

THE KELVIN MEDAL

DR. ELIHU THOMSON, consulting engineer with the General Electric Company, has recently been awarded the Kelvin gold medal, one of the highest honors bestowed in recognition of scientific achievement. The medal, which was founded in 1914 by British and American engineers and is awarded triennially by the presidents of the representative British societies, has been awarded only once before, Dr. W. C. Unwin being the first recipient.

The *Electrical World* writes:

In technical and scientific circles Dr. Thomson has attained a position of eminence as a scientist, inventor and educator, especially because of his achievements in the field of electrical engineering. A Briton by birth, Dr. Thomson came to this country when five years of age and lived and was educated in Philadelphia. He began his research work while holding the professorship of chemistry and mechanics at the Central High School, from which he had previously graduated, and it was during this period that he laid the foundation of later inventions. In 1880 he resigned his chair at the Central High School to become head of the American Electric Company, which was subsequently reorganized at Lynn, Mass., and named the Thomson-Houston Electric Company. In 1892 the business was merged with the Edison General Electric Company to form the present General Electric Company, and since that time Dr. Thomson has been retained as consultant.

The seven hundred patents issued to him by the United States are a monument to his inventive work, which has extended to almost every field of electrical application. Dr. Thomson has previously been honored by scientific and professional societies and has served as president of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers and of the International Electrotechnical Commission. He was the first recipient of the Edison medal.

THE JOHN FRITZ GOLD MEDAL

THE JOHN FRITZ gold medal, the highest honor bestowed by the engineering profession in this country, has been awarded for 1924 to Ambrose Swasey, engineer, manufacturer and philanthropist of Cleveland, Ohio.

The award was made, according to the announcement, "for the building of great telescopes, the founding of the Engineering Foundation, and the invention and manufacture of fine machine tools, precision instruments and military and naval range finders."

The most notable of Mr. Swasey's many public benefactions was the establishment, through a gift of \$500,000, of the Engineering Foundation as the joint research instrumentality of the four great national societies of civil, mining and metallurgical, mechanical and electrical engineers.

The medal was established in 1902 in honor of John

Fritz, of Pittsburgh, pioneer in the American iron and steel industry, and is awarded annually for notable scientific or industrial achievement. Previous recipients have been Alexander Graham Bell, General George W. Goethals, Guglielmo Marconi, Sir Robert Hadfield, of London, and Eugene Schneider, of Paris, head of the Creusot Works.

Mr. Swasey was born at Exeter, N. H., on December 19, 1846, of New England lineage. He learned the machinist's trade in Hartford, Conn., afterwards removing to Chicago. Since the early eighties he has resided in Cleveland, where, with Worcester R. Warner, he established the Warner and Swasey Company, of which he is now vice-chairman.

Mr. Swasey is a past-president and honorary member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, having been one of its organizing members. He is an honorary member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and of several other engineering societies of America and Europe. He is an officer of the Legion of Honor of France and has received other honors at home and abroad.

Among the famous telescopes built under the direction of Mr. Swasey are the 36-inch Lick refractor at Mt. Hamilton, Calif., the 26-inch telescope of the Naval Observatory at Washington, the 40-inch telescope of the Yerkes Observatory at Williams Bay, Wis., and the 72-inch reflecting telescope of the Dominion Astronomical Observatory at Victoria, B. C.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

THE AUGUSTUS AND ALICE WALLER MEMORIAL

THE many friends of the late Professor and Mrs. Waller will be interested to know that at a representative meeting held at the Royal Society of Medicine on June 1, under the chairmanship of Sir Edward Sharpey Schafer, it was resolved to establish a memorial to Professor and Mrs. Waller in recognition of their life-long devotion to physiological investigation. The memorial is to take the form of a fund to be used for the encouragement of scientific research. Its administration is to be entrusted to the council of the London (Royal Free Hospital) School of Medicine for Women, where Dr. and Mrs. Waller were early associated and where their daughter is at present a lecturer in physics.

It is proposed, furthermore, to establish an additional memorial at St. Mary's Hospital Medical School, where Dr. Waller was a lecturer in physiology for nineteen years. Here the memorial will take the form of a research room, to be called the "Waller Research Laboratory," in connection with the Physiological Department.

