

how essential John Hunter found his farm at Earl's Court to be for the completion of his experimental work, and hoped that the institution or farm he had in mind would serve young surgeons as an 'Earl's Court'. He bought land adjacent to the Darwin estate as a site for his institution, now known as the Buckston Browne Farm for Surgical Research. It was opened in 1933, but with the coming of war all its research workers were called to the field, the laboratories being taken over by the Emergency Health Service. With the return of peace we may hope to see it restored to its old activities.

Among his intimate friends Buckston Browne numbered Sir Thomas Barlow: both were from Lancashire; they met as students at University College; they occupied houses in Wimpole Street which faced each other. On January 11, Sir Buckston was carried to his old hospital, suffering from a

fracture of the neck of his femur; he died on January 19, well advanced into his ninety-fifth year. As he lay in the hospital, where seventy-three years before he had been house surgeon, his senior friend shook off the burden of life, having reached his hundredth year.

In 1931 the University of Aberdeen conferred its honorary LL.D. on Sir Buckston in recognition of his services to surgery. In 1932 he received the honour of knighthood, when he discarded "George" from his name, wishing to be known as Sir Buckston Browne.

A. KEITH.

IN *Nature* of October 28, 1944, an obituary notice was printed of Prof. Gustav Gilson: we have since been informed that Prof. Gilson died on January 1, 1944.

NEWS and VIEWS

Anglo-French Society of Sciences

At the beginning of the War, a number of scientific men in England and France became conscious of the lack of close knowledge and contact between the science and scientific workers of the two countries. As a result, they founded in April 1940 an Anglo-French Society of Sciences to assist the removal of this lack of mutual knowledge. The Society was organized in two groups, under the presidencies of Prof. P. A. M. Dirac and Prof. F. Joliot. The occupation of France interrupted normal proceedings, but during the occupation some members became very prominent in the French resistance movement. The liberation of France has enabled the Society to hold its first conference, which was on the topic of "The Solid State", and was held in London on January 20 at the Society for Visiting Scientists. Prof. F. Joliot and Mme. Irene Curie-Joliot travelled from France to take part in the proceedings, and were accompanied by Prof. Wyart, Dr. J. Laval and Dr. Mathieu. Papers were read at the conference by Prof. N. F. Mott, Sir Geoffrey Taylor, Dr. Laval, Dr. Mathieu, Dr. Guinier, Prof. Wyart and others.

Members of the Society were entertained to tea at the House of Commons by Sir Robert Bird, chairman of the Anglo-French Parliamentary Committee. In reply to speeches by Sir Robert Bird and Mr. E. W. Salt, chairman of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee, Prof. Joliot spoke on the contribution of science to international understanding, and its place in the conduct of affairs. Science tends to clarity of mind and rational method, and it should be introduced into all aspects of a nation's life, including many where it may not hitherto have been customary. Prof. J. Hadamard referred to David Hume's famous remark that British soldiers fight and die in order that British judges may judge according to their conscience; the devotion of the English and French to that ideal is a binding link between them.

Medical Education in Great Britain

In a reply on January 18 to a question in the House of Commons regarding the Goodenough Report on Medical Schools, Mr. Willink stated that the Government recognizes the fundamental importance of medical education and research to the future of the health services of the country, and accepts the

principle of increased grants for the purposes of medical education and research to be distributed by the University Grants Committee through the universities to medical schools, postgraduate schools and institutes and hospitals used for teaching and research. The Government also accepts the suggestion that for a limited period these additional grants should be separated from the block grants received by universities for their work as a whole. As regards the views expressed in the report on the importance of affording to women equal opportunities to those enjoyed by men for medical training and for obtaining postgraduate experience, the Government has decided that future payments of grants to medical schools should be conditional on the adoption by the school of the principle of admitting a reasonable proportion of students of both sexes. It is proposed also that the University Grants Committee, in consultation with the university authorities concerned, should be responsible for determining from time to time whether the action taken by each of these schools complies reasonably with the principle. Equal importance is also attached to the revision of the medical curriculum, and acceptance of the principle of increased grants for medical education and research depends on the early completion of such a revision.

Tuberculosis Mortality in the United States

ACCORDING to J. Yerushalmy, principal statistician, H. E. Hilleboe, senior surgeon, and C. E. Palmer, surgeon, United States Public Health Service (*Public Health Rep.*, 58, 1457; 1943), the average annual number of deaths from all forms of tuberculosis in the United States in the period 1939-41 was 10,429 (45.9 per 100,000 of the population). Mortality from tuberculosis was 41 per cent higher among males than among females, and three and a half times as high among non-whites as among whites. Death-rates for all forms of tuberculosis were higher in the older age-groups than in the younger. Among children and young adults the rates were higher for females than for males; but in the older groups the rates were much higher for males. Nearly one half of all tuberculosis deaths occurred at the ages 20-44. The death-rate from tuberculosis for males was higher among residents of large cities than among residents in intermediate sized cities, and that of the latter was much

higher than the rate for residents in rural areas. Tuberculosis mortality has decreased continuously since the beginning of the century, the rate in 1941 being less than one fourth that in 1900, and has fallen at a greater rate than mortality from all causes.

