

trated in relatively few of them. In 1951 seventeen unions with a membership in excess of 100,000 accounted for 6,305,000 members. Although trade union membership is to-day highly concentrated, it is spread through a far greater range of occupations and industries than it was sixty years ago, when it was drawn in the main from a few that had become reasonably well organized during the nineteenth century. These changes in trade union structure and organization are described by P. C. Roberts in an article based upon considerable investigation and much practical experience in a recent issue of the Unilever magazine, *Progress* (43, No. 240, autumn 1953).

#### Investigations in Physics published in Russian and other Slavonic Languages

AMONG the resolutions passed during the General Assembly of the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics held in Copenhagen during 1952 was a recommendation that action should be taken to publish papers reviewing the work done in various fields of experimental and theoretical physics and published only in Russian and other Slavonic languages. As a result, the organization of this task was undertaken by the permanent secretariat of the Abstracting Board of the International Council of Scientific Unions, and a number of reviews of work done in the U.S.S.R. and countries of Eastern Europe have been prepared, each containing a bibliography on the subject in question. A supplementary number of the Italian journal of physics *Il Nuovo Cimento* is being prepared (Supp. to Vol. 10, Series 9) and will be available shortly, containing the following reviews: Soviet physics (J. Turkevich); mechanical twinning (R. W. Cahn); recent Soviet work in the field of crystallography (A. L. Mackay); crystallography in Eastern Europe (A. L. Mackay); théorie de la liaison chimique (M. Magat); sur les travaux de magnétisme en U.R.R.S. (S. Rosenblum); recent research on superconductivity in the U.S.S.R. (D. Shoenberg); Polish physics (W. J. Swiatecki); recent research on cosmic radiation in the Soviet Union (G. Wataghin); and recent Russian work on liquid helium (J. Wilks). The number of copies will be necessarily limited, and those wishing to order a copy who are not regular subscribers to *Il Nuovo Cimento* should write at once to either Nicola Zanichelli, Editore, Via Imerio N.46, Bologna, or to Prof. G. Polvani, Direttore, Via Saldini N.50, Milano. The price of the Supplement will be about 2500 lire.

#### Classification of Vegetation

IN a search for objective methods to be used in the classification of vegetation, D. W. Goodall (*Austral. J. Bot.*, 1, 3, 435; 1953) has directed attention to the concept of fidelity as originally advanced by a Swiss school of plant ecology. This idea is bound up with the concepts of characteristic species; that is, plant communities were classified according to the presence or absence in them of small groups of 'characteristic' species much more common in one particular community than in any other. In the present investigation Goodall has attempted to express the concept of fidelity quantitatively. A new index of fidelity is described, based on the ratio of frequencies for the species in two communities. The importance of significance tests in determining characteristic species is emphasized. The value of a species as indicator of a particular

community is taken as the ratio of the frequency in that community to the frequency elsewhere within the area studied. An index to express this is proposed. The value of discriminant functions in enabling vegetation samples of uncertain affinities to be allotted to one of several possible communities is demonstrated. An example is given in which this technique has been used to determine whether one community can be regarded as intermediate between two others, or has special features of its own.

#### Radio Industry Council Premiums for Technical Writing

THE Radio Industry Council has awarded premiums of 25 guineas each for articles on radio published in the public technical press during 1953 as follows: G. G. Gouriet (spectrum equalization; *Wireless Eng.*, May); A. W. Keen (triode transformation groups; *Wireless Eng.*, October); A. H. Beck and A. D. Brisbane (a cylindrical magnetron ionization gauge; *Vacuum*, April 1952 and published April 1953); Dr. D. McMullan (the scanning electron microscope and the electron-optical examination of surfaces; *Electron. Eng.*, February); H. M. Davis and Miss J. E. Seaborn (a linear sweep cathode-ray polarograph; *Electron. Eng.*, August); J. R. Pollard (selective calling for radio-telephone systems; *Electron. Eng.*, December). The Radio Industry Council's Premiums for technical writing were first awarded last year by the Council for articles published in non-private periodicals during 1952, the object being to encourage the writing and publication of articles reporting technical progress and development of radio, television and electronics in Great Britain. Any writer is eligible who is not paid a salary wholly for writing and is earning less than 25 per cent of his income from fees from articles or from book royalties.

#### British Glaciological Society: Officers for 1954

THE following have been elected officers of the British Glaciological Society for 1954: *President*, G. Seligman; *Vice-Presidents*, Rt. Rev. W. L. S. Fleming, Bishop of Portsmouth, W. V. Lewis, K. Sandford and J. M. Wordie; *Chairman of the Committee*, V. E. Fuchs; *Secretary*, Mrs. H. Richardson (c/o Scott Polar Research Institute, Lensfield Road, Cambridge); *Honorary Treasurer*, T. H. Best; *Honorary Editor of the Journal of Glaciology*, G. Seligman (Little Dane, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent).

#### South African National Committee on Geochronology

THE first meeting has recently been held of the South African Committee on Geochronology, a new body which is under the sponsorship of the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. The Committee has been formed "to take note of developments in this field in South Africa and overseas, and to do all it can to further them". Its members are at present: Dr. B. F. J. Schonland (*Chairman*), Dr. L. T. Nel, Dr. S. H. Houghton, Dr. E. J. Marais, Dr. D. Schreiner, Mr. R. T. Jamieson and Mr. J. D. Louw (*Honorary Secretary*).

#### Oil and Colour Chemists' Association: Sixth Technical Trade Exhibition

OWING to war damage repair work being undertaken at the Borough Polytechnic, the Sixth Technical Trade Exhibition of the Oil and Colour Chemists' Association will not be held there, as in former years,