

## NEWS and VIEWS

## U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences

At a recent meeting of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., thirty-six new academicians and fifty-eight corresponding members were elected. Among the chemists elected were Profs. Dubinin and Nesmeyanov, who have studied the chemistry of metallo-organic compounds, also Profs. Rodionov and Chernyayev, the well-known organic chemists. The geologists included F. Savarensky, a geologist who did valuable work in connexion with the construction of the Moscow-Volga Canal and the Moscow underground railway; Prof. Belyankin, a leading petrographer, who has helped greatly the industrial development of the Urals; Prof. Smirnov, a leading mineralogist of the Leningrad Mining Institute; and Prof. Satpayev, who represents the Kazakhstan branch of the Academy. Among the physicists were Lebedev, the well-known experimental physicist; Khristianovich, who has made investigations in mechanics; Alikhanov, who has studied the physics of the atomic nucleus; and Kurchatov. The biologists included the botanist Sukachev, the histologist Zavarzin and the Ukrainian pathologist Strazhesko. On the applied side, Major-General Blagonravov was elected to the Department of Technical Sciences, as were A. Mikulin, A. Yakovlev and V. Klimov, designers for aviation. The inventor of a new gun, A. Kostekov, was elected and also the Ukrainian economist, M. Ptukaha, who is charged with reconstruction duties.

## Post-War World Education

DR. GRAHAM CLARK has an article in the September issue of *Antiquity* in which he attempts to integrate the various subjects to be taught in schemes for post-war education round the central idea of the evolution of mankind and his place in the universe. In other words, prehistoric anthropology—the study of our common origins—is to be the cement which will bind together the common education of the post-war nations of the world. The article is very interesting and thought-producing, and should be read by all concerned with post-war education. Considered on a university level, there is much to be said for Dr. Clark's thesis; whether his conceptions can possibly be adapted to the primary levels of teaching—to the brain of the child who is necessarily occupied with such problems as the writing of his own language correctly and the doing of his sums—is quite another matter. For, after all, education is not entirely 'book learning'.

Few to-day would deny that the twofold purpose of every educationist concerned with the upbringing of both children and adolescents is, first, to teach them how to live, and secondly to stimulate their interest in and to impart knowledge. Carrying the matter a stage further, the first of these can be subdivided into (1a) the art of living alongside one's neighbour, and (1b) the power to stand four-square with a reasonable personal independence *vis-à-vis* the material world. It is especially in this connexion that the various youth organizations play such an important part, and quite frequently and rightly are closely connected with the schools. The other object of education can be subdivided into (2a) the imparting of information useful for technical purposes, for the job in life to be undertaken by the individual, and

(2b) the imparting of purely cultural information. (Naturally 2a and 2b often overlap. What is of technical importance for one man may be of purely cultural interest to another—the professional geologist may be interested in Plato, while the classical teacher may have a private passion for geology.) It would appear that it is only with 2b that Dr. Clark is in the main concerned. Unfortunately, in the past it has been just this side of education that has least interested the average Englishman, though to-day those who are actively keen on education can detect a change in this respect. There is no doubt that our curricula need an overhaul, and Dr. Clark's plea for prehistory and anthropology as basal subjects should be borne in mind.

## District Heating in New York

CURRENT discussions on fuel economy and planning for the future give a special interest to details recently published (*Steam Engineer*, 12, 222; 1943) of the largest district heating scheme in the United States. In the new Parkchester residential community in New York, the central heating of a whole building from one boiler plant gives place to the central heating of a whole district from a single boiler house. The site for this vast scheme is an area of 129 acres occupied to the extent of 26.4 per cent of buildings, 21.2 per cent of avenues and 51.4 per cent by lawns and walks. Accommodation for 40,000 people is provided in the 42,464 rooms of 51 blocks of flats, along with garages and a theatre. The central boiler plant, housed in a building 180 ft. × 75 ft., and including a chimney more than 300 ft. high, consists of four oil-fired boilers. From these the live steam is circulated on the return condensate system in a vast closed circuit. Instead of fitting a valve on each radiator in a room, a damper is used to control the heat. By this means leakage of air into the closed circuit through a multiplicity of valves is much reduced. The outside walls of each building are heavily insulated by a 1-in. thick spun glass layer together with a layer of air between the brick and plaster of the outside walls. This extra insulation alone is claimed to save £8,000 worth of fuel in a year. Details are not given of the thermal efficiency of the transmission system. As the last building was ready for use in 1941, the whole scheme will have had a thorough trial by the time post-war reconstruction begins. The average cost to the individual is about £2 15s. per month per room including heat and light, and the flats, consisting of from two to five rooms, are designed for people whose income is from £360 to £900 a year.

## Medical Research in War-time and the Relief of Suffering

Two recent addresses are deserving of attention in that they deal with new advances in medical research. One is Sir Edward Mellanby's Ludwig Mond Lecture, devoted to a review of medical research in war-time (*Brit. Med. J.*, Sept. 18, 1943); the other is Sir Henry Dale's Frederick Price Lecture (*Brit. Med. J.*, Oct. 2, 1943) on the remarkable recent advances in chemotherapy, all of which have been made in the comparatively short interval between the War of 1914-18 and the present War. Sir Edward Mellanby refers to "endless references in religious, theological, and even philosophical addresses", to the prostitution of science, especially for the purposes of war, and to "some suggestion that there exists in