

since the 'white' populations are rapidly approaching stagnation—that of Great Britain is actually on the eve of a decline—yet we have no means of measuring the industrial and commercial changes which this entails. No organisation has been evolved to collect the statistics and other information which it is imperative to possess, and instead we are continuing to press forward with reorganisation schemes in housing, education and transport at home and to expand food and raw material supplies overseas as if world populations are destined to go on expanding at the old rate and with their age distribution unchanged. The fundamental statistical facts and trends in regard to our economic life should become as much part of the common stock of ideas on which all act, as are certain of the fundamental facts of physics and chemistry.

Economics of Progress

THE James Seth Memorial Lecture at the University of Edinburgh was delivered on April 26 by Mr. Roy Glenday, economic adviser to the Federation of British Industries, who took as his subject "The Economic Consequences of Progress". There is a limit, he said, beyond which it is unhealthy to allow growth to proceed even in a community which takes special care not to overstep the frontiers of its own territory. Conflict will still inevitably arise in the process of growing, under the pressure of congestion between the members of the different groups or subdivisions into which the community of necessity splits its territory and occupations. No matter what may be the basic plan of subdivision adopted, there is a limit to the size of economic structure which can be erected on it with safety. The United Kingdom, however, still possesses enormous resources, and the solution Mr. Glenday favours is the one which accepts present tendencies as both reasonable and inevitable. They should be encouraged by promoting a flow of migrants from Great Britain, not for the purpose of developing the land and country-side of the Dominions and Colonies but to enlarge their industries and towns. Given supplies of cheap capital, there are no insuperable obstacles to a redistribution of population between the over-populated Mother country and the under-populated Dominions overseas. This would be as much to their advantage as to ours. In Canada, for example, the railways could serve a population three times its present size.

Guide to National Collections

AMONG the numerous suggestions which have been put forward of means whereby the public might be stimulated to visit in greater numbers the museums and national collections in London, that of a general guide covering all the collections has been one of the most attractive. It has been pointed out that few, outside those who are technically or professionally interested, know where to find exhibits which will illustrate subjects on which they desire to be better informed, while even among the learned and scientific public, not many could without hesitation state off-hand the range and purpose of each

unit in the series. A "Brief Guide to the National Museums and Galleries of London" (H.M. Stationery Office, pp. 106. 6d. net) has now been issued in accordance with a recommendation of the Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries in the hope, as expressed by Lord d'Abernon, the chairman, in a prefatory note, that "this guide, giving in compendious form the salient facts of interest concerning each of the Institutions, may stimulate public interest, both at home and abroad, in the unrivalled resources of the National Collections". It is not intended to supersede individual guides and handbooks, but to supplement them by giving briefly within a single cover information relating to the origin, purpose, range and arrangement of each, together with much useful and practical information, such as how to get there, time of opening and closing, charge for admission, if any, and the like. Especially helpful is a series of street-maps, showing the approaches. The information is clear, direct and comprehensive and there are some excellent illustrations. Experience will show whether the information is given in a form which will attract those for whom it is intended. Should the demand justify, it will be revised annually. Copies may be obtained at H.M. Stationery Office sale branches or through any bookseller, as well as at the museums.

University of London Buildings

MR. T. LL. HUMBERSTONE sends us a copy of a letter he has sent to the Clerk of the London County Council relating to the provision of an open space on part of the site of the new buildings of the University of London at Bloomsbury. He informs us that since his election as a member of the Holborn Borough Council in November last, he has found that an undertaking was given by the University to the Council and also to the London County Council that the University would "preserve a garden area with trees and grass equal in size to, but not necessarily identical in location with, that now existing in Torrington Square gardens". It appeared after inquiries made by Mr. Humberstone that this undertaking was not carried out by the layout of the buildings. Representations were therefore made, with the result that a new design and layout have been prepared, providing approximately an acre of additional open space in the form of three bays on the Malet Street frontage, giving this façade a crenelated form. Mr. Humberstone is the author of a valuable historical work on "University Reform in London" and contributed to NATURE of July 9, 1932, a long article on the development of the University and the design of the new Buildings.

British Oil from Coal

THE first train load of 100,000 gallons of oil made by low-temperature carbonisation from British coal went to the new plant of Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd. at Billingham from the Barugh (Yorks) works of Low Temperature Carbonisation Ltd. on April 26. The train, which was drawn by two locomotives, consisted of 34 tanks of 3,000 gallons each and weighed