

Essays must be submitted by not later than 9th January 1960, and can only be accepted from young people who will not have reached the age of twenty-one before November 1959. Full particulars of the scheme may be had from the Hon. Secretary, who will also be prepared to offer suggestions and advice on the problem to be attempted.

### **The Report**

Owing to circumstances over which he has no control, the Editor regrets that he has been forced to omit certain items which have appeared regularly in the past. It is hoped that this is temporary only, and in future reports to resume publication of these features.

### **OBITUARY**

It is with deep sorrow that we have to record the death on March 18th of our Chairman, Major A. B. Gay, at the comparatively early age of 63 years. It is not improbable that very few members who have not served on the Committee may know Gay, so modest and retiring was he. But to those who had the fortune to know him he was a source of strength and help second to none. No request, whether for information or for practical help, was ever rejected, and he went to endless pains and personal inconvenience to satisfy the humblest who came to him. He never spoke an unkind word of anyone, although he was often wearied by the importunate. In committee he was able and sagacious, a good judge of a man and a situation, and firm and loyal in his support. The Society will be hard put to it to find a successor of his breadth of outlook and personal quality.

For many years now, Gay has acted as assistant curator in the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, and it has been his untiring devotion and his biological insight which has brought the collections there into as fine a state as may be seen in any museum outside our big cities. Himself an expert in the birds and the Lepidoptera—although he would have been the first to deny this—he was always on the alert to improve the cabinets, enlarging their contents judiciously and bringing their taxonomic arrangement up-to-date. But not content with this, he always sought the help of other experts to bring the collections of other groups of animals into a like state of perfection. His objective was to build a reference collection, centred round the British fauna, but wherever possible on a still wider scale. He did not attain this ideal, for no man could, but he went far along the road, and the collections of the Museum will long stand as a memorial to a man who has put all the natural historians of the south-west irredeemably in his debt.