

### Higher Technological Education in Britain

THE University Grants Committee has appointed a sub-committee to advise it on matters affecting technology in the universities of Great Britain, and to consider questions of higher technological education in consultation with the National Advisory Council on Education for Industry and Commerce, appointed by the Ministry of Education. The sub-committee consists of: Dr. A. E. Trueman (chairman), Prof. J. F. Baker, Sir Alan Barlow, H. W. Cremer, Sir Charles Darwin, Sir Peter Innes, Prof. Willis Jackson, Sir Andrew McCance, Prof. Andrew Robertson, Prof. J. B. Speakman, Sir Raymond Sreat, Sir Henry Tizard, and Sir Charles Ellis.

### B.C.U.R.A. Quarterly Gazette

THE *B.C.U.R.A. Quarterly Gazette*—a new publication of the British Coal Utilization Research Association—is designed to give a more colourful account of the Association's work and to serve a wider range of readers than a rigorously scientific journal. To factual accounts of research and development projects, it will add a running commentary on the Association's staff and their activities. The circulation will not be limited to members only. The first number contains a survey by Sir Charles Ellis, president of the Council, as it finds itself in a nationalized coal industry, covering its members, staff, accommodation, work and prospects. There follow articles on technical achievements in course of development. B.C.U.R.A. Patent No. 1 describes the down jet furnace, which employs a revolutionary system of combustion of solid fuels. Normal combustion on a grate is beset by limitations owing to the presence of ash and volatile matter in the fuel. These are avoided by the new technique, which provides freedom to work at greater intensities and for longer durations. The exploitation of these ideas is only in its infancy. Another item deals with the Association's work on domestic heating by open coal fires, which normally radiate not more than 25 per cent of the heat of combustion. Work in past years has shown the possibility of increasing this by one or other method—especially by supplementing radiation with heat convection. To-day the consumers' progress towards fuel economy is limited by lack of availability of efficient appliances. Sometimes these are too costly or even only to be obtained in a new house. The article describes a new inset fire which can be fitted into an existing grate at a moderate cost. It is designed by Mr. J. S. Hales and Mr. T. W. Grieve and claimed to be capable of high thermal efficiencies. When burning normal house coal, the total output of heat—by radiation and convection combined—reached 37 per cent; with coke, the figure reached 48 per cent of the heat of combustion. In addition, by reducing the flow of heat up the chimney to one change per hour, draughts are minimized and comfort improved.

### Medical Group Practice in the United States

THE review of the development and characteristics of Medical Group Practice in the United States which Political and Economic Planning has issued as Broadsheet No. 274 is of special interest in view of the obligations placed on local authorities in Britain under the National Health Service Act to provide, equip and maintain health centres staffed and run by medical practitioners working as a team. The survey shows that American group practice aims at

providing a full general and specialist service, including, if possible, in-patient treatment, and in the United States the term is applied to almost any form of organised medical team-work. The main incentives appear to be the inability of individual practitioners to provide a sufficiently complete service, the desire for professional co-operation among medical men and the need to reduce the cost of medical care by decreasing overhead expenditure and bringing specialist and hospital services to undeveloped areas. The main criteria are organised team-work and pooling of income. Day-to-day consultations are supplemented by staff meetings, good record systems, and sometimes also by democratic methods of administration. Groups show much interest in keeping their members up to date and developing their skills, for example, by good libraries, paid annual study leave, and systematic training of junior members. Financial competition within the group not only hinders team-work but also results in friction, and no solution has yet been found for the problem of assessing financially the diverse and constantly changing ability of physicians. The election of group members is of the highest importance and should be done by the medical men themselves. Some are temperamentally unsuited for group work and should be excluded. Good group practice may have a beneficial influence on medical standards over a wide area; but in view of the important differences in social background, in the development of health services and in the organisation of the medical profession in the United States, careful consideration will be necessary before the lessons of American experience can be applied to Britain.

### British Trust for Ornithology

THE work of the British Trust for Ornithology (91 Banbury Road, Oxford) is described in the fourteenth annual report which has recently been issued. Much useful information has been collected from the hatching and fledging inquiry and will be included in the new edition of the "Handbook of British Birds". A sample census of heronries showed that large decreases were recorded in every considerable area and in the majority of individual heronries; this was almost certainly due to the extreme severity of the winter. The black redstart inquiry showed that, up to the end of the year, sixteen pairs were reported to have lived in the south of England. Other inquiries have been made into the behaviour of tits with milk-bottles and the nocturnal activities of redwings; but probably the most popular was the watch for swifts on May 11, 1947. Five hundred observers made reports on the movements of about five thousand birds, three out of every four of whom were headed north. Above a line drawn from the Wash to the Severn this northward surge was especially marked, and in south-west Devon several parties of swifts were seen to come in from the sea and to proceed inland.

