

ducing joint consultation procedure into an organization, and this is followed by suggestions for keeping the machinery and spirit of joint consultation alive. The broadsheet also contains details of the constitutions of joint consultative bodies at three firms where joint consultation is successfully practised; these are, the Works Council of the Northern Branch of High Duty Alloys, the Management Advisory Committee of Vauxhall Motors, Ltd., and the Works Council Scheme of Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd. The broadsheet may be obtained from the Institute of Personnel Management, Management House, Hill Street, London, W.1, price 2s. 6d.

#### Use of Plastics in Preparing Fossils

A USEFUL technical article by H. A. Toombs and A. E. Rixon, of the British Museum (Natural History), concerning a new development of the 'transfer method' in the preparation of fossils is contained in the *Museums Journal* (105; August 1950). The early technique of Holm in the preparation of graptolites, whereby the fossil was stuck to a glass slide by means of Canada balsam and the matrix removed by hydrochloric acid, is well known. In 1948 Toombs, by using acetic acid instead of the mineral acids, showed how the method could be applied to most vertebrate remains in calcareous rocks. It was necessary, however, to use a rubber cement instead of Canada balsam, which is attacked by acetic acid. This rubber cement, however, had the disadvantage of being opaque, thus obscuring the original surface of the fossil. By using the synthetic resin known as 'Marco Resin S.B.26 C', the transparency of the plastic allows the original side of the specimen to be seen. Its adhesive powers are stated to be at least as good as those of rubber. Laboratory details of the process are given in the paper, the dentary of a Eugnathid fish from Purbeck limestone being selected as an example.

#### The Wandering Albatross

ALTHOUGH well known to sailors and others who make sea voyages, not many people have seen the wandering albatross in its breeding territory. There are few places which this great sea-bird, with a wing-span of about seventeen feet, finds suitable for nesting; in the southern oceans there are probably not more than six islands. Chief among them is Marion Island, one of the Prince Edward group, which is situated within the Roaring Forties. Its suitability as a breeding place for the wandering albatross is probably due to the weather, which is extreme enough to exclude human beings but not severe enough to endanger the life of the young birds in their growth to maturity. One human being who has observed the nest-building, egg-laying, incubation and other habits of the wandering albatross is J. A. Bennetts. His account is recorded in a recent issue of *Scottish Zoo and Wild Life* (3, No. 2; Jan. 1951); the article is accompanied by some photographs showing the immature chick and the courtship behaviour of adult birds.

#### Blundells' School Science Society

THE fifth issue of the magazine of the Blundells' School Science Society is yet another example of the splendid work being done at many boarding schools in Great Britain in the training and inspiration of young scientific workers. In 1950, besides a series of general lectures to the Society ranging from the biology of the south-west Pacific to the production

and measurement of high vacua, records were kept by individual boys to illustrate the local meteorology, entomology and ornithology. Five hundred birds were ringed by the Ornithological Section of the Society, while one group of bird-watchers spent a camping week-end recording the birds of the Ponchdown area. The Geographical Section toured South Devon to study physical formations in relation to land utilization, and a full account of their observations is presented. The magazine also contains prize-winning essays describing original inquiries made by boys. Those dealing with the reactions of nymphs of two species of may-flies to various ecological factors, variations in the sex ratio of the meadow brown butterfly and the investigation of double flower specimens of lady's-mock are particularly noteworthy, as are a number of contributions by the teaching staff.

#### Smithsonian Institution: Annual Report for 1948-49

THE annual report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution for the year ended June 30, 1949 (see *Nature*, 165, 641; 1950), has now been issued bound with the General Appendix (Publication 3996; pp. 422+82 plates; Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1950; 2.75 dollars). This includes reports of investigations made by collaborators of the Institution, as well as some memoirs of a general character or on special topics that are of interest or value to the numerous correspondents of the Institution. Among these are Sir Harold Spencer Jones's Arthur Lecture on the determination of precise time, Prof. F. E. Zeuner's address to the Royal Institution on time in evolution, H. Friedman's paper on the "Breeding Habits of the Weaver-Birds: a Study in the Biology of Behaviour Patterns", E. H. Walker's article "New Zealand, a Botanist's Paradise", and A. V. Kidder's paper on the archaeological importance of Guatemala. The rest of the papers have been previously published elsewhere, though some, such as those of E. Hubble on the 200-in. Hale telescope and some of the problems it may solve, and E. D. Walker on "Animal Behaviour", may not be easily accessible to British men of science.

#### Technical Information and Documents Unit

THE Technical Information and Documents Unit, which for a number of years has been attached to the Board of Trade, has become a part of the Information Services of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. The Unit has a large collection of unpublished documents, which contains valuable information on the production and use of substitute materials, and these are at the disposal of industry in Great Britain. There is a small Technical Section for assistance in the selection of material to meet specific needs, and a reading room is provided for those wishing to make a detailed study of drawings and documents. Alternatively, photocopies can be supplied at moderate charges. The Unit is still at Lacon House, Theobalds Road, London, W.C.1.

#### Zoological Society of India: Officers

OFFICERS of the Zoological Society of India have been elected as follows: *President*, Prof. K. N. Bhal, professor of zoology, University of Lucknow. *Vice-Presidents*: Dr. S. L. Hora, director, Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta; Dr. M. A. Moghe, principal, Amraoti College. *Secretary*: Dr. M. L. Roon-