

NEWS and VIEWS

W. C. Gorgas (1854-1920)

ONE of the world's greatest sanitarians, William Crawford Gorgas, was born a century ago, on October 3, 1854, near Mobile in Alabama. After graduating M.D. at Bellevue Hospital Medical School, New York, in 1879, he joined the Medical Department of the United States Army. An attack of yellow fever at Fort Brown, Texas, rendered him immune from this disease, and as a result he was frequently sent to camps where outbreaks had occurred. In 1898 he was appointed chief sanitary officer in Havana. When the Reed Commission had proved the mode of transmission of yellow fever by *Aedes aegypti*, he began to attack the mosquito's breeding places and in less than eight months succeeded in eradicating the disease from a region where it had existed continuously for one and a half centuries. But for Gorgas, the construction of the Panama Canal could never have been accomplished. Made chief sanitary officer of the Canal Zone in 1904, he converted this 'white man's grave' into a healthy and inhabitable region. His reputation was now world-wide. In 1913 he visited the Transvaal to advise on the control of pneumonia among the native miners of the Rand and afterwards investigated endemic foci of yellow fever in South America for the Rockefeller Foundation's International Health Board. During 1916-18 he served as surgeon-general of the United States Army. On his way to West Africa, he died in London on July 3, 1920, after a cerebral hæmorrhage, and was given a military funeral in St. Paul's Cathedral. During his last illness he was visited by King George V, who conferred an honorary K.C.M.G. upon him.

Second International Conference of Teachers of Geography

IN 1951 the British Geographical Association initiated an international conference with a meeting at Sheffield, and in August 1954 Holland acted as host for the second conference, which was attended by 160 delegates from about twenty countries. Wisely the formal work is limited to the thorough discussion of two or three topics, each introduced by a paper and then debated in groups before the group-leaders put questions to the lecturer. In every discipline there is the constant problem: How soon and at what stage should academic advances in the subject—with results which may only be tentative—be introduced into the teaching in schools and colleges? The Conference agreed that the concept of under-developed lands contains an element of subjective judgment highly dangerous if introduced without the utmost care to children of school age. The idea of different stages in cultural and economic development is better introduced incidentally in the teaching of regions. The separation of physical and human or social geography which exists in Dutch universities was admitted as specially applicable to conditions in a country where vital work in land reclamation and soils is so much to the fore, but generally was regarded as unsuitable elsewhere. The discussion on 'field-work' revealed no exact word or phrase in the languages of Western Europe to cover the outdoor activities of school geography classes now so well known in Britain and voted as desirable elsewhere. The other half of the work of the Conference is for the host country to show in the field as much as possible of modern developments. This

the Dutch, under the presidency of Dr. W. J. Jong and with Prof. A. C. de Vooys as organizing secretary, did extremely well—with special emphasis on the problems of the new polders of the erstwhile Zuyder Zee.

Vacation Course in Synoptic Meteorology

FOR the fifth year in succession, the Royal Meteorological Society, in conjunction with the Council for the Promotion of Field Studies, held a vacation course in elementary synoptic meteorology at the Council's field-centre at Malham Tarn. The course was held this year during August 25-September 1 and was attended by some thirty-five students. The majority of students attending were undergraduates, reading for degrees in mathematics, physics and geography, nearly half the universities in the United Kingdom being represented. The instructors were again Mr. James Paton, Scottish secretary of the Royal Meteorological Society and senior lecturer in meteorological physics in the University of Edinburgh, and Mr. C. D. Ovey, a vice-president of the Royal Meteorological Society and lecturer in geography in the University of Cambridge. Visiting lecturers included Prof. G. Manley, who described the Helm Wind at Crossfell; Mr. W. V. Lewis, of the Geography Department, University of Cambridge, who gave a talk on the movement of glaciers and process of glacial erosion; Dr. S. R. Eyre, of the Geography Department, University of Leeds, who gave a lecture on microclimatology of the New South Wales coastal lowland; Dr. W. A. Fairbairn, of the Department of Forestry, University of Edinburgh, who spoke on climate and forestry; and Mr. E. G. W. Spence, who explained the construction and use of meteorological instruments. Towards the end of the course a visit was arranged to the Meteorological Office Station at Squires Gate, near Blackpool. An important part of the course consisted of observation work and the plotting of synoptic meteorological data. As in previous years, various education authorities and the Education Department of the R.A.F. made it possible for some of the students to attend the course, which is approved for grants in suitable cases. It is planned to hold a similar course in mid-August 1955; in view of the increasing number of applications received, a parallel course in 1955 for sixth-form students, to be held at the Juniper Hall Field Centre of the Council, is at present under consideration.

Archæology in Greece during 1952-53

THE annual report for the session 1952-53 of the managing committee of the British School of Archæology at Athens, by J. M. Cook and J. Boardman, entitled "Archæology in Greece, 1952-1953", is reprinted from the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* (Vol. 74, pp. 64+4 plates. London: British School of Archæology at Athens), and summarizes the varied work of the year ending September 1953. The Greeks continue restoring ancient and medieval buildings up and down their country, and the Americans in the Agora at Athens are rebuilding the Stoa of Attalos—a colonnaded block of shops built in the second century B.C.—to serve as their museum and are also preparing to landscape other ruins. This sort of work offends purists; but ancient sites do not belong only to specialists. Excavators have been busy in Athens, Eleusis, Corinth, Mycenæ, Lerna, Argos, Olympia, Pylos, Crete, Chios, Thasos, Samothrace, and elsewhere; the most useful results are likely to