

a scientific museum in Montevideo; and a mobile exhibition will shortly tour the Latin-American countries and will show different aspects of science and its relation to daily life. In his report Dr. Establier points out that a characteristic of the work has been the complete collaboration that government and scientific institutions and individual men of science have shown, and he is of the opinion that this true Unesco spirit which he has found over the whole continent of South America is most promising for the future. The address of the Office is: Unesco Centro de Cooperación Científica para América Latina, Bulevar Artigas 1320, Montevideo, Uruguay.

Theory of Relativity in Contemporary Science

THE seventieth birthday of Prof. A. Einstein was celebrated in Princeton on March 19, 1949, by the reading of a group of papers with the title "The Theory of Relativity in Contemporary Science", and these have now been published (*Proc. Amer. Phil. Soc.*, 93, No. 7, 521; 1949; 50 cents). E. P. Wigner deals with invariance in physical theory, distinguishing between the older types of invariance which found perfect formulation in the special theory of relativity, and the new type, not yet completely understood, corresponding to the general theory of relativity. A somewhat similar distinction is drawn by H. Weyl, who deals with the stimulus of relativity theory on pure mathematics, particularly with invariance, the theory of groups and differential geometry. In these the most valuable suggestions for developing general ideas have come from the general theory of relativity, though these are much more complicated than those arising from the special theory. G. M. Clemence explains some new methods for applying relativity theory to the motion of the planets; the application to the perihelion of Mercury is well known, and there is now good hope of dealing with the earth, Mars, possibly Venus, and some minor planets. A much more difficult problem, that of relativistic cosmology, is discussed by H. P. Robertson. After recalling the cosmological theories of Einstein, Weyl, Friedmann, Lemaitre, Tolman and himself, leading up to Hubble's idea of an expanding universe, Robertson gives a critical examination of the evidence. He concludes that we have not yet sufficient data and must look forward to the facts which may be provided in the near future by the 200-inch telescope on Mount Palomar.

Mode of Action of Insecticides

THE Chemical-Biological Co-ordination Centre of the National Research Council, Washington, D.C., was established in 1946 with the object of assembling information on the relation of chemical structure to biological activity, to sponsor the 'screening' of chemicals for their biological effects, and to prepare reviews of the literature on test methods and biological activity. Review No. 1 has now been published (pp. 84; 1948; 1 dollar). It deals with the mode of action of organic insecticides, exclusive of fumigants, and covers both natural products such as the pyrethrins, rotenone and nicotine and such synthetic insecticides as benzene hexachloride, DDT and the organic phosphates. The chemistry of the active substances is outlined, and what is known of their mode of entry and the points at which they interfere in the normal physiology of the insect are reviewed. It must be admitted that much of the existing knowledge is very incomplete or appears contradictory. But the review, which is by R. L.

Metcalf, of the Citrus Experiment Station in California, is a very competent piece of work and will prove a valuable starting-point for anyone wishing to make a scientific study of insecticides.

British Journal of Sociology

THE re-appearance of a journal devoted to the publication of recent researches in sociology has been long expected. More and more investigators have been concerned with sociological matters, and now the London School of Economics has provided them with a medium in which the results of their observations can be expressed. Edited by Profs. M. Ginsberg, D. V. Glass and T. H. Marshall, the first issue contains articles by Prof. R. Aron on "Social Structure and the Ruling Class"; Prof. D. V. Glass on "The Application of Social Research"; J. Hall and D. Caradog Jones on "Social Attitude and Social Class"; and Asa Briggs on "Social Structure and Politics in Birmingham and Lyons". There are also an extensive list of book reviews and a short section dealing with current events in sociology. The format of the journal is good. Publication will be quarterly. In order to attract the widest possible circle of readers it is hoped that articles describing some of the sociological investigations being carried out in various industrial organisations and in the Services may be included.

Basil Hicks Lecture of the University of Sheffield

THE fourth Basil Hicks Lecture of the University of Sheffield will be given by Lord Boyd-Orr on November 10. The Basil Hicks Lecture was founded by the late Dr. William Hicks, formerly principal of Firth College and University College, Sheffield, and charter vice-chancellor of the University of Sheffield, in memory of his son who was killed in the First World War. The foundation provides for a triennial lecture dealing with some aspect of the First World War, either in its origins, its conduct or its social and international consequences, or such other subject of national or international interest as may be arranged. Previous lecturers have been Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, Dr. Gilbert Murray and General J. C. Smuts.

University of Birmingham: Recent Appointments

PROF. E. A. Peel, at present professor of educational psychology in the University of Durham, has been appointed professor of education and head of the Department of Education, University of Birmingham. The following appointments in the University have also been announced: D. H. Griffiths to be lecturer in geophysics; G. L. Hatherley to be lecturer in metalliferous mining; Dr. A. Lasnitzki to be senior research fellow in biochemistry (cancer research); and Dr. D. L. Woodhouse to be lecturer and senior research fellow in chemical pathology.

Institute of Chemistry of Ireland: Election of Officers

AT the first annual general meeting of the Institiuid Ceimice na hEireann (Institute of Chemistry of Ireland), the following officers were elected: *President*, Dr. A. G. G. Leonard; *Vice-President*, W. V. Griffiths; *Honorary Secretary*, F. T. Riley; *Honorary Treasurer*, M. Cranley; *Council Members*, Dr. V. Barry, D. Crowley, Prof. T. Dillon, D. T. Flood, G. F. O'Sullivan, Prof. T. S. Wheeler and G. Martin Wheeler (*Secretary*). The meeting stressed the contribution which the chemist can make to efficiency