

and Prof. R. C. Mills, chairman of the Interim Council of the Australian National University, Canberra, Sir John Medley, vice-chancellor of the University of Melbourne, Prof. D. B. Copland, vice-chancellor of the Australian National University, Canberra, Prof. G. A. Currie, vice-chancellor of the University of Western Australia, Prof. S. H. Roberts, vice-chancellor of the University of Sydney, Prof. J. J. Stable, president of the Professorial Board, University of Queensland, and Prof. T. Hytten, vice-chancellor of the University of Tasmania.

The president of the University, Wallace C. Wurth, announced three grants made to assist the work of the University. Lord Nuffield had provided, through the Nuffield Foundation, a Nuffield research professorship for mechanical engineering from a grant totalling £25,000 sterling over ten years. Such a research professorship in mechanical engineering is unique in the British Commonwealth, and this is the first occasion on which the Nuffield Trust has endowed a research professorship outside the British Isles. A sum of £15,000 has been provided by the mining companies at Broken Hill towards the provision of senior staff in mining engineering. The Commonwealth Government has approved the allocation of £20,000 over two years to assist the University in research work.

When laying the foundation stone, H.E. the Governor made special reference to the fact that, whereas in the past Britain has shown a lead to the Dominions in most matters, in the establishment of the first university of technology in the British Commonwealth, New South Wales has not only given a lead to the other Australian States, but also to the mother country. This is most appropriate in view of the increasing industrial development of Australia and the status that country now has in the affairs of the British Commonwealth.

An interesting feature of the proceedings was the delivery in turn by vice-chancellors of the Australian universities of messages of greeting to the new University. Mr. A. Denning, director of the University, read a number of messages which had been received from leading world universities and technological institutions overseas. These included greetings from President Killian, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the United States; President Pallmann, of the Zurich Institute of Technology; Sir Edward Appleton, vice-chancellor of the University of Edinburgh; Sir Raymond Priestley, vice-chancellor of the University of Birmingham; Dr. David S. Anderson, director of the Royal Technical College, Glasgow; Prof. O. A. Saunders, professor of mechanical engineering in the Imperial College of Science and Technology, University of London; and Prof. Eric Ashby, vice-chancellor elect, University of Belfast. Messages were also received from Lord Eustace Percy, rector of King's College, University of Durham, and Mr. L. B. Robinson, managing director of the Zinc Corporation Group of industries, London. A personal message was read from Prof. M. L. Oliphant, Poynting professor of physics in the University of Birmingham, who will go to Australia in 1951 as director of the Research School in Physics of the Australian National University. After pledging his co-operation with the N.S.W. University of Technology, he stated that the occasion of the laying of the foundation stone of this institution was an event which may mark the beginning of a revolution in technical education in the British Commonwealth.

BRITISH COUNCIL

REPORT FOR 1948-49

IT will be recalled that on the opening day of the 1948 Conference of the Universities of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on December 17, 1948, there was some discussion of three resolutions concerned with encouraging the interchange both of young postgraduates and of teachers which had been passed at the Congress of Universities of the Commonwealth in the previous July; Mr. J. F. Foster, secretary of the Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth, had referred to the setting aside by the British Council of a definite sum for travel grants, to be administered by a joint committee of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, of the Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth and of the Universities Advisory Committee of the British Council. Later in the discussion, Dr. A. E. Morgan explained briefly how the British Council came into this scheme, which was only a small beginning towards the great Imperial academic travel fund which was really required. For the academic year 1949-50 there would only be available from the British Council a sum of £6,000, obtained by reducing its awards of postgraduate scholarships from nineteen to eight, though Dr. Morgan hoped that this sum might be supplemented by funds from other sources.

The Council's own report for 1948-49* briefly records this development as starting in March 1949, but the analysis of expenditure included is for the year 1947-48, in which £12,136 is shown for travel costs of interchange of university staffs between Commonwealth and other overseas countries and the United Kingdom and £201,844 for scholarships and bursaries generally. Other items of expenditure which may be noted in passing are £34,124 for the work of the Council in general science, agriculture and medicine, £160,512 for books, book exhibitions, British Council publications and overseas press, and £67,730 for the purchase and distribution to Council libraries and other institutions of technical and other periodicals. During 1948-49, the Council awarded 242 new scholarships as compared with 272 in the previous year, and 119 of the latter holders continued during part or the whole of the second year. During 1948-49, sixty-two foreign scholarships for British students were offered by twelve countries through the Council, as compared with thirty-six in 1947-48. The short-term bursary scheme, designed mainly to enable industrial or social workers, technicians, local government officers, etc., to live in Great Britain for three to six months and pursue their normal occupations, developed considerably, and awards were made to 105 bursars from forty countries.

During the year, thirty-two summer schools were held in twenty-two countries overseas, attended by more than 1,600 persons, while summer schools at seven British universities were attended by a further 1,742. Besides this, vacation courses were arranged for overseas students at universities in the United Kingdom, and the Council also provided a special 'introduction course' for Council scholars on their arrival in Great Britain from countries where living conditions are widely different. The value of this student welfare work of the British Council has been since signally recognized by the Colonial Office, which

* British Council. Report for 1948-1949. Pp. 147. (London: British Council, 1949.)

from the beginning of 1950 has transferred to the British Council the formal responsibility for the welfare of all Colonial students in Great Britain. The Council will now be responsible for housing two hundred such students in new London hostels as well as for the Colonial Office hostels in the provinces, and for this it will be provided with an additional £515,000 from the Foreign Office, Colonial Office and Commonwealth Relations Office, of which £425,000 will come from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund, and which will be managed by the Council as a separate account.

