

that beneath it, down to the Fourth Period, is Hittite; and there are Hittite inscriptions side by side with documents in cuneiform. In the Fourth Period Sir Leonard has begun to excavate a palace the architecture of which both in material and in style seems as essentially Cretan as does the painted pottery; objects in gold and ivory testify to its richness, and cuneiform tablets appear to show that it was a royal building and date it to the sixteenth century B.C. This year's season will be devoted to the clearing of the palace, and its results should certainly throw light on the connexions between Crete and the Syrian mainland.

British Archæological Investigation in France

ON more than one occasion recently, French archæologists have expressed admiration for the methods of excavation followed in Great Britain on such sites as Maiden Castle and St. Albans, and at the same time have regretted that a similar procedure had not been introduced into archæological studies in France. In a recently published report (*L'Anthropologie*, 47, 5-6) of the proceedings at the last sitting of the Commission des Monuments historiques (Section de Préhistoire) reference is made to the concession to excavate the fortified site of Artus at Huelgoat (Finistère) granted by the Commission to the Society of Antiquaries of London, of which the direction will be in the hands of Dr. R. E. Mortimer Wheeler and Mr. R. Radford. The report goes on to add that while the antiquities discovered will naturally remain the property of France, a greater gain will be the experience thus to be acquired of methods of systematic investigation, of which archæologists in France have but a very faint idea, not only as regards the work of digging but also in regard to interpretation, through the co-operation of specialists, and the supreme excellence of the planning and photography, to say nothing of the preservation of the stratigraphic record. It is, perhaps, unnecessary to add that in this international exchange the gain of Great Britain will be no less in the acquisition of systematized evidence which may be expected to throw no little light on the relation of the cultures of north-western France and the west of Britain in prehistoric times—a relation which recent discovery suggests may have been even closer than has hitherto been anticipated.

International Telecommunications Conference at Cairo

RADIO communication is essentially an international affair, and it is therefore necessary that it shall be conducted according to rules and conventions agreed to by all the principal countries in the world. The necessary regulations are drawn up by international conferences which are held at intervals of about five years and are attended by delegations from the administrations operating the radio services in the various countries. These conferences are organized by the International Telecommunications Union, with headquarters at Berne, Switzerland, the function of which is to co-ordinate telecommunication

of all types, telegraph and telephone, cable, wire and radio. At the present time, world radio communication is being conducted under the Madrid Convention which was drawn up at the end of 1932.

ON February 1, a new conference will be opened in Cairo with the object of revising the existing convention in the light of progress and developments in the past five years. During this period, the technical aspects of the various questions involved have been studied by international technical committees, such as the Comité Consultatif International des Radiocommunications (C.C.I.R.), which last met at Bucharest in May-June 1937. The general objective of these committees and of the Cairo conference is to revise the existing convention in such a manner as to place telecommunications on the most efficient and equitable basis for the world as a whole. On the radio side, considerable attention is given to the allocation of wave-bands among the claimants representing the various interests involved, which range from commercial services and defence requirements through broadcasting to various scientific and experimental interests. The Cairo Conference is expected to last from six to twelve weeks, and the application of the results may require a year or more to put into effect, so that ample time is provided for industry and the users of communications to prepare for such changes as may be involved.

British Snowfall Survey

AT the first meeting of the International Snow Commission held in Edinburgh on September 14-16, 1936, members of the British group emphasized the importance of snowfall in the hilly districts of the British Isles, pointing out, also, that if the climate were to take a slightly colder turn the snowfall would become decidedly impressive over a large portion of the country. Out of this meeting there arose the formation of the Association for the Study of Snow and Ice, and among other activities of this body a scheme has been launched for extending our knowledge of snowfall in Great Britain from observations of the extent, duration and depth of snow-cover. It is thought desirable to begin systematic study with limited areas in such snowy districts as the Cairngorms, the Southern Uplands of Scotland and the northern Pennines, gradually extending the scheme to cover the whole of the country. It is hoped to investigate the permanent, semi-permanent and late-lingering snow-drifts in the Scottish Highlands, and the northern English and Welsh mountains, together with such important phenomena as the long-distance, mass-drifting of snow whereby quantities of snow in severe blizzards may pass out of the drainage basins into which, but for the wind, they would have fallen. The plan will thus supplement valuable information already being obtained from the rainfall stations of the Meteorological Office, and readers interested should communicate in the first instance with the chairman of the Ice and Snow Association, Mr. Gerald Seligman, at Warren Close, Coombe Hill Road, Kingston Hill, Surrey.