

Food, Health and Income". This bore witness to the fact that his interests had widened and now embraced the economic and social aspects of food production and human health. In the years immediately preceding the Second World War, Boyd-Orr had set in motion a large-scale dietary survey of human populations, the finds of which proved of considerable value to the Scientific Food Policy Committee of the War Cabinet in formulating its nutritional policy. During 1942-45 Boyd-Orr filled the dual role of director of the Rowett Research Institute and professor of agriculture in the University of Aberdeen. Then in 1946 there followed his appointment as director-general of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, after which academic honours have been showered upon him. He was for a time Member of Parliament representing the Scottish Universities; in 1945 he was made rector and a year later chancellor of the University of Glasgow. In September of this year he was re-elected president of the World Movement for World Federal Government. Now the award of the Nobel Prize for Peace has set the seal to his work for world peace.

### School of Pharmacy University of London

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain established its School of Pharmacy in Bloomsbury Square in 1842; this School has played an important part in the training of pharmacists and in the advancement of pharmaceutical knowledge. In 1925 it was admitted as a School of the University of London, and the scope and prestige of its research work were increased by the opening of the Pharmacological Laboratories under the direction of Prof. J. H. Burn. In 1933 the school became the "College of the Pharmaceutical Society". The original building had by this time become hopelessly inadequate, and plans were made to provide fine accommodation for the College in the new building in Brunswick Square, which was also to serve as the headquarters of the Society. These plans were interrupted in 1939 before the building was complete, and when the War ended it was impossible to proceed with them. The solution of the problem thus presented has now been found. The College of the Pharmaceutical Society is born again as an independent School of Pharmacy in the University of London. The University has purchased the unfinished building and intends to give the School the same space it would have received from the Society. The first session of the new School, which is also the hundred and seventh session of the old School, opened on October 5. In the inaugural address Prof. G. B. Jeffery gave an interesting review of the history of the Society and the University, and held out high hopes for their joint future. Those who are responsible for this development are to be warmly congratulated. The old over-crowded building is still in use; but there seems to be a prospect of better things to come.

### Memorial to James Nasmyth

A BRONZE plaque has recently been placed on 47 York Place, Edinburgh, to mark the birthplace of James Nasmyth, the celebrated inventor, engineer and astronomer, who was born there on August 19, 1808. The tenth of the eleven children of the distinguished painter Alexander Nasmyth (1758-1840), he inherited from his father his artistic skill and mechanical ingenuity. He was brought up in surroundings which stimulated his natural talents, and at the age of twenty-one he became the assistant of the famous

Henry Maudslay, of Lambeth, being thereby brought into contact with many able engineers. When twenty-six, he started in business for himself in Manchester, and two years later founded the Bridgewater Foundry, Patricroft, for the manufacture of locomotives, machine tools, etc., which soon gained a European reputation. By the time he reached the age of forty-eight, Nasmyth was able to retire with an ample fortune, and settling at Penshurst, Kent, he erected an observatory and became well known for his observations and theories of the sun and the moon. Among his many mechanical inventions the most important was the steam hammer; but it can be said that he made improvements in all machines which occupied his attention. His "Autobiography", edited by Samuel Smiles and published in 1883, is among the best of such works written by engineers. Nasmyth died in London on May 7, 1890. The new memorial at Edinburgh has been erected through the efforts of the Royal Scottish Society of Arts, the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, the Royal Scottish Academy, the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the Watt Club.

### List of Reference Books

THE National Book League has recently issued a selected list of reference books intended for the general reader which has been compiled by W. A. Mumford, borough librarian of Cambridge, with the assistance of the borough librarians of Finchley, Folkestone and Hornsey (pp. 32. London: Cambridge University Press, 1949; 1s. net). Although it omits very technical and specialized works and contains only eleven entries under "Science and Technology", some of which could be challenged, it should prove a useful desk tool to those in charge of works or small technical libraries who do not find A. D. Roberts's book essential. In arrangement the list follows generally the Dewey classification.

### Spawning Act of the Bitterling

AMONG a number of interesting contributions to the silver jubilee number of *The Aquarist and Pondkeeper* (May 1949), a paper on the breeding habits of the bitterling (*Rhodeus amarus*) is noteworthy. The author, the well-known fish photographer, W. S. Pitt, brings together a number of contradictory accounts of the manner in which the female deposits her eggs in the freshwater mussel, where they afterwards undergo development. It is generally believed that the long ovipositor is inserted into the mussel; but his own observations, and those of his brother, suggest that this is not so. So far as they could see, the bitterling merely strikes the siphon of the mussel with the part of her body immediately in front of the ovipositor, the latter trailing loosely behind, being neither inserted into the mussel nor sucked in by it. The late J. R. Norman, in a letter to Pitt, described a wide-lipped tube at the base of the long, narrow ovipositor and showed that it is possible for the egg to be shed through either tube. Some observers, including in recent years L. H. Bretschneider and J. J. D. de Witt, have insisted that the long ovipositor is inserted into the siphon and that through it the egg is passed. It appears that the act of deposition occurs so quickly that details are difficult to follow, and the act therefore seems to be a suitable subject for investigation with a cine-camera in the hands of an expert photographer and aquarist possessed of much patience. Perhaps Mr. Pitt himself will undertake the task.