we have just described are often quoted in the literature of the atom as a tribute to the fundamental nature of the work.

On returning to McGill as assistant professor, Bieler continued his work along similar lines, but was greatly handicapped by the lack of a suitable supply of radium, curiously enough in the very laboratory where its essential properties were first discovered. He then turned his attention to magnetism, and in preparation for an attack on the experimental side of the subject published a critical survey of the subject in the *Journal* of the Franklin Institute (1927). In collaboration with Mr. C. T. Lane, the technique for obtaining samples of extremely pure substances was developed, and the determinations made in the McGill laboratories are now quoted as among the most reliable.

In the summer of 1927 Bieler developed, in collaboration with Mr. H. G. I. Watson, a new method for geophysical prospecting which was successfully applied in the mining districts of northern Quebec. A brief account of his work is published in the *Canadian Mining and Metallurgical Bulletin* (1928), just before the author left to take charge, under the auspices of the Australian government, of an extensive program of work planned to locate, if possible, new mineral deposits. There is no doubt but that, had Bieler lived, he would have been among the foremost world authorities in this field. An appreciation of his work in England and in Australia by his coworkers there, will, it is to be hoped, appear in another issue.

He died at Geraldton, western Australia, on July 25, 1929, after a brief illness of acute pneumonia.

I have spoken only of Bieler's scientific work. He was equally at home in writing and speaking French and English, and it has several times been my privilege to hear, among a group of friends interested in literature and music, articles from Bieler which testify to a vivid imagination, an extensive vocabulary and an inside knowledge of the works of literary men.

L. V. KING

MCGILL UNIVERSITY

HENRY CHAPMAN MERCER

DR. HENRY CHAPMAN MERCER, an archeologist and ethnologist of international reputation, died at Doylestown, Pennsylvania, on Sunday, March 9. Many generous bequests of scientific interest were made in his will. The famous Mercer Museum, erected and maintained by Dr. Mercer for the Bucks County Historical Society, has been bequeathed to that society and endowed with a maintenance fund of $130,000. The Mercer Museum contains a historical collection, which is internationally famous, of some twenty thousand ethnological tools and implements of the pioneer settlers of America. Fonthill, Dr. Mercer's incomparable home, is bequeathed to the public for a museum, and the beautiful grounds surrounding it are given to the Doylestown Nature Club as an arboretum, both bequests to be maintained by an endowment fund of $100,000. Another $100,000 bequest is made in memory of his uncle, Timothy Bigelow Lawrence, to Rudolf P. Hommell, Lehigh University, who now is conducting an expedition in the Far East for the collection of utensils employed in the daily life of the inhabitants.

Dr. Mercer was never married. He was born in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, on June 24, 1856. In 1879 he was graduated from Harvard with the degree of A.B. Dr. Mercer received the honorary degree of doctor of science from Franklin and Marshall College in recognition of his archeological discoveries during his Yucatan expedition. He was granted the honorary degree of doctor of law by Lehigh University. Principal among several honors bestowed on Dr. Mercer was the award of a bronze medal by the Exposition Historico-Americano Madrid in 1892 for his "Lenape Stone."

In 1882 he was an honorary member of the United States Archeology Commission at Madrid. He became editor for anthropology in the *American Naturalist*. In 1894 he was appointed by Dr. William Pepper as curator of American and prehistoric archeology at the University of Pennsylvania and filled that position until 1897.

Dr. Mercer had contributed numerous learned papers to historical publications and published many books. Among his books are "Hill Caves of Yucatan" (1896), "Antiquity of Man in the Delaware Valley and Eastern United States" (1897) and "Ancient Carpenters' Tools" (1929).

Fonthill, which was built by Dr. Mercer in 1908 and 1909, is a unique residence entirely of concrete with beautifully groined and arched ceilings, upon the interior of which Dr. Mercer lavished his finest exhibitions of ceramic art, illustrating history and historical subjects, both ancient and modern.

Dr. Charles Conrad Abbott wrote the following ode to Dr. Mercer:

Reincarnation of the storied past,
Skyward, in majesty, thy walls arise,
In strength assuring us that they shall last;
Not crumble as the common structure dies.
Thy towers, mantled with the morning light,
Proudly acclaim the past is still alive
Where proud, grim feature, or the sorry sight,
Would have the world in soulless fashion thrive.

