THE Royal medals and other awards given annually by the Royal Geographical Society for the encouragement of geographical science and discovery have, as we learn from *Nature*, been distributed as follows: The founder's medal was presented to Lieutenant Boyd Alexander, for his African explorations and careful trigonometrical survey of the region between the Benue and Lake Chad. Lieutenant Boyd Alexander devoted a considerable time to the exploration of Lake Chad, and added materially to our knowledge of that constantly shifting lake. A careful study was made of the hydrography of the various river systems, the Niger, the Congo and the Nile, through which the expedition has passed. Detailed maps were made of the more unknown parts of the region, such as the Bamingi, Kibali and the Yei rivers. Much information was gathered concerning the physical features of the region passed through; careful studies were made of several of the types of natives, and important additions were made to our knowledge of the natural history of the extensive region. The patron's medal was awarded to H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco, for his work in oceanography. Among the notable additions to scientific knowledge made on board the *Princess Alice* are: (1) the results of using the deep-sea traps invented by the Prince, which threw a new light on the life on the floor of the deepest parts of the ocean; (2) successive seasons' exploration on the coast of Spitzbergen and in the adjacent seas; and (3) studies of the conditions of the upper air by means of meteorological kites in mid-Atlantic. Other awards were as follows: Murchison award to Colonel Delmé-Radcliffe, for his work when as resident in the Nile province of Uganda he mapped the whole province, and for the work which he did afterwards when in charge of the English section of the Anglo-German Boundary Commission, between Victoria Nyanza and Mount Ruwenzori. The Gill memorial to Dr. T. G. Longstaff, for his exploring work in the western Himalayas and Tibet, and especially on his last expedition in the Garhwal Himalayas, when he ascended the summit of Trisul. The Back bequest to Lieutenant George Mulock, for his long-continued work, mostly during his own time, in preparing the six sheets of the Antarctic charts, showing the results of the *Discovery* expedition. The Cuthbert Peek grant to Rai Sahib Ram Singh, a native Indian surveyor, who has done excellent surveying work on the expeditions of Captain Deasy, Dr. Stein, Captain Rawling and Major Ryder.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS

THE Drapers' Company has undertaken to give Oxford University £22,000 for a new electrical laboratory and £1,000 toward its equipment.

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, Ontario, has received from Dr. J. P. Thomson, Brisbane, a valuable collection of specimens for its museum.

THE graduating class of the Forest School of Yale University disbands on June 13, at the conclusion of their work in Alabama. Twenty-eight men out of a class of thirty-two will take the federal civil service examinations in forestry and nearly all of them will enter the government service.

DR. WALLACE CRAIG, of the University of Chicago, has been appointed to the chair of philosophy and psychology in the University of Maine.

DR. FRED W. THYNG, teaching fellow at Harvard University and in charge of the courses in biology at Tufts College the past year, is to be assistant in anatomy at the Northwestern University Medical School.

AT Cornell University appointments have been made as follows: Mr. David A. Molitor, who is now working on designs of the locks of the Panama Canal, professor of topographic and geodetic engineering; Dr. Sutherland Simpson, of the University of Edinburgh, professor of physiology; Dr. Andrew Hunter, of Leeds University, assistant professor of biochemistry; Dr. Dennie Hammond Udall, professor of veterinary medicine in Ohio State University, acting professor of the principles and practise of veterinary medicine, to succeed Dr. James Law; H. N. Ogden and V. Karapetoff, promoted to professorships of sanitary engineering and electrical engineering,

respectively; J. E. Trevor, professor of thermodynamics. In the Medical College in New York City: O. H. Schultze, assistant professor of pathological anatomy; J. S. Ferguson, assistant professor of histology; W. J. Elser, assistant professor of bacteriology. S. H. Gage was made professor of histology and embryology, emeritus, and James Law professor of the principles and practise of veterinary medicine, emeritus. Professors Gage and Law retire this year, as has been already announced, according to the provisions of the Carnegie Foundation.

The trustees of Princeton University have made the following appointments: Mr. Henry Jones Ford, of Baltimore, professor of politics, to succeed Professor Harry A. Garfield, who begins his administration as President of Williams College, his alma mater, next autumn; Henry Norris Russell '97 and Raymond Smith Dugan, assistant professors of astronomy; Gilbert Van Ingen, assistant professor of geology; John Gale Hun, Charles Ranald MacInnes and Carl Eben Stromquist, preceptors in mathematics; John Havron, Jr., instructor in civil engineering, and Frank Irwin, instructor in mathematics.

C. E. Porter has been appointed professor of botany at the University of Santiago de Chile.

At University College, London, Mr. H. Deans has been reappointed to lecture on railway engineering; Mr. A. T. Walmisley to lecture on waterways, docks and maritime engineering; and Mr. W. N. Blair to lecture on roads, street-paving and tramways, during the session 1908–09. Dr. C. Spearman has been reappointed reader in experimental psychology.

Mr. Richard Noel Gerrod Thomas has been appointed to a lectureship in physical chemistry at Balliol College, Oxford.

M. Raoul Bricard has been appointed professor of applied geometry in the Paris Observatoire des Arts et Métiers.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

THE MENDELIAN INHERITANCE OF MUTATIONS

The revival of Mendel's writings and the extensive elaboration of the group of facts he discovered seem to have resulted in a corresponding neglect of the works of Darwin. A large amount of recent literature of Mendelism and mutation can be read without meeting any intimation that Darwin also studied and interpreted phenomena of the same kind. Darwin lacked, of course, the technical vocabulary of the modern Mendelian cult, but he made many observations and experiments, and collected a large series of pertinent facts from the records of earlier investigators. The conclusions he reached are very definite, and have not been refuted.

Darwin's fundamental discovery was that normal, constructive evolution is a gradual process. He did not fail to see that abrupt variations and Mendelian inheritance are not in accord with the idea of continuous changes in the characters of species, but he decided that such facts are not of primary importance in evolution. He understood that the characters of mutations are not necessarily new, and was aware that no complete inventory of the characters transmitted by a plant or animal can be made from the pedigrees of a few close-bred generations. He associated mutations with reversions and other monstrosities, and reckoned the Mendelian inheritance of mutations as a further evidence of abnormality.

When a character which has been lost in a breed reappears after a great number of generations, the most probable hypothesis is, not that one individual suddenly takes after an ancestor removed by some hundred generations, but that in each successive generation the character in question has been lying latent, and at last, under unknown favorable conditions, is developed.[1]

All the characters above enumerated, which are

[1] "Origin of Species," Chapter V. In the first edition (p. 160) the words of the sentence are somewhat different, but the same idea of persistent transmission and ultimate reappearance of ancestral characters is clearly conveyed: ". . . When a character which has been lost in a breed, reappears after a great number of generations, the most probable hypothesis is, not that the offspring suddenly takes after an ancestor some hundred generations distant, but that in