### Megalithic Tombs in Scotland and Ireland

PROF. GORDON CHILDE's present ideas on the megalithic tombs in Scotland and Ireland are put on record in a paper read before the Glasgow Archaeological Society (*Trans.*, 11; 1947). Recent discoveries have caused him to modify some details of his exposé made in the same publication for 1931. No longer, for example, is "the priority of Scottish passage

graves over against English or Irish" maintained. The chief discoveries made in the last ten years have been those of no less than seventy horned cairns covering segmented cists in Ulster which, allowing for local differences, can be equated with the tombs of the Clyde and Solway coasts. Beacharra ware occurs in both these series of tombs. Further, it would appear that in Megalithic tomb times, south-west Scotland, north-east Ireland and the Isle of Man formed one province, while central and western Ireland and Scotland north of the Great Glen constituted another. Lastly, Prof. Childe uses the new discoveries to suggest an explanation of the anomalous occurrence of long cairns, horned at both ends, which have been found in northern Scotland.

### Raffles Museum, Singapore

THE *Bulletin of the Raffles Museum* was suspended in 1941 when the Japanese occupied Singapore. It has now been revived, and the first issue of the new series (No. 18, October 1947) is made up of papers prepared before the occupation and preserved in the Museum. It is devoted almost entirely to the natural history of Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean and based on collections and field notes made on the island by C. A. Gibson-Hill between September 1938 and November 1940. Much of the bulletin describes the birds of the island; but notes are also included on the nature of the coast, climatic conditions from July 1939 to June 1940, echinoderms, Brachyura, terrestrial crabs, Arachnida, Isoptera, heterocerous and rhopalocerous Lepidoptera, terrestrial reptiles and mammals. The *Bulletin* also contains an obituary notice of the late director, F. N. Chasen, who was killed by enemy action in 1941.

### Textile Institute: Annual Conference

THE subject of the annual conference of the Textile Institute, to be held at Buxton during June 2-5, will be "The Organisation of the Textile Industry". Among the authors of papers are Sir William Palmer (chairman, British Rayon Federation), Dr. F. C. Toy and Dr. D. W. Hill (British Cotton Industry Research Association) and Prof. A. N. Shimmin and Prof. A. J. Brown (University of Leeds). The Institute will also discuss its own role in the organisation of the industry at the opening session on June 2, when chairmen of its various committees will describe the work of their sections and their plans for the future, dealing in particular with education, standardization, publication, co-ordination, liaison and the status of the textile technologist. Foreign visitors to the conference include B. Hellmann and Dr. Zoltan Szaloki, who are to present a paper on "Textile Planning and Modernization in Czechoslovakia". Mr. Harold Wilson, President of the Board of Trade, has agreed to address the conference on June 2.

### Science Service Officers

DR. KARL LARK-HOROVITZ, chairman of the Department of Physics, Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana, and Charles E. Scripps of Cleveland, Ohio, have been elected trustees of Science Service, of Washington. Mr. Scripps represents the E. W. Scripps Estate, of which he is a trustee, while Dr. Lark-Horovitz represents the American Association for the Advancement of Science, of which he is general secretary. The following officers have been re-elected: *President*, Dr. Harlow Shapley, director of Harvard

College Observatory; *Vice-President and Chairman of the Executive Committee*, Dr. Alexander Wetmore, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution; *Treasurer*, O. W. Riegel, director of the Lee School of Journalism, Washington, and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia; *Secretary*, Mr. Watson Davis, director of Science Service, Washington, D.C. Additional members of the Executive Committee are Mr. Frank R. Ford, editor of the Evansville Press, Evansville, Indiana; and Dr. E. G. Conklin, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey.

### British Medical Association: Annual Scientific Meeting

THE first annual scientific meeting of the British Medical Association since the War will be held at Cambridge during June 25-July 2, under the presidency of Sir Lionel Whitby, regius professor of physics in the University. Among the topics of particular scientific interest announced for discussion are: recent advances in knowledge of the Rh factor in blood; plasma and blood derivatives in the treatment of burns; human relations in industry; prophylaxis of virus infections; radioactive isotope therapy; aviation medicine; nutrition; antihistamine substances.

### International Summer School in Social Biology

THE British Social Hygiene Council is organising a Summer School on "The International and Cultural Relations of Social Biology", at the University, Lausanne, Switzerland, during August 18-September 1. During the first week of the School, there will be two morning and one evening lecture sessions each day, except Sunday, while the second week will be free for visits, excursions, and personal recreation. The course is intended for students of biology, teachers, social workers, men and women in administrative positions, and all who are interested in problems of human welfare and culture. The estimated cost, including travel, hotel accommodation and tuition, will be about £35. Further information can be obtained from the Secretary, British Social Hygiene Council (Dept. S.J.1), Tavistock House North, Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1.

### Summer School in Health Education

THE Central Council for Health Education is holding its annual Summer School in Health Education at 'High Leigh', Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire, during August 11-25. In addition to the basic lectures in physiology (by Prof. Samson Wright), psychology (by Prof. James Drever), the biology of infection (by Dr. Robert Cruickshank), and social factors affecting health (by Prof. J. M. Mackintosh), Dr. H. A. Wilson, the Bishop of Chelmsford, will speak on "The Spiritual Needs of Man", and Sir Alexander Fleming on "Penicillin". An interesting new development is that of a course of nature study, with rambles and evening discussions, illustrated by films, strips and bird-song records. The School will appeal especially to educational and medical administrators, doctors, teachers, youth leaders, public health nurses, industrial nurses, industrial welfare workers, training organisers and students. Further information can be obtained from the Medical Adviser and Secretary, the Central Council for Health Education, Tavistock House, Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1. The inclusive cost of the course per person will be £16 16s.