To other activities of the British Council the general cut of ten per cent imposed on all Government expenditure will in future apply, and the accounts of the work given in the latest report will be read with that limitation in mind. Glancing first at the work under the Science Advisory Committee, of which Sir Henry Dale has resigned the chairmanship after serving since 1942, the Engineering Panel of Advisers has been replaced by the secretaries of the Institutions of Civil, Mechanical and Electrical Engineers, and their presidents serve on the Science Advisory Committee. A Combined Sciences Department has taken over the responsibility of work for all sciences other than agriculture and medicine. Lecture tours overseas were undertaken by twenty-one eminent British men of science, and a conspectus of current scientific research in British universities and university colleges was prepared under the title "Scientific Research in Britain". A survey was made of financial facilities available in the United Kingdom to enable British scientific workers to study overseas and vice versa. In the Science Library 134 bibliographies were compiled in response to requests, and these are distributed to all Council libraries overseas.

The library of the Medical Department dealt with more than 140 requests for bibliographies and information, and more than fifty scholarships were awarded to medical postgraduates and places found for them in universities and hospitals. At the request of the Ministry of Health, programmes were arranged for World Health Organisation fellows studying in Great Britain. The showing of some films on anaesthesia to Italian medical men led to the dispatch of Mr. Geoffrey Organe, of the Westminster Hospital, to Italy and to the establishment there of three schools of anaesthesia; it is somewhat surprising that such results and the close relation between the medical profession in the two countries should have been left to the initiative of the British Council. A similar remark, apart from the question of travel funds, might well be made of the initiation of interchange of lecturers between British and foreign universities. It seems highly desirable that universities and professional institutions should scrutinize carefully this latest report of the British Council and decide what activities there may be which it would be more fitting with professional esteem for them to pursue on their own initiative, and what it is more appropriate to leave to the British Council because of the greater experience which, as in student welfare, the latter is able to bring to bear.

This may well be true of some publishing activities. To *British Science News* (ceased publication, 1950) and the *British Medical Bulletin*, the new quarterly *British Agricultural Bulletin* was added in 1948; but there are other publishing activities, such as *Britain To-day*, which might be improved with closer scrutiny, and the book trade should now be able to manage its own exhibitions of books overseas and export trade without

specific assistance from the Council. The library policy of the Council has already changed, and responsibility for the establishment or maintenance of general public libraries is being transferred to the Colonies themselves. The report points out that the main impact of the work overseas is upon specialists, students and others who are unable to visit Britain, and that about half the Council's headquarters staff is engaged in providing the necessary services and supplies of cultural material for the overseas staff.

EARTHQUAKES DURING OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1949

DURING the last three months of 1949 there were thirty-one strong earthquakes and at least 116 minor ones. October opened with a shock having an epicentre to the west of Lake Tanganyika. On October 4 there was a shock of magnitude $6\frac{1}{2}$, from latitude 1° S., longitude 21° W., in mid-Atlantic; but probably the greatest earthquakes of the month were on October 19, 20 and 21 in the Solomon Islands region. The epicentre of these shocks was near lat. $5\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ S., long. 154° E., and the magnitude of the greatest $7\frac{1}{2}$. As far away from the epicentre as Rabaul (New Britain), damage was done to some houses which were thrown off their foundations, while in other houses crockery and glassware were damaged by being thrown from tables and shelves. Several water tanks were thrown from their stands. On October 31 a shock of magnitude $6\frac{3}{4}$ occurred some seventy miles south of Sitka (Alaska), and this was felt in Sitka. Probably the earthquake of deepest focus during the three months, however, happened on October 28 in the region of the Fiji Islands, the depth being about 450 km.

On November 22, in the region of the Kermadec Islands, the greatest earthquake of that month occurred, and the next greatest, on November 27, was in the region of the Tonga Islands; the former had instrumental magnitude $7\frac{1}{2}$ and the latter $7\frac{1}{4}$. It is possible that a slight earth tremor occurred on November 16 in the Potteries district in England. Windows rattled and beds moved, but no damage has been reported.

December 17 and 19 marked the principal earthquakes of that month. On December 17 there were many shocks having the same epicentre (lat. 54° S., long. 71° W.), the greatest being at 15h. 07m. 53s. G.M.T., this having instrumental magnitude $7\frac{1}{2}$. The region affected was in the far south of the Argentine and Chile, and the movement was particularly severe in Tierra del Fuego. Property damage was done at Punta Arenas (Chile), the most southerly town in the world, where several buildings, including a school, collapsed. At the small Argentinian seaport of Ushuaia, the pier broke in two and several buildings were damaged. The total casualties appear to have been one policeman killed and another injured when a house collapsed. On December 29 an earthquake with instrumental magnitude 7.4 shook Luzon, the chief island of the Philippines. Near Ilog, the capital of Isabella Province, on the east coast fissures spouted water and roads were blocked by landslides. At Naguilian, near by, a 'jeep' is said to have disappeared into a fissure. Along the coast, there were landslides and the sea ran over low-lying country, drowning one woman. In Manila and other places damage was done to buildings, and in Cabantuan