of the experiments upon the problem of launching aircraft with excessive loading, due to the necessity for carrying considerable fuel and oil for long-distance flights. Other methods such as catapulting, topping up with fuel while in the air, etc., are being developed, and have been mentioned in NATURE as they have occurred.

Depredations of Property by Rabbits

A BILL to protect agriculture from the ravages of rabbits was introduced in the House of Lords by Lord Sempill on July 25. It follows the lines of the report issued by the Mersey Committee on this subject, and provides powers for enabling the county councils to take action against the owner or occupier of rabbit-infested land who fails to take precautions to prevent damage to neighbouring land. It also provides for action for damages on the part of the aggrieved party. To meet the difficulties of those who are unable to find the labour and equipment necessary for keeping down rabbits, the Bill enables county councils to provide staff and equipment for this purpose. Gin traps, however, are not to be used by the staff so provided. Some doubt has been expressed as to whether the destruction of rabbits by cyanide fumigation, which may now be regarded as the standard method of rabbit-control, is strictly legal, and a clause of the Bill puts the use of this method for rodents beyond doubt. The Bill also gives effect to the Mersey Committee's recommendation that "gin traps should in no circumstances be set in the open".

SPECIAL provision is made in the Bill for instances in which Scottish legal practice and administration differ from the English. The introduction of the Bill is in the nature of a reconnaissance and has been