

Conception of Science in Education

THE summer number of *The Use of English*, edited by Denys Thompson (Chatto and Windus), is notable for the amount of space which it devotes to the problems of teaching the humanities to the science specialist, particularly in the senior forms of grammar and public schools. F. W. Westaway, and more recently P. A. Gaskill and A. Towers, have already written excellent small books on English for science students. The editorial of the periodical under review goes further and gives a most useful outline of a scheme for enlarging the conception of science, its nature, its methods, its strength and its limitations in the field of knowledge. Such a scheme could well be developed for all sixth-formers in addition to those specializing in science. An excellent reading list on the values of science, science and civilization, the scope of science, science and religion, and science and politics is provided. The editor is wise in saying that "every sixth form teacher knows that it is not only the scientist who suffers from lack of balance and humility. In their refusal to see that true science is a major human activity, specialists in other subjects are quite as obtuse and obstinate as any scientist". This, indeed, is exemplified in another otherwise useful contribution by a writer in the same issue, who says: "Western civilisation is not only a weaving together of Greek, Roman and Hebrew strands; for good or ill we must admit the presence of modern western technology". Here again is the failure to realize that technology is a part of the application of science and not science itself. It now remains for some wise educationist to continue the work of redeeming the philistinism of so many students of the arts. Examples of this are only too common: for example, the master of the college who dreams of a neo-Hellenic Utopia but does not despise the use of anaesthetics and aeroplanes and adds to his income by broadcast talks.

National Museum of Canada, Ottawa: Annual Report for 1949-50

THE year 1949-50 was an important one in the history of the National Museum of Canada, for it inaugurated a new era. The Museum began and grew up within the Geological Survey; but in 1920 the two were separated and placed under separate directors. They continued, however, to occupy the same building—the Victoria Memorial Museum—and to share some of the same services and even the same administration. By a reorganization which became effective in January 1950, the two passed into different government departments—the Geological Survey into the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, and the National Museum into that of Resources and Development. This development is recorded in the annual report of the Museum for 1949-50 (Bulletin No. 23; pp. 261+60 pl.; 1951; 1 dollar). As is usual with museums in Canada and the United States, the Museum has been able to carry out an extensive series of expeditions and archaeological excavations. The report gives details of field-work in zoology, undertaken in British Columbia, and botanical studies along the east coast of Hudson Bay; archaeological sites were investigated on Cornwallis Island, North-West Territories, and in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. It is a matter worthy of note that these field exhibitions are undertaken as part of the normal work of the Museum, such is the faith of the trustees and managing bodies in their ultimate value to the Museum and the common weal.

Research at the University of Birmingham during 1950-51

THE twenty-second annual report of the Joint Standing Committee for Research of the University of Birmingham covers the session 1950-51, in which the new Aitchison laboratories in the Department of Industrial Metallurgy were brought into use for teaching and research purposes. These laboratories consist of two main sections equipped with full-scale plant for foundry and for metal-working operations, and there is also a machine shop used principally for the construction of apparatus and for service and maintenance purposes. The laboratories, with modern manufacturing plant and equipment at their disposal, have been constructed and equipped in the hope of supplying the metallurgical industries with men of good metallurgical training. The most valuable feature of the report is, as in previous years, the departmental lists of published work which is regarded as contributing to original knowledge. Each list is prefaced by a short note directing attention to special features of the year's work. Three examples of such special features are as follows: in the Department of Mathematical Physics a new method has been evolved of treating bound states in field theory, which has led to the development of new mathematical methods; work on the dielectric breakdown of pure liquids has now attracted a grant from the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research; and the Department of Chemistry has been selected by the International Union of Chemistry as the British laboratory for the standardization of the molecular weights of high polymers.

University of London

THE title of professor emeritus in the University has been conferred on the following: Prof. S. P. Bedson (bacteriology), on his retirement from the Goldsmiths' Company's chair of bacteriology at the London Hospital Medical College which he has held since 1934; Sir David Brunt (meteorology), on his retirement from the chair of meteorology at the Imperial College of Science and Technology which he has held since 1934; Sir Alfred Egerton (chemical technology), on his retirement from the chair of chemical technology at the Imperial College of Science and Technology which he has held since 1936; Prof. G. I. Finch (physical chemistry), on his retirement from the professorship at the Imperial College of science and technology which he has held since 1936; Prof. J. R. Marrack (chemical pathology), on his retirement from the chair of chemical pathology at the London Hospital Medical College which he has held since 1934; Prof. J. A. S. Ritson (mining), on his retirement from the chair of mining at the Imperial College of Science and Technology which he has held since 1935; Sir George Thomson (physics), on his retirement from the chair of physics at the Imperial College of Science and Technology which he has held since 1930.

The following other titles in the University have been conferred: reader in pharmacognosy on Dr. J. W. Fairbairn, in respect of the post held by him at the School of Pharmacy; professor of pharmacology and therapeutics on Dr. C. A. Keele, in respect of the post held by him at the Middlesex Hospital Medical School; reader in biochemistry on Dr. William Klyne, in respect of the post held by him at the Postgraduate Medical School of London; reader in bacteriology on Mr. B. W. Lacey, in respect of the