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EDITORIAL NOTES.

AS will be seen from the official report reprinted elsewhere in this issue, the Geological Society has decided at a Special General Meeting to admit women as Fellows. It was generally believed that the result was a foregone conclusion, and the figures of the ballot indicate that this belief was justified. As the President pointed out in his opening remarks, the Society has in the past pursued a rather hesitating policy with regard to this matter, and it is satisfactory to find that a clear and definite decision has at last been made on a motion initiated by the Council. The work done in the past by a number of women geologists has been of a high order of merit, and the recognition of its worth will doubtless stimulate others to follow in similar paths and even to surpass the achievements of the pioneers. Ere long we shall doubtless see ladies occupying seats on the Council and possibly even the presidential chair.

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WE have much pleasure in calling special attention to the paper appearing in this number of the Magazine under the title of "Foliation and Metamorphism in Rocks". In this Professor Bonney gives a summary of the conclusions reached by him after an almost lifelong study of the subject both in the field and in the laboratory. It so happens that Professor Bonney's active geological life nearly synchronizes with the existence of microscopic petrology; he was one of the pioneers in this field and has had unrivalled opportunities of examining the gneissose and schistose rocks of many parts of the world, and especially those of the Alps. Again, he has devoted much attention to the origin of serpentine and cognate questions, both in Britain and abroad, with important results. Among other achievements Professor Bonney was one of the band of geologists who set British stratigraphy free from the incubus of "altered Silurian", and assisted to exorcise many other bogeys surviving from an earlier day. — We feel sure that our readers will welcome this summary of the conclusions reached by one of the masters of petrology after nearly half a century of research, all the more because the observations on which the results are founded are entirely first-hand and independent of textbooks or preconceived ideas of any kind.

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FOLLOWING a deputation to the Board of Trade from the Joint Industrial Council for the Tin-mining Industry of the United Kingdom, the Government delegated to the Imperial Mineral Resources Bureau the duty of making a preliminary inquiry into the position of the industry, which is, as is well known, in a parlous condition owing to the high cost of labour and material, without a corresponding increase in the price obtained for the main product of the mines, namely black tin or cassiterite. A committee was formed to undertake the work, Sir Lionel Phillips being appointed Chairman, and Dr. F. H. Hatch and Mr. W. Forster Brown, on behalf of this Committee, have recently visited the principal mines in the Camborne-Redruth area as well as those near St. Just and St. Agnes. At their request they were supplied with full data relating to the operation of the mines in the years 1912-18 inclusive. We understand that the report of the Committee, after approval by the Bureau, has been placed in the hands of the Government, and will be considered as soon as possible.

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THE lecture recently given by Professor Edgeworth David before the Geological Society gave food for a considerable amount of reflection on the importance of geology in warfare and the extraordinary inability of our military authorities to appreciate this importance. It was, however, fully realized by the Germans, who had a geologist for every 20 kilometres, as against one geologist for the whole of the British western front. This responsible post was held by Captain W. B. R. King, of the Geological Survey of Great Britain. On occasion Professor David also assisted with advice on geological matters, especially with regard to water supply, but as a rule no geologist was consulted until borings in unsuitable places had failed to find water, thus wasting time, labour, and money. Expert geologists were also urgently needed to advise with regard to tunnelling and mining operations; owing to ignorance of the position and depth of the water-table tunnels were frequently drowned out. A water-table map of most of the western front was eventually constructed, but it was impossible for the small staff to deal adequately with this and many other matters, such as prospecting for road-metal and other necessary supplies. Although many geologists were actually serving in the Army in various capacities on the western front, Headquarters did not seem to think that their services could be usefully employed; some of the Engineers high in authority did, however, realize the value of geology and would have liked more help, as is made manifest in a paper entitled "The Work of the Miner on the Western Front", read by Major H. Standish Ball before the Institution of Mining and Metallurgy on April 10, and published in the Bulletin of the Institution for last month. This contains some brief but highly appreciative remarks on the geological work of Professor David and others. The general conclusion to be drawn is that professional geologists ought to be permanently attached to all armies.

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OWING to the unprecedented demand for houses, a large amount of indiscriminate building will take place in the immediate future. A recent issue of the *Observer* contains a most timely article, signed "Silex", on the necessity for geological advice and control in these matters. There are few subjects on which more nonsense is talked and written than on the question of the suitability or otherwise of various soils for residential districts. The general public has acquired some vague ideas as to the advantages of gravel soils and the supposed evil effects of clays, but the importance of taking into account other conditions as well is hardly ever realized. The man in the street is by no means aware that a gravel site in a hole, such as the Thames Valley, may be infinitely wetter and more unhealthy than a clay site on a hill, and similar instances might be multiplied indefinitely. It is highly desirable that local authorities before giving their consent to building schemes, at any rate on a large scale, should consult an expert as to the suitability of the area suggested for the special purpose in view, and that they should refuse their consent in the case of an unfavourable report. Neither municipalities nor the State can afford to allow the health of the people to be endangered or money to be wasted in unprofitable and possibly injurious enterprises, when this can be prevented by sound scientific and technical advice.

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MR. T. SHEPPARD has again earned a debt of gratitude for a remarkably interesting sketch of Martin Simpson and his career. He provides a pedigree, bibliography, and detailed description of his books and a variety of personalia now difficult to obtain, a facsimile of his writing and the well-known portrait. The paper appears in the Proceedings of the Yorkshire Geological Society, xix (4), 1918.

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DR. H. S. WASHINGTON contributes to *Art and Archaeology*, vii (7), August, 1918, 256-63, a description and figures of a medal he acquired in Rome. Of Leonello Pio, Count of Carpi, it is cast in lead, and dates from about 1500. The artist is unknown. The special interest of this medal lies in the fact that it represents a volcanic eruption, with "lightning-charged" clouds, falling bombs, and lava-flow in realistic fashion, and Washington, from a most careful and elaborate investigation, thinks that it must represent the eruption of Vesuvius of 1500, described by Ambrosio Leone in *La Storia di Nola*, 1514, which contains the oldest known figure of Vesuvius. If that is so, then the medal is probably a little earlier in date than the book. The legend on the reverse, surrounding the design of the mountain, reads MELIUS PUTATO, which Washington interprets as "more powerful (or active) than I have been thought to be", and he further points out that as the records of earlier eruptions are 1036, 1049, and 1139, the motto would be appropriate to the popular idea that the volcano was then extinct.