

Annual Report of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture

THE 1948 annual report of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, St. Augustine, Trinidad (London office, 40 Norfolk Street, London, W.C.2), comes at an important period of its post-war development. On one hand, the College is now closely associated with four adequately financed Colonial Development and Welfare Acts research projects dealing with banana, cacao, cane sugar and soils; on the other hand, working arrangements are being formulated with the University College of the West Indies, and contacts are being made with the University Colleges in the Gold Coast, Nigeria and Uganda. In Trinidad, as elsewhere, urgent research projects are at present impeded by lack of housing or of laboratory accommodation and by lack of staff. Construction costs have risen, and some modification of original designs has been necessary. It is satisfactory to note that three hundred acres of land in the new College farm are being cleared and planted; the College has hitherto had insufficient land for field experiments. Some appointments have been made to the teaching and research staff. It is considered that the introduction of equivalent salary scales will be greatly advantageous in attracting good men and in facilitating interchange between scientific workers in the West Indies, in the Colonial Research Service and in the Scientific Civil Service of Great Britain.

Another feature in plans for Colonial development is the grouping of overseas men of science in research organisations where they benefit from contact with fellow workers, have adequate libraries and can be relieved of various administrative chores. A regional agricultural research organisation has not yet been established in the British West Indies, but the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture does, in fact, carry out some of the desired functions. It seems necessary to assume that as time passes an increasing amount of agricultural research, development and extension work in tropical lands will be carried out by nationals of those countries. Nevertheless, these territories will continue to require technicians who have received their general education and their more specialized training in metropolitan countries. These two aspects of man-power needs in relation to agricultural development have to be borne in mind when planning the most fruitful co-operation between regional research organisations and regional university colleges. The discussions that are in progress between the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture and the University College of the West Indies will, it is hoped, lead towards a well-devised and adjustable allocation of responsibilities in this field.

Parliamentary and Scientific Committee: Annual Report

THE annual report for 1949 of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee (pp. 20; London: Parliamentary and Scientific Committee, 1949; 1s.) gives an account of the Committee's activities which demonstrates what an important contribution this unofficial body can make in bringing scientific opinion to bear effectively on the conduct of public affairs. A useful series of addresses was given to meetings of the Committee during the year on such varied matters as American technological co-operation, the British Standards Institution, science and the efficient use of materials in the building industry, Britain's oil-refinery programme, the Agri-

cultural and the Medical Research Councils and the World Resources Conference. Questions were put in the House of Commons by Mr. Raymond Blackburn, chairman of the sub-committee on coal utilization, which led to important announcements on the re-organisation of research and development under the Minister of Fuel and Power, the efficiency of coal utilization and on smoke abatement. Representations were made during the year on the importation of scientific books and journals, on Anglo-American co-operation and President Truman's Fourth Point, and on sera and vaccines for veterinary use. A sub-committee on technical education took evidence with the object of producing a report on technical education in sequel to those issued on scientific man-power and higher technological education. Other aspects of scientific man-power and technological education were raised by members of the Committee in the House of Commons during the year; but, while a sub-committee was appointed to consider the effect which the implementation of the Spens report would have on the scales for university salaries, no action on the part of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee was called for in view of announcements made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on February 28 and March 15, 1949.

Turnover of Industrial Labour in Great Britain

THE British Institute of Management has now published an analysis of labour turnover statistics submitted by 187 undertakings, covering 215,499 male and 94,875 female employees for the period January-June 1949, in response to an invitation issued in November 1948 with the booklet of the Institute, "Labour Turnover". The returns cover thirty-seven industry groups and thirteen localities. Three tables are given: the first lists the industry groups and shows the number of establishments included in each group, and a percentage analysis of leavers in various categories; the second gives half-yearly totals for thirty-seven industry groups and five locality groups, showing the total number of leavers in each group for each of twenty-three reasons for leaving; the third table gives the annual labour turnover-rate, the resignation-rate and the rate of resignations for works reasons. Analysis of this third table indicates the very low annual labour turnover-rate for both males and females in the oil and petroleum industry. By far the greater proportion of this low rate for both males and females is made up of resignations, and of these resignations less than forty per cent for men and less than thirty per cent for women are resignations for works reasons. In most industries the proportion of resignations among women is very high compared with discharges, and resignations for other than works reasons predominate, whereas among men a high proportion leave for works reasons. Full six-monthly analysis sheets for each industry group and, where possible, each locality group have been distributed to the undertakings participating in that industry and locality, and copies are available for inspection at the Institute.

Sciences Modernes

THE first number of a new Belgian monthly, *Sciences Modernes* (pp. 32; Jumet-Charleroi: 4 rue Remoncheval, 1950; 250 francs a year), indicates that its appeal lies more particularly in the field of applied science; but it expects to find its readers among those who wish to be kept up to date with regard to developments in technology during and