The whole enterprise is in the hands of a committee containing a number of American members. Subscriptions should be sent to the Honorable Treasurer, Professor J. Mellanby, St. Thomas's Hospital Medical School, London, S. E. 1. Unless special designation is made, it will be concluded that donations are intended for the Waller Research Fund at the London School of Medicine, as originally proposed.

The many Americans who have enjoyed the lectures of Professor Waller in several institutions of this country, who have visited his laboratory in London, and who have had the rare privilege of coming into intimate contact with Professor and Mrs. Waller will welcome the opportunity to share in this admirably devised plan for a memorial, and thus perpetuate their long, active service to physiology.

FRANCIS G. BENEDICT

THE TEACHING OF EVOLUTION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

REPORTS are appearing in the newspapers that President A. A. Murphree, of this university, has stated his agreement with the well-known views of William Jennings Bryan on the subject of evolution. This is due to the blunder of a local reporter, taken up and spread in garbled form by one of the less reliable news bureaus.

The actual facts are exactly contrary to the report. President Murphree's views on the subject of evolution are essentially in agreement with those of conservative modern scientists. Entire academic freedom is enjoyed by all members of the teaching staff of the biology department. No effort has ever been made to influence in any way either the manner or the matter of teaching.

Because of the mischief which this misstatement is capable of causing, if permitted to go unchallenged, the faculty of the department of biology of the University of Florida requests that you print this statement.

J. SPEED ROGERS

DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY,
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A NEWSPAPER FOR MUSEUMISTS

The Museum News, which made its first appearance on January 1, 1924, is a newspaper published by The American Association of Museums. It is begun as a bi-weekly, but is expected soon to become a weekly. Judging from its frequency of issue, the *News* might be regarded, perhaps, as just a bulletin like many another, but from the standpoint of its editorial policy and its appearance, the *News* is an innovation. It publishes news, not articles. It states facts, not opinions. It features what is important. By virtue of its newness, it is proof against the historical and the

descriptive type of item which so frequently mars the current notes in a bulletin.

The Museum News is intended primarily for members of the association—a group which is becoming practically coextensive with the museum profession; but incidentally, the *News* will reach a wide range of chance readers, for a continued effort will be made to give single copies wide distribution. In this way much can be done to dispel the notion that museums are not on the alert. It is hoped that through their newspaper, members of the museum profession may benefit among themselves and that the profession as a whole may the more clearly register its work and its aims.

LAURENCE VAIL COLEMAN,
Secretary

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS

THE SANTA BARBARA SKULL

It seems to me that Dr. E. H. Sellards, of the University of Texas, is unfair to Science Service when he criticizes us, in *SCIENCE*, December 28, 1923, for publishing an adverse opinion on the antiquity of skull found at Santa Barbara, California. The newspapers had published sensational articles announcing that an expedition of the Smithsonian Institution had discovered the remains of a primitive man older than the Neanderthal of Europe. We owed it to our newspaper clients to let them know that the Smithsonian Institution at Washington had not yet received from its agents in the field the complete report and photographs, but that "long experience covering numerous finds of so-called primitive man on this continent" led the anthropological experts to expect that the antiquity of the skull had been greatly overestimated in the press reports.

This seems to me a carefully worded and conservative statement of fact and I do not see how Science Service can be blamed for publishing it. Our information as to the "fossil human remains" at Vero, Florida, reported by Dr. Sellards, was obtained from Bulletin No. 66 of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1918, page 23. If we had been writing for a scientific journal we should have cited the reference in a footnote, but as everybody knows, footnotes are not permissible in the press.

I do not know who is right, Dr. Sellards or Dr. Hrdlička, in their controversy over the Vero find, but I am sure that the opinion of so eminent an anthropologist as Dr. Hrdlička is worth publishing.

Science Service can not altogether avoid controverted questions. In such a case it aims to get the views of competent authorities on different sides, but can not always procure opposing opinions in time to be put in the same press despatch.

EDWIN E. SLOSSON
SCIENCE SERVICE, WASHINGTON