

picture of the fission process, introducing the term 'fission' and making an estimate of the energy liberation. Using the method of recoil, which she and Hahn had applied so effectively in the early days of radioactivity, she was later able to show that the bodies previously called 'transuranic' did, in fact, originate by fission. Since 1939, Dr. Meitner has worked in Stockholm, where she now directs a small but active laboratory. Enjoying good health and abundant energy she can, while looking back on a life full of high achievement, also look forward to further years of happiness and success.

#### Nobel Prize for Medicine : Dr. Paul Müller

THE award of the Nobel Prize for Medicine for 1948 has been made to Dr. Paul Müller for his discovery of the effects as an insecticide of D.D.T. Drs. P. Läger, P. Müller and H. Martin were the leaders of an intensive research for insecticidal chemicals in the Basle laboratories of J. R. Geigy, S.A., which extended more than twenty years. The researches were directed originally towards the discovery of moth-proofing agents to be incorporated in fabrics. It was in the section of research entrusted to Paul Müller that D.D.T. was actually synthesized and its contact insecticidal properties discovered. It seems to have been in the course of field trials that its remarkable effectiveness against the Colorado beetle was noticed. It was soon found to be equally toxic to the louse and the mosquito. The material was brought to the notice of medical entomologists in Great Britain and the United States at a critical moment in the War when the supplies of pyrethrum were rapidly falling short of the demand. Soon it was being produced in very large quantities on both sides of the Atlantic. It proved of enormous value in combating typhus and malaria during the War, and now it is being employed with success in campaigns for the complete eradication of malaria from island areas. It is an equally valuable weapon in agricultural entomology and has provided a great stimulus to the search for yet other insecticides.

#### Dr. G. M. Vevers

DR. G. M. VEVERS, superintendent of the Zoological Society of London, will be retiring for medical reasons at the end of the year. He received his medical education at St. Thomas's Hospital, London, and served in the First World War as a captain in the R.A.M.C. After demobilization he became assistant to Prof. R. T. Leiper, in the Department of Helminthology of the London School of Tropical Medicine, and was awarded a Beit Medical Fellowship for Medical Research in parasitology. The same year he was also appointed honorary parasitologist to the Zoological Society and spent much of his time in the Society's prosectorium. In 1921 he went to British Guiana on a Colonial Office inquiry into filariasis. In 1923 Dr. Vevers was appointed superintendent of the Zoological Society in succession to the late R. I. Pocock. He introduced the application of the general principles of hygiene to wild animals in captivity, paying particular attention to the helminthic infections which used to be such a frequent cause of death in newly imported animals. He also introduced improvements in diet and housing, resulting in a reduction of the incidence of dietetic diseases and epidemics such as tuberculosis. He was also responsible for carrying out the extensive building programme at the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park, following the First World War.

Dr. Vevers was closely associated with the late Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell in the formation and development of Whipsnade Zoological Park, in which he took a very special interest. He also designed the layout of the Dudley Zoological Gardens, and since the Second World War has been engaged in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the Zoo at Regent's Park. He is the author of numerous papers on helminthology and the keeping and breeding of animals in captivity; also children's books and other books on general natural history, and has been a regular broadcaster in the B.B.C. Children's Hour and other programmes. He was elected an honorary fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1946; and has been awarded the Silver Medal of the Zoological Society of London, and the Gold Medal of the Zoological Society of Glasgow and West of Scotland. After his retirement Dr. Vevers will continue to reside at Whipsnade, and will be available for consultation by the Society in an advisory capacity.

#### Botany at Rothamsted :

##### Dr. Winifred E. Brenchley

ON her retirement from the post of head of the Botany Department, Rothamsted Experimental Station, on October 1, Dr. Winifred E. Brenchley had completed forty-two years of service there. She went to Rothamsted in 1906 as the holder of a Gilchrist Studentship of the University of London, and in the following year was appointed to the permanent staff. Dr. Brenchley was the first woman member of the staff, and it says much for her personality and for the quality of her work that the appointment was an immediate success and paved the way for many other women to undertake research in agricultural science at Rothamsted. Dr. Brenchley was a pioneer in the study of the effects of micro-nutrient elements on plant growth, and is an acknowledged authority in this field. Before the importance of elements such as boron, copper and manganese in plant nutrition was fully appreciated, she began a long series of solution-culture studies on elements other than the ten known to be essential. Her monograph 'Inorganic Plant Poisons and Stimulants', published in 1914, described her own results and provided a valuable critical summary of the scattered information then existing on the subject. The investigation of the effects of boron made afterwards is perhaps the best-known work from her laboratory. Dr. Brenchley's other chief interests have been in the ecology of weeds, and in the changes with time in the flora of the permanent Park Grass plots at Rothamsted. The results of her earlier studies on these plots provided material for her book 'Manuring of Grassland for Hay', published in 1924. Dr. Brenchley has played a very active part in the social life of Rothamsted, and in recognition of her long-continued interest in the welfare of all members of the staff, a presentation was made to her at a party held on October 22, attended by many of her past and present colleagues. Dr. Brenchley is to continue her research work at Rothamsted on a part-time basis. Her successor as head of the Botany Department is Dr. D. J. Watson, formerly in charge of the Crop Physiology Section, which has now been merged with the Botany Department.

#### Indian Archæology at the University of London

ON October 28, at the Institute of Archæology, London, Prof. K. deB. Codrington, the newly appointed professor of Indian archæology, gave an in-