All honor then to him who raised the pile;
Where daydreams wander through each classic room;
Where honest speech is never brought to trial,
Nor trustful candor hear its certain doom.

Defying critics, faithfully thou wrought—
Thou master builder of a fruitful thought.

ALBERT MOYER
NEW YORK CITY

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE KEW BOTANICAL GARDENS[1]

FOR the public Kew is a delightful pleasaunce, for the gardener a demonstration of achievement and a suggestion of possibilities, and for the botanist a storehouse of information and a center for research. The recently issued number of the *Bulletin of Miscellaneous Information* (Appendix I., 1930), comprises under this familiar but somewhat unattractive title a review of the work of the various departments of the Royal Gardens during 1929. In 1925 work was begun on the formation of a National Pinetum at Bedgebury, in Kent, as the nearness of London is not conducive to the growth of conifers; and in spite of the long cold winter and abnormally dry summer of 1929, good progress is reported. The abolition of the penny charge for admission to the gardens from August Bank Holiday onwards is reflected in an increase in the number of visitors of nearly 220,000 between August and December, as compared with the corresponding period in 1928. The hard winter of 1928–29 and the boisterous gales of the last two months of the year caused severe losses among shrubs and large trees, but the long hot summer gave an unusual brilliance of color to the abundant crops of fruits and berries on many of the trees, and the later incessant and heavy rains effectively cleansed trees and shrubs from soot and dirt.

The more strictly botanical activities of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, have benefited by generous grants from the Empire Marketing Board, which have rendered possible visits by the scientific staff and various collectors to different parts of the empire overseas and elsewhere, resulting in valuable accessions to the gardens and herbarium, and the gain of invaluable experience to individual members of the staff. Mr. Hutchinson's botanical tour in South Africa produced a harvest of more than 3,000 species, including a large number of living succulent plants. Work of botanical exploration has also been carried out in British Guiana, Persia, Somaliland and the Solomon Islands. Considerable additions have been made to the herbarium, mainly by the incorporation of stored material. An important feature of the work is the international cooperation in research rendered possible by an extension of the system of reciprocal loans between important botanical institutions; during the year more than 9,000 specimens were borrowed and nearly 6,000 sent out on loan. Botanical work in South Africa will be greatly facilitated by an arrangement to present to the National Herbarium at Pretoria duplicates of authentic specimens in the Kew Herbarium. The report of the museums records an increasing interest taken in the economic products of plants, involving much correspondence and discussion of home and colonial products with visitors. The difficulty in answering questions as to possibilities of new crops for home or the colonies is often enhanced by the lack of discretion on the part of optimistic journalists.

[1] *Nature.*

SUMMER SCHOOL FOR TEACHERS OF ENGINEERING

THE Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education in conjunction with the Carnegie Institute of Technology will conduct a summer school for engineering teachers beginning on June 12 and ending on June 21. The session this summer will be devoted to engineering drawing and descriptive geometry, and will be held on the Carnegie campus.

The summer school is an enterprise growing out of the general investigation of engineering education conducted by the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education. Its general purpose is the improvement of the teaching of engineering. Each session is devoted to the study of methods of teaching a particular subject of the engineering curriculum.

William E. Mott, director of the College of Engineering, and Harry M. McCully, professor of drawing and descriptive geometry at the Carnegie Institute of Technology, are local director and secretary, respectively, of the summer course. Thomas E. French, professor of engineering drawing, Ohio State University, will be chairman of the teaching staff.

The nine-day session will begin with an address of welcome by Mr. John L. Porter, chairman of the trustees' committee of the Carnegie Institute of Technology. The various meetings will be conducted by teachers who are recognized as leaders in their fields. Entertainment features, including a smoker given by the Engineers' Society of Western Pennsylvania, will be arranged during the session. Trips to the larger Pittsburgh industrial plants have been planned.

Professors from schools in all parts of the country and from Canada and Mexico will attend the meeting. Registration will be limited to a hundred teachers.