

BARRO COLORADO, an island in Gatun Lake, Panama Canal Zone, has been reproduced in miniature at the American Museum of Natural History, with its wealth of bird and animal life and tropical foliage. The exhibit was opened to the public on December 9. The island is the first of a series of twelve groups planned to illustrate bird life in the major faunal zones of the world. Barro Colorado is to be typical of the American tropics. The group was presented by Dr. Evan M. Evans, who was assisted in his work by Dr. Frank M. Chapman, ornithologist; Francis L. Jaques, who painted the background, and Raymond L. Potter, who mounted the birds. The foliage was reproduced in wax by James L. Clark, of the museum.

INDIAN objects and prehistoric relics, comprising the collection owned by Mr. Jonathan Tibbet, of Riverside, will soon be permanently exhibited at Pomona College as the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Tibbet, according to an announcement made by Mr. J. H. Batten, director of regional service for the college. The gift contains between five and six thousand separate articles, some of which date back to prehistoric days. The pioneer relics cover the entire period of California history, and have been secured from early families that Mr. Tibbet personally knew or from other trustworthy sources.

ACCORDING to a statement in *Nature* on the annual report of the British Photographic Research Association, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research has offered to the association a block grant for the five years ending May 31, 1932, that will make up the income of the association from other sources (its members' subscriptions) to £5,000 per annum. There are certain conditions, and the one that is essentially new requires the appointment of a "research committee of technical and scientific persons in whom shall be vested the supervision of the scientific investigations of the association." Although the income of the association will probably be rather less than it has been, the useful work that it has been carrying on for the last ten years will be continued. The report gives the details of the last year's work.

THE cooperating agencies composing the New England Research Council, including agricultural experiment stations, state bureaus of markets and some of the universities of New England, were represented at the annual meeting of the council in Boston the latter part of October, according to a report by Nils A. Olsen, assistant chief of the U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics, in the *Record* of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. He says that a very much worth-while review was presented of all the research work that is going on at the individual stations. A general discussion of methods and problems arising

in connection with the elasticity of milk supply studies was led by Mordecai Ezekiel, an economist of the division of farm management and costs of the bureau.

THE 1927-28 prize essay contests of the American Chemical Society will be conducted in a manner similar to that of the past four years with funds which have again been provided by Mr. and Mrs. Francis P. Garvin, of New York City. Contests will be conducted for high-school pupils, with prizes totalling \$6,000 in cash and six four-year university scholarships of \$500 annually; for university and college freshmen, with prizes totalling \$6,000 in cash; for normal school and teachers' college students, with prizes identical with the freshman contest. The topics from which contestants must select subjects for their essays are: The relation of chemistry to health and disease, the relation of chemistry to the enrichment of life, the relation of chemistry to agriculture or forestry, the relation of chemistry to national defense, the relation of chemistry to the home and the relation of chemistry to the development of an industry or a resource of the United States.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NOTES

THE Princeton University \$20,000,000 fund committee reports that over \$6,500,000 is now pledged towards the objective of the Princeton fund, which is to secure an increased remuneration for the faculty and to make possible a building program for the university. Toward the \$2,000,000 fund for a foundation in pure scientific research over \$1,400,000 is now pledged. Upon completion of the \$2,000,000 fund the university will receive from the General Education Board its conditional gift of \$1,000,000 for this purpose.

AMHERST COLLEGE has been promised a new chemical laboratory as the gift of Mrs. William Henry Moore, of New York City, and her sons, Edward Small Moore and Paul Moore, as a memorial to her husband.

AT a dinner held in New York on December 2 by the Near East College Association, a gift was announced, among others, of \$1,000,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation to be devoted to medical work at the American University of Beirut. The Near East College Association announced at the dinner the opening of a campaign to raise \$15,000,000 for the six American colleges in the Near East. Among other gifts announced was \$1,000,000 from the estate of Dr. Charles Hall, who died in 1914.

THE University of Cambridge has become entitled to a bequest of approximately £65,000, accruing from

the residuary estate of the Rev. J. H. Ellis, M.A., of Trinity, to be used for general purposes as thought fit.