Commercial Fish Catch of California for 1941 and 1942

Fish Bulletin No. 59 of the California Department of Natural Resources, Division of Fish and Game, Bureau of Marine Fisheries (1944), by the staff of the Bureau, contains detailed records of fish delivered by commercial fishing boats to Californian ports. In addition, shipments of fresh fish by truck, rail or cargo vessel to Californian factories from outside the State are included. There is much information in this report. The value of all landings is tabulated, the 1942 values reflecting the higher war prices and price-ceilings fixed by the Federal Government. Although the value is much increased, the weight in pounds is less. The decrease in volume of the 1942 catch was due to reduced numbers of the better class of fishing boats and of experienced fishermen, as well as to the restrictions placed upon the free movement of fishing vessels necessitated by Army and Navy coastal defence plans. The sardine, *Sardinopsis caerulea*, heads the list both in weight and value; the Pacific mackerel, *Pneumatophorus diego*, and the yellow tuna, *Neothunnus macropterus*, coming next. Various shell-fish occur in much smaller numbers. It is interesting to note that crabs (*Cancer magister*) average 2 lb. each and abalones (*Haliotis* spp.) 50 lb. per dozen. A useful list of common and specific names of fishes, crustaceans and molluscs is given.

Soil Conservation in Kenya

In his first broadcast, on December 27, since he assumed office as governor of Kenya, Sir Philip Mitchell dealt with one of the Colony's most pressing problems—soil erosion. He illustrated his talk by reference to the Ukamba Reserve, where the far-advanced state of soil deterioration is causing grave anxiety. Here, Sir Philip said, is a salvage job which must be put in hand immediately. Much useful agricultural engineering work has already been done, but work needs to be greatly accelerated, otherwise "in a few years time there will be nothing left of the Ukamba Reserve". Concurrently, a social reorganization leading to a changed attitude of the African to his land must be carried through. Sir Philip sees most hope for soil conservation in the establishment of a landlord-tenant relationship, the landlord being the tribe as a whole, and the tenant the head of the family. Such a system would ensure the greatest possible security of tenure for the good cultivator and none for the incorrigible land miner. But he sees no short cut to the ultimate goal of restoring the land to a state of stable fertility.

Merseyside Naturalists' Association

THE third war-time portfolio of the Merseyside Naturalists' Association, an attractively bound volume of two hundred and fifty pages comprising sixty-five pages of photographs and coloured plates and forty-three original articles, has been edited by Miss J. Linaker. It includes detailed accounts of regional bird-life at Mold, North Wales, by J. Lord and C. Swaine; Wigan and Leigh flashes, by G. Brown and T. Edmondson; Hoghton, by G. C. Miller;

a Mersey shore pool, by F. J. Hartley; St. Andrews, the Midlands and war areas of Italy and North Africa; the president, Philip Ashcroft, describes his researches into the history of Martin Mere, the lake of 3,000 acres that once covered west Lancashire; Eric Hardy has a detailed account of the extinct and earliest known fauna of the north-west of England; and Mrs. E. G. Hardy describes how nestling hedge-sparrows were killed by a colony of brown ants. There is much that is of more than local interest. The raven is increasing its nesting range on the North Wales border, the curlew has definitely been established as a nesting bird in west Lancashire, while the colliery subsidence waters of south Lancashire are now known to be an important passage haunt of several rarer ducks, waders and wild swans.

Bibliography of Seismology

THE *Bibliography of Seismology*, 13, Nos. 14 and 15, Items 5564 to 5787, July 1943–June 1944, published by the Dominion Observatory, Ottawa, Canada, have just been received. In them are listed in full, occasionally with comments, papers and books from all parts of the world except Germany and Japan, dealing with pure and applied seismology. An interesting article listed in No. 14 is item 5579 by Centano-Grau, M., "Estudios sismológicos", Litografía del Comercio, pp. 555, 2 maps, 5 tab., Caracas, 1940, which gives a comprehensive review of many phases of seismology, and puts forward a theory of electrical causes for earthquakes of volcanic origin. The book contains a complete catalogue of earthquakes of Venezuela, and a study of the destructive shocks, including predictions of probable recurrences in different regions. In Nos. 14 and 15 numerous papers are listed dealing with rock bursts, chiefly in Canada and South Africa. One important paper is by Ernest A. Hodgson, "What is a Rock Burst?" published by the *Northern News*, Kirkland Lake, September 9, 1943, after a radio talk by the author. Other papers are by J. Spalding and include such topics as "Description of a Rock Burst", "Theory and Practice of Ground Control", and "Theory of Rock-Pressure" (*Kolar Gold Fields Mining and Metallurgical Society Bulletins*, 8, No. 41, 153, Johannesburg, 1935–37). An interesting theoretical topic is listed as item 5709 in No. 15: Finch, R. H., "The seismic prelude to the 1942 Eruption of Mauna Loa" (*Bulletin Seismological Society of America*, 33, No. 4, 237; 1943). The paper presents evidence that the eruptions of Mauna Loa are preceded by pronounced seismic activity, but that this activity falls off for a month or more prior to the actual eruption. This paper may be considered a sequel to Harry O. Wood's paper in the same journal in 1915 on the 1914 activity. Items from *Nature* are listed in both parts of the bibliography.

Announcements

PROF. J. M. MACKINTOSH, professor of public health in the University of London and dean of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, has been appointed a member of the Fuel and Power Advisory Council.

DR. J. G. DAVIS, of the National Institute for Research in Dairying at Shinfield, near Reading, has been appointed scientific adviser to the Express Dairy Co., Ltd., London.