

been made as follows: Dr. A. Bose, reader in physics, Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, Calcutta, to study the techniques of paramagnetic resonance at the Clarendon Laboratory, Oxford (January 1956–January 1957); Dr. H. B. S. Cooke, senior lecturer in geology, University of the Witwatersrand, to study African fossil mammal collections in the British Museum and the Powell–Cotton Museum with the view of taxonomic determination of ungulate cranial and skeletal material in Africa, and also to study modern methods of age-determination applied to Quaternary deposits and related fossil material (January–June); R. G. Cooke, senior lecturer in organic chemistry, University of Melbourne, to study modern techniques in the isolation of natural products and in the determination of molecular structure at the University of Cambridge (February–August); G. C. Israel, senior lecturer in physical chemistry, University of Hong Kong, to enable him to study modern methods of research in chemical kinetics and mechanisms at University College, London (September 1956–March 1957); Prof. L. C. King, professor of geology, University of Natal, to carry out field studies in Australia on the sequence of cyclic denudational landscapes, on pediplanation and on the relation of soils to landscape evolution (January–March); A. D. McKay, Matopos Research Station, Southern Rhodesia, to study problems and techniques in pasture research and ecology in semi-arid areas of Australia with particular reference to management and use of natural grasslands (for about four months from September); Dr. K. G. McNeill, lecturer in natural philosophy, University of Glasgow, to work with the research group on the 23-MeV. betatron at Saskatoon (June–August); G. B. Masefield, University demonstrator in tropical agriculture, Department of Agriculture, Oxford, to observe the characteristics of nodules on the roots of annual leguminous crops at four widely dispersed centres in the typical wet-tropical environment of Malaya (June–September); S. Smith-White, senior lecturer in botany, University of Sydney, to discuss at Oxford, the John Innes Horticultural Institution and elsewhere his researches into cytological conditions in the Australian flora and other matters (for about twelve months from January); Dr. A. M. Stephen, lecturer in organic chemistry, University of Cape Town, to work at Edinburgh, in a study of carbohydrates, with emphasis on polysaccharide structure determination, and also of biochemical aspects of carbohydrate metabolism (January 1956–January 1957); M. W. Tracey, Rothamsted Experimental Station, to study the methods in use and being developed at Melbourne for the study of cellulase and the microbial degradation of keratin (January–December).

Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society

THE Council of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society proposes to publish a history of the Society from its foundation in 1781. Unfortunately, the Society's home was destroyed by enemy action in December 1940, and there perished with it not only the Society's Library but also all its Minute Books and other records. The Council wishes, therefore, to enlist the help of any former members or other persons who possess or know of any material which throws light, however dim, upon the history and development of the Society at any period. It would be grateful for any bibliographical references to allusions to the Society, however obvious they

may seem to be. Any original material forwarded would be copied and returned with the minimum of delay. It is proposed to issue the history at the time of opening the Society's new building, the construction of which will shortly begin. Communications should be sent to Dr. W. H. Brindley (honorary librarian) or F. Willett (honorary editorial secretary) at the Society's present address, Portico Library, 57 Mosley Street, Manchester 2.

Agricola's Position in Science

PRESIDENT HERBERT C. HOOVER had an extraordinary career as a mining engineer in Asia, Europe, Africa and America before he became the thirty-first president of the United States in 1929. In 1912 he and the late Mrs. Hoover published their translation from the Latin of Agricola's classic work, "De Re Metallica". The introduction to their work has been reprinted in a recent issue of the *Scientific Monthly* (81, No. 5; November 1955). Mr. and Mrs. Hoover suggest that, in his departure from the peripatetic school of the Greeks by making use of observed facts, Georgius Agricola must rank as one of the truly great pioneers of science.

Electric Fencing against Game

EXPERIMENTS in Africa to keep wild animals inside reserves or away from areas required by man are described in *Oryx* (3, No. 3; November 1955). In the first experiment one strand of steel wire was mounted at a height of 15 in. around the outside of a plot roughly a hundred acres in area. The power unit for the fence was an ordinary electric fence of the type used by farmers for fencing cattle and was run from a six-volt car battery. This was effective against bush-pig and bush-buck and against baboons when erected in the manner described above. It was not effective against monkeys. In a second experiment a strand of steel wire was erected 40 in. high and was intended to be a barrier to the movement of large animals along the west side of Lake Manyara. Unfortunately, the results of the experiment were masked by conditions which could not be controlled but were still encouraging enough to indicate that electric fencing is a possible method of restricting the movement of game.

Geological and Geomorphological Research in the South-West of England

A CONFERENCE of geologists and geomorphologists was held in the University of Exeter during January 5–7, with the object of encouraging the development of research in the South-West of England by promoting contact between those engaged in it. There are about seventy geologists and geomorphologists directly or indirectly doing research on problems of the area, and, of these, fifty-two were present, including fourteen postgraduate students at universities; nine of those attending were geomorphologists and geographers rather than geologists. The formal sessions were not intended for the announcement of work done but for the discussion of matters of general interest. The chief topics discussed were: the palaeontology of the Devonian, the stratigraphy of the Culm, the pegmatites, the folding and faulting, the Lizard and Start boundaries, and high-level surfaces on Exmoor and Dartmoor. It was agreed by all that the conference had been highly successful, and it is hoped to arrange a further conference next year.