AT St. Louis University, Dr. Alphonse M. Schwitalla, A.M., Ph.D., has been appointed dean of the school of medicine to take the place of Dr. Hanau W. Loeb, recently deceased, and Dr. Don R. Joseph, formerly vice-dean, was promoted to the position of associate dean. Dr. James B. Macelwane was appointed dean of the graduate school to take the place of Dr. Schwitalla.

DR. HUBERT H. RACE, secretary of the Ithaca section of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers, has been appointed assistant professor of electrical engineering at Cornell University.

THE *Journal* of the American Medical Association states that Dr. Langley Porter, recently appointed dean of the University of California Medical School, has also been appointed professor of medicine and Dr. Lionel S. Schmitt, who has been the acting dean for several years, has been appointed associate dean and associate professor of administrative medicine, effective November 1. Dr. Schmitt, who is also a director of hospitals, was formerly clinical professor of dermatology.

DR. DONALD H. ANDREWS has been appointed assistant professor of chemistry at the Johns Hopkins University.

DR. T. M. MACROBERT, of the University of Glasgow, has been promoted to a professorship of mathematics.

M. BACHELIER, of the University of Rennes, has been appointed professor of the differential and integral calculus at the University of Besançon.

PROFESSOR H. LEO has been nominated professor of pharmacology at Bonn.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

THE CONTROL OF DIABETES IN SIAM BY THE USE OF SOLANACEOUS PLANTS

IT may be of general interest to the readers of *SCIENCE* to learn of the existence in Siam of solanaceous plants whose fruit has a marked effect on the sugar content of the urine in diabetes, a disease that is quite prevalent in Siam.

The discovery of the virtue of these plants was made by the late Dr. Yai S. Sanitwongse, a graduate of the medical department of the University of Edinburgh, through having a friend, a native doctor, suffering from advanced diabetes, in whom the quantity of sugar excreted fluctuated in a remarkable manner from day to day, at times practically disappearing. By a process of exclusion, it was pos-

sible definitely to correlate the decrease of sugar with the ingestion of small fruits, taken with meals as a condiment. Later, the fruits were administered with the food in a number of cases of diabetes, always with marked effect, the sugar clearing up immediately and remaining absent from about twenty hours, but recurring unless the fruits were again taken. The daily use of the fruits in very small quantity at each meal kept the sugar in abeyance and led to improvement in the general condition of the patients, without any restriction in the diet, which always comprised a large proportion of rice. Special reference may be made to a striking case that has come to the writer's personal notice, that of a male European, about fifty-five years old, who had lived in Siam many years and developed diabetes in very severe form, with the usual loss of weight that proceeded to extreme emaciation. This man was induced to make a thorough trial of the solanaceous fruits. Beneficial results were noted immediately, so that in six months after he began treatment, and without the use of any other antidiabetics nor any systematic regulation of diet, his physical condition was vastly improved, the sugar was being kept entirely in abeyance, and he added thirty pounds to his weight. During that period he had taken at each meal ten of the little fresh fruits, and found that it was not necessary to increase the number, and in all probability that it might even have been feasible to reduce the quantity. The fruits produced no unpleasant gastric or intestinal symptoms. In December, 1925, the use of the fruits had been discontinued for about a year, and the health of the individual remained excellent. He then reported that sugar was usually entirely absent from the urine, and that it temporarily recurred only after some dietetic indiscretion, such as a very heavy meal of starchy or sugary food. In March, 1927, the general physical condition of the man continued to be good, there was no recurrence of the disease, and he had the satisfaction of feeling that should the diabetic symptoms reappear he had at hand a certain means of combating them.

The plants whose fruits have the noteworthy property indicated belong in the genus *Solanum*, but do not appear to have been positively identified as to species. There are at least two distinct forms, found wild over a large part of Siam. The fruits, which grow in loose clusters and resemble miniature tomatoes, are about the size of large peas or small grapes, and have a bright green color when immature, becoming yellow or orange when ripe. The taste is not unpleasant. The fresh fruits are said to be more potent, but the dried ones, even after some months, also produce a noticeable effect.

The news of the efficacy of these fruits in diabetes