

notice issued to the Press by the Air Ministry, one of the most valuable is from Miss Mabel Williams, who noticed at Cambridge that the window of her room vibrated vigorously at 6.21½, at 6.26½ and again at 7.26½. Sir John and Lady Smith, who were listening at Havering-atte-Bower in Essex, report that, between 19 and 22 minutes after 7, hundreds of birds in the trees surrounding their house suddenly made startled cries as if in danger. A considerable number of people in various parts of England have reported that they heard noises, which they attributed to the experimental explosions, but there was no area in which the sounds attracted general attention, and observers who listened with the intention of timing the series were not successful.

It is in accordance with previous experience that the infra-sonic waves, which carry most of the energy of an explosion, can be effective at great distances, at places where no sound can be perceived by ear. In the present case, the infra-sonic waves seem to have passed over Foulness to make the twigs quiver in the trees at Havering-atte-Bower and to shake the window at Cambridge. The distance from Oldebroek to Cambridge is 400 km.

University and Educational Intelligence

LONDON.—The title of reader in petrology in the University of London has been conferred on Dr. Alfred Brammall in respect of the post held by him at the Imperial College—Royal College of Science.

THE problem of the deaf, especially of their education, training and employment, is dealt with exhaustively in a report by Dr. A. Eichholz (London, H.M. Stationery Office, pp. 206, 3s.). The report is based on an investigation begun in April 1930, with the object of clearing up the facts upon which various representations have been made from time to time since 1924 (when the National Institute for the Deaf was founded) to Parliament and to the Ministry of Health and the Board of Education. Comprehensive statistics of the incidence of deafness in adult life are lacking, but indications that deafness of a disabling character exists in a marked degree among the general population are afforded by rejections for ear-diseases of applicants for service in the Army (5 per cent) and Royal Air Force (2 per cent). Among children, some gratifying decreases, attributable to arrangements by local education authorities for inspection and treatment, are reported. The statistics of deaf and dumb children also show a gradual decrease, attributable to improvement in the general health supervision of the population, from 4,173 in 1924 to 3,621 in 1930. The report suggests, *inter alia*, that arrangements for the detection of defects of hearing should be improved by the use of acoumetric apparatus such as the audiometer now used in many American cities, that the Ministry of Health and Medical Research Council should institute a study of the age incidence, causes and treatment of ear defect, that provision for vocational courses for deaf people should be made in the north, west and midland districts of England and in South Wales, and that a secondary school for the deaf should be provided.

THE International Federation of University Women (Crosby Hall, Cheyne Walk, S.W.3) has published a full report of its sixth conference, held last August

at Edinburgh. Created, mainly on American and British initiative, in the year following the War as a means of promoting international understanding and friendship, this organisation has year by year extended its membership until it now comprises, in addition to those of the United States and the British Empire, associations of university women of every country of Europe (outside Russia), and Egypt, Palestine, Mexico and Brazil. The list of participants in the conference reaches the imposing total of 575 and although the American and British largely predominated, thirty countries in all were represented. Among the subjects dealt with were: international aspects of the development of science, co-ordination of university standards, the contribution of women to the newer knowledge of nutrition, epidemics of plant diseases and, in one of the sectional meetings, the careers open to women biologists. At this sectional meeting there was a consensus of opinion that it is far more difficult for women than for men to obtain work as biologists, that this is not due to their unsuitability for any of the kinds of work available (with the possible exception of certain kinds of tropical field work) and that there is consequently a waste of women biologists. Two members undertook to investigate this matter. Statistics of membership of the affiliated associations show that seventy per cent of the aggregate total are American university women. These constitute the financial backbone of the Federation. The German membership decreased heavily in 1932, while the Austrian increased by seventy-six per cent.

EDUCATION in Belgium is described by Dr. J. F. Abel, of the United States Office of Education, in a pamphlet of 145 pages prepared after investigation on the spot last year and now published by the Government Printing Office, Washington. One of the most striking facts to which Dr. Abel directs attention is the very heavy enrolment in the kindergartens—nearly a quarter of a million; this being nearly as large a proportion of the total number of children of kindergarten age as the proportion of the enrolment in primary schools to the number of children of primary school age. The secondary school curricula in Belgium have lately been remodelled so as to lessen school work and give more opportunity for recreation and physical development, the number of school hours being limited to 34 a week and teachers being warned that assigning tasks for home study is generally useless, and that it is habit rather than subject matter that the pupil is to acquire. Physical and biological sciences figure in the curricula of all divisions of secondary schools, but the time allotted is in general only two hours a week. Commenting on the problems arising out of bilingualism, Dr. Abel observes that the Belgians have proved that language unity is not necessary to, or perhaps advantageous for, national unity where appropriate arrangements are made in the schools. In the attempt to give effect to the principle of equal instruction for equal intelligence, very elaborate procedures have been prescribed for the guidance of the committees entrusted with the task of selecting children in primary schools for bursaries; the model school card enumerates forty-one characteristics to be estimated in the case of each pupil. An interesting account is given of the Colonial University, which selects annually twenty young men who contract to serve at least three years in the Congo after a four years' course.