

far into the nineteenth century, when popular magazines tended to replace them. Now they become plentiful again at times of great public excitement. The Oxford pamphlets of 1914-18 are still fresh in the memories of people who have reached or passed middle age. Pamphlets are with us again. They cover many subjects—scientific, geographical, historical, biographical, and all that relates to the Fighting Forces. For the most part they are authoritatively written, and “show the complexion of the times” very effectively.

Recent additions to the Oxford pamphlets (Oxford University Press, 3*d.* net) include Lieut.-Col. Casson's “Greece”, written by one who is both a scholar and a soldier, and describing the character and traditions of the Greek people. Sir John Pratt, writing from an intimate knowledge of the Far East, describes in “Great Britain and China” the chief episodes in our relations with China since 1715, when the East-India Company set up its factory in Canton; and Admiral Sir Herbert Richmond, distinguished alike as naval officer and writer, in his “War at Sea To-day” makes clear to the layman the new difficulties of naval warfare, and the means adopted to meet them.

The latest addition to Federal Tracts, published by Macmillan and Co., Ltd. (6*d.* net), for Federal Union Research Institute, is Prof. George Catlin's valuable pamphlet on “Anglo-American Union as a Nucleus of World Federation”—a title which explains itself. The author's distinguished record as a student of politics, and as an exponent of this particular subject, marks him out as a high authority. World federation is for him the ultimate aim, but Anglo-American Union is the first step. Cultural autonomy is the due of all nations, even the smallest, but national sovereignty is not. Lord Balfour's reference to “an English-speaking method of looking at the great affairs of mankind” is recalled and enforced—that sense of a common culture which needs to be made more articulate. Prof. Catlin regretfully points out that the whole issue has received far less attention and publicity in Britain than in the United States and the Dominions.

“The Body as a Guide to Politics”, by Dr. W. B. Cannon, formerly professor of physiology at Harvard, afterwards of the British Military Service, and later of the U.S.A. Medical Corps, is more directly scientific in tone. His general thesis, which may sound fanciful at first hearing, is that the external and internal relations and activities of the body are so marvellously organized by Nature that they may throw light on the present defects of organization by man. When danger threatens the body, stabilizing agencies act on the instant to guarantee security, but when danger threatens a nation disruptive factors have full sway. The pamphlet is an elaboration of the epilogue to Dr. Cannon's popular work “The Wisdom of the Body”, published in 1932. It is included in the series “The Thinker's Forum”, published by the Rationalist Press Association. In the same series appears Muriel Jaeger's “Wars of Ideas”, expounding the claim that Nazi-ism is a new religion, with Hitler as its Messiah.

### Geographical Names

THE vexed problem of geographical place names is raised again in an article in the *Geographical Journal* for October in which the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names of the Royal Geographical Society, Kensington Gore, S.W.7, enumerates certain principles which are offered for criticism. The whole memorandum is too long for extensive quotation but

some of the main principles may be noted. Generally speaking, names should be those used by the responsible government or official survey of the country concerned, in the case of countries that use a Roman alphabet. In names of features or places in lands not using a Roman alphabet, transliteration, with certain qualifications, is recommended. But exceptions to these general rules are allowed. In popular, text and small-scale maps, English names of conventional usage are allowed; in learned works and large-scale maps conventional English names are allowed for marine features outside territorial limits and features of international interest, with the recommendation that the foreign official name, if it differs markedly from the English, should be given in brackets. Other exceptions are in favour of English or international postal names of important places that differ markedly from official names, and, in historical context, the use, either of the name or narrow transliteration of the name that prevailed at the time under consideration, or the name conventionally known to English scholars. It is emphasized that these principles do not necessarily represent the considered views of the committee but are put forward as a basis for discussion.

### Russian Scientific and Technical Periodicals in Great Britain

ON the recommendation of the Anglo-Soviet Scientific Collaboration Committee, the British Council requested the Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux to undertake a survey of the war holdings of Russian scientific and technical periodicals available in Great Britain. The survey, covering the years 1939-42 inclusive, has just been completed, and summaries of the results may be obtained from A.S.L.I.B., 31 Museum Street, London, W.C.1 (“Wartime Guides to British Sources of Specialised Information, No. 4”, 1*s.* 6*d.* to members of A.S.L.I.B., and 2*s.* 6*d.* to non-members, postage inclusive). More than two hundred specialized libraries participated in the survey, which covers three hundred and thirty-four periodicals. From the summarized results it is possible to tell at a glance whether complete series of each of the periodicals for the last four years may be consulted in the Science Library or Patent Office, whether complete series have been located in other libraries, or whether the series located are incomplete. For further detailed information concerning the location of incomplete sets and odd numbers of periodicals, application should be made to A.S.L.I.B., where an index showing the particular issues received, their location, and the conditions of their accessibility is maintained. It is apparent from the survey that very few of the 1942 issues have so far been located, but attention is directed to the considerable time-lag in transit.

### Potato Tips as Seed

THE importance of the potato, not only as human and animal food but also as a raw material for the manufacture of starch, alcohol and synthetic rubber, has greatly increased in the U.S.S.R. since the War. At the beginning of the War a big increase in the potato crop was ordered by the Government, but to achieve the goal set, a large addition to the amount of seed potatoes available was necessary. Lyssenko claims that the problem can be, and to some extent already has been, solved by utilizing as seed small pieces of tuber weighing about half an ounce and containing one of the upper eyes. The rest of the