

biological gardens, but after an introductory term boys are encouraged to select for study topics in which they are particularly interested. The subjects studied include *Basidiomycetes* on tree-stumps in Erlestoke Woods by H. T. H. Cromack; the size of *Gammarus pulex* in fast- and slow-running streams by K. Houston; the growth of *Limnaea pereger* in a wild population by F. P. H. Huntingdon; the performance of *Endymion non-scriptus* in open and shaded areas by D. S. I. Taylor; and the effects of temperature on air breathing in *Limnaea stagnalis* (L.) by R. L. Page. The report also contains details of the School's biological gardens and the meetings held by the Society.

#### Electrical Engineering Conference Report Series

As one of the several alternative methods for the rapid publication of the proceedings of conferences and symposia, the Papers Committee of the Institution of Electrical Engineers has launched a new series, *Conference Report Series* (1. Pp. ii+27. London: Institution of Electrical Engineers, 1962. 5s.). The first number contains a report of the proceedings of the symposium on nuclear electronics held during November 20–December 1, 1961, at Savoy Place, London, which was organized by the Measurement and Control Section of the Institution in conjunction with the British Nuclear Energy Conference. A conference on the same subject was held by the International Atomic Agency at Belgrade during May 1961. The Institution's symposium was held in order to enable those who were not fortunate enough to attend the Belgrade conference to hear and discuss reports on the material presented. Copies of the papers presented at that conference are not yet available, but the proceedings are to be published this year by the Agency. There were three sessions at the symposium devoted to radiation detectors, electronic circuits and techniques, and radiation monitors and instruments, respectively. Contributions included reports on the Belgrade conference by W. Abson, K. Kandiah and D. Taylor, and brief notes by J. B. Birks on improved organic scintillator detectors; Prof. A. W. Morrison and others on data-logging equipment for nuclear physics experiments; and D. E. Barnes on plutonium monitoring.

#### Standardized Genetic Nomenclature for Mice

THE Committee on Standardized Genetic Nomenclature for Mice has prepared two listings of inbred strains of mice, arranged alphabetically according to standardized designations. These appeared in *Cancer Research* (12, 602; 1952; and 20, 145; 1960). While virtually all investigators who maintain colonies of inbred mice have accepted the standardized nomenclature in theory, a few of them are careless in practice. Of those investigators who do not raise their own animals, some are often ignorant of the rules and may copy incorrect usage from other sources; others who know the rules may at times be careless. The Committee feels that it is as important to use correct designations for strains as to spell ordinary words correctly, and has now made available reprints of the second listing. Copies of this can be obtained from: Dr. Mary F. Lyon, Radiobiological Research Unit, Harwell, Didcot, Berks; Dr. N. N. Medvedev, Laboratory of Inbred Animals, Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., Moscow, Solyanka 14; or Miss Joan Staats, Roscoe B. Jackson Memorial Laboratory, Bar Harbor, Maine, U.S.A.

#### Fluorescence Microscopy in the Diagnosis of Pulmonary Tuberculosis

THE demonstration of acid-fast bacilli in smears of sputum remains the most rapid laboratory technique for a presumptive diagnosis of pulmonary tuberculosis. The widely used and classical staining technique of Ziel-Neelsen has limitations, however, in Africa, where there are limited laboratory facilities and where there is a shortage of trained laboratory staff. The technique may not always be accurate when used in the large out-patient clinics, for technicians are pressed for time and long and tiresome scanning of smears is often necessary before the presence or absence of bacilli can be assumed. Thus, a more efficient method is required. A method of fluorescence microscopy for the detection of acid-fast bacilli was introduced by Hagemann in 1937 and has been developed by others over the years. The method consists of staining bacilli by the fluorescent dye auramine, to which they are acid- and alcohol-fast, and which has the property of converting rays at the lower end of the spectrum to light of longer wave-length. When auramine-stained bacilli are subjected to a source of ultra-violet light which has been passed through a filter to absorb blue-violet and ultra-violet rays, they fluoresce; if a yellow filter is placed in the eyepiece they appear yellow against a dark field. The fluorescence is clearly visible microscopically, and a magnification of 200–300 times is sufficient to recognize acid-fast bacilli. A paper by Dr. W. J. Bell and Dr. P. P. Brown, of the West African Council for Medical Research, Tuberculosis Research Unit, Ghana, presents evidence for the accuracy of the method of fluorescence microscopy when used by junior technicians in Africa (*Cent. Afric. J. Med.*, 8, No. 1; January 1962).

#### Medical Research Council : New Research Group

THE Medical Research Council is to establish a Research Group on the Relationship between Organic and Functional Mental Disorders in the Department of Psychological Medicine, King's College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne (University of Durham), under the honorary direction of Prof. Martin Roth.

#### The International Society on Toxinology

A NEW international society devoted to the advancement of knowledge on the plant and animal toxins was recently formed in Atlantic City, New Jersey. The new society is known as the International Society on Toxinology and will bring together biochemists, pharmacologists, toxicologists, physiologists, immunologists and physicians with interests in the toxins derived from the tissues of plants and animals. Founding officers are: *President*, F. E. Russell, Los Angeles; *Secretary-Treasurer*, P. R. Saunders, Los Angeles; *International Co-Chairmen*, H. Michl, F. Ghiretti, A. de Vries, B. N. Ghosh, S. A. Minton, H. A. Reid, T. M. Yanagita, J. M. Gonclaves, J. F. Gennaro and M. Whiting. The office for the new Society is Box 323, 1200 N. State Street, Los Angeles 33, California. The journal *Toxicon* will become the official organ of the new group and will carry notes and announcements of the Society's activities.

#### Beit Memorial Fellowships

THE following elections to Beit Memorial Fellowships have been announced: *Junior Fellowships*,