

Regional Economic Development

IN a written answer in the House of Commons on November 18, the Joint Under-Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, Mr. W. Rodgers, stated that the National Institute for Economic and Social Research had been commissioned to carry out a three-year project under the direction, from the late summer or early autumn of 1966, of Prof. A. J. Brown, "to build up a theoretical and empirical framework for the analysis of regional economic development and the consideration of regional policy in the United Kingdom especially in relation to problems of national economic development". He had also recently discussed the priorities for regional research with representatives of regional planning councils, who were now considering which projects they would regard as most urgent. The Department was also prepared to consider proposals for projects on regional economic matters from those working in the field.

British Productivity Council

IN support of a proposed National Campaign for Quality and Reliability, plans for designating a Quality and Reliability Year (QRY), October 1966–September 1967, were announced on October 29 by the British Productivity Council and the National Council for Quality and Reliability. Details of the scheme are available from the British Productivity Council, Vintry House, Queen Street Place, London, E.C.4. The campaign is to be launched throughout Britain and its object is to emphasize the benefits of quality with built-in reliability, and the ways and means of achieving it. The turnover of British manufacturing industry in 1964 was £10,114 million. It has been shown that adoption of the methods which will be advocated during QRY can produce savings in the range of 1.5–5 per cent of gross turnover, while maintaining or raising product quality. Even on the lowest percentage, savings of £150 million a year should be well within the grasp of manufacturing industry. The technique which will be the *raison d'être* of the campaign, and which, as is rightly pointed out, must begin at the design stage of the product, involves: reduction of costs; reducing scrap and re-work; considerably reducing Britain's import bill for raw materials; ensuring that delivery dates are kept or improved; increasing earnings, not by harder work but by increased efficiency and "doing it right first time"; and giving more customer satisfaction by consistency of product. The Quality and Reliability Year is already assured of widespread support by representative industrial, national and professional bodies in Britain. Its patron is H.R.H. Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, who, in the course of a message sent to the organizing council, commented that a good reputation for well-designed goods or components, fit for the purpose, which do not fail or break down, is the criterion for certain success. A bad reputation is a very costly luxury which Britain cannot afford.

Overseas Development Institute

THE Overseas Development Institute, set up in 1960, is an independent non-Government body aiming to ensure wise action in the field of overseas development. It is financed by grants from the Ford Foundation, British foundations, and by donations from British industrial and commercial concerns. Its declared functions are: to provide a centre for co-ordination of studies on development problems; to direct studies of its own; to be a forum for all concerned with development problems to facilitate contacts, discussions, and sharing of ideas; to spread information collected as widely as possible among those concerned with development problems; and to keep the urgency of such problems before the public and responsible authorities. An instance of one of the most recent activities of the Institute is provided by a publication entitled *British Private Investment in East Africa*,

by D. J. Morgan (Pp. 63. London: The Overseas Development Institute, Ltd., 1965. 7s. 6d.). The argument is that private investment overseas is a matter of controversy. It is sometimes blamed for balance of payment difficulties; the rate of such investment in developing countries is on the decline; Africa, in particular, has been affected by this changing pattern. For this reason, East Africa was chosen as a special area for study. This pamphlet is, in effect, a report of a survey and a conference. The survey was undertaken by the Institute in conjunction with the Federation of British Industries and the Dulverton Trust, and involved sending a questionnaire to 1,500 British firms concerned in East Africa; the replies are analysed and, at a conference held during June 1965, various obstacles to investment in that area were discussed and some vital economic questions posed. Among the latter are: Is East Africa a growth area? Are profit margins high enough to attract British investment? How important are tax and other concessions? What are the political risks? All these questions are examined in this pamphlet and to a large extent answered, but the conclusions reached still leave unsolved the basic problem of declining investment in East African enterprises, unless combined action by the African Governments concerned, the British Government, and equally important, British industry itself, materializes.

Science Papers of the Victorian Era

THE great majority of John Dalton's manuscripts were presented to the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society in 1864 by his literary executor, William Charles Henry. More than three-quarters of the original collection was destroyed during the Second World War and many of the surviving items are in such a charred and brittle condition that their future preservation is problematical; careful separation and sorting of the charred sheets was a lengthy but necessary preliminary to the actual cataloguing of the collection. Subsequent to this partial destruction, the Society has received various gifts, including a collection originally presented to Dalton Hall, a hall of residence of the University of Manchester. These manuscripts in the possession of the Society have now been microfilmed, occupying four spools of a total length of 340 ft., of which printed matter occupies about 320 ft. The material consists of lecture notes, papers, notebooks, meteorological records, correspondence, domestic accounts and some rare printed items such as lecture syllabuses. The microfilm is available either in negative or in positive form; the former is judged to be more legible. The Society has also made available a microfilm of letters from J. P. Joule and John Mercer to Lyon Playfair dealing with scientific topics during 1841–49. The film consists of about 16 ft. of correspondence from Joule and 16 ft. of correspondence from Mercer.

Laboratory Photochemical Reactor

A PHOTOCHEMICAL reactor suitable for small-scale photochemical research in universities and industrial research laboratories is now available from Engelhard Hanovia Lamps (Slough, Bucks.). This welcome addition to their range of ultra-violet equipment was shown as a prototype at the Oxford International Congress of Photo-Biology in June 1964 and is now available from stock. The reactor consists of a three-necked glass flask fitted with standard ground glass sockets. One of these receives a clear quartz thimble which in turn holds a smaller quartz thimble containing the ultra-violet lamp. There is provision for water-cooling of the space between the inner and outer thimbles, and for nitrogen flushing of the lamp chamber to eliminate ozone. Use of high-purity synthetic quartz in the thimbles ensures good ultra-violet transmission characteristics. Two lamps are available for the reactor, a 100-W medium pressure lamp emitting a range of radiations from 185 to 366 m μ and a 2-W cold-cathode