

to the *Geographical Journal*, Vols. 1-5, Numbers 1-41: 1918-1932" (London: Royal Geographical Society. 16s.: to fellows, 12s. 6d.). The terminal date is chosen as coinciding with the termination of the "Fourth General Index" to the *Geographical Journal*. The volume also serves as an index to much of the contents of the annual volumes of the *Bibliographie Géographique Internationale*, for which decennial tables have not recently been issued, the volume numbers in the Index giving the date of publication to within five years.

THE Index which is thus made available is under one alphabet, giving authors and regional names in heavy type. Comprehensive headings are subdivided by italic headings, thus greatly facilitating reference. Thus under British Empire the subdivisions are agriculture and forestry, communications, defence, economics, education, history, mineral resources, politics, population, power, survey, text-books and travel. The lack of a rigid plan of subdivision and the adoption in each large grouping of one suitable for the character of the entries, are useful features. Considerations of space have limited each item to one subject entry. Titles in the less familiar languages are given in the language used in the summaries appended to the articles. Maps and photographs in the Society's collection are omitted, but all atlases are included.

Composition of Scientific Papers

EACH of our two leading medical contemporaries—the *British Medical Journal* and the *Lancet*—includes in the issues of January 2 some helpful suggestions to writers of scientific papers upon styles of composition and typographical conventions. The *British Medical Journal* is given a much more attractive appearance than it has had hitherto by the use of a cover of grey paper with a scarlet design upon it, and the type of the journal has been entirely changed, being now that created a few years ago for the printing of *The Times*. This type is more legible than that formerly used and is particularly suitable for comfortable reading. The *British Medical Journal* announces in the same issue that, in future, the Harvard system of references to scientific literature will be used, instead of numbered references, such as are used in NATURE. Examples are given of these two systems of references to papers. The *Lancet* publishes a special supplement containing advice to authors on the preparation of scientific papers, words and phrases to avoid, summaries, abbreviations, references, and related matters. If these instructions were followed generally, the work of editors would be greatly relieved.

Air Raid Precautions

AIR RAID PRECAUTIONS HANDBOOK No. 4 is entitled "Decontamination of Materials" (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1936. 6d.), and deals with contamination caused by chemical substances capable of giving off poisonous gases. These gases are classified as non-persistent and persistent, the book dealing

chiefly with the latter, which include the tear gases (ethyl iodoacetate or *K.S.K.*, and bromobenzyl cyanide or *B.B.C.*) and the blister gases (mustard gas and lewisite). Decontamination of tear gases can be effected by using water, earth or a mixture of glycerin and caustic soda according to circumstances. Decontamination due to blister gases includes ventilation, hosing with water, removal by solvents, several methods of applying bleaching powder, immersion in boiling water, covering with earth, and destruction of the contaminated article by burning. In all cases, identification of the poison gas should precede attempts towards decontamination, and the latter should therefore be carried out only by persons specially trained and thoroughly protected. Appendixes in the manual deal with the equipment of a decontamination squad and methods of dealing with road surfaces, the structures of buildings, household articles and vehicles.

Colorado Potato Beetle

IN consequence of the spread of the Colorado potato beetle from France and Belgium into Germany and Luxemburg, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries has made an order "The Importation of Plants (Amendment No. 2) Order of 1936" regarding plant imports into Great Britain. The Order imposes restrictions on the importation from Germany and Luxemburg of certain kinds of horticultural produce as from January 11. The restrictions are similar to those already in force with respect to like produce from France and Belgium. The provisions of the order require a certificate in one of two forms to accompany living plants, potatoes, raw vegetables and cider apples imported from the countries mentioned. Copies of the Order (S. R. and O. 1936, No. 1288), price 1d. each net, may be obtained from H.M. Stationery Office, Adastral House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2.

Campaign against Noise

THE Leningrad Institute for the Protection of Labour is doing much useful work in combating the noise of machinery in Soviet factories. Some two hundred silencers of special design have been fitted to the automatically driven lathes of Leningrad factories manufacturing electrical apparatus. It is claimed that these silencers reduce the noise of the machines to the loudness of the normal human voice. The Institute is also carrying out experiments to reduce the noise of machinery at other types of works and factories and on the motor-ships of the Black Sea. During the past year the Institute has received more than twenty different designs for silencers from Soviet engineers and factory workers.

Earthquake in Kent on December 29

AT about 1.30 p.m. on December 29, a very slight earthquake, accompanied by a rumbling sound, was felt in the east of Kent. The villages in which it was observed (Adisham, Nonington, Snowdown, etc.) are close to the centre of the area disturbed by the much stronger Canterbury earthquake of November 27,