

provision, even if it does not entirely remove the evil of a permanent loss in population, will at least lessen the numbers of those who do not return to their homes after a period of extra-territorial employment. A further important provision sets up a standing committee of representatives of the three Governments to secure co-ordination and to consider problems in connexion with the supply of labour as they arise.

Population Investigation Committee

It is announced in *The Times* of November 5 that a committee has been formed to investigate the fall in the birth-rate in Great Britain and its probable consequences. The committee, which has been appointed by the council of the Eugenics Society, is presided over by Prof. A. M. Carr-Saunders, and has among its members, Lord Horder, Mrs. Hubback, Dr. Julian Huxley, Prof. L. Hogben, Dr. R. R. Kuczynski, Lady (Rhys) Williams, Prof. J. Young, and other authorities on various aspects of the subject. Dr. C. P. Blacker, the general secretary of the Eugenics Society, is honorary secretary of the Committee, and Mr. D. V. Glass is research secretary. Mr. Glass has recently published a useful book on this subject, entitled "The Struggle for Population". The committee has already held two meetings, and its investigations are gradually taking shape. The main object is, in the first place, to ascertain the facts of the case and the causes of the decline in the number of births per family; and for this purpose it invites the co-operation of institutions and individuals engaged upon relevant lines of research. Inquiries may be addressed to the Secretary, Population Investigation Committee, 69 Eccleston Square, London, S.W.1.

New Discharge Bulb Lamps

THE new discharge bulb lamps are already in use on the Continent, and judging from the fact that they were shown at a meeting of the Illuminating Engineering Society on October 13, they will probably be soon on sale in Great Britain. In appearance, they are like the ordinary 'pearl' lamp but they have no filament. They contain a small quartz mercury vapour discharge lamp "about the size of half a cigarette" and they are corrected for colour. Internally the bulb is coated with a fluorescent powder, in the same way as the lower area of the inside of the cathode ray tube, where the picture is shown in television reception. According to the *Electrical Contractor* of November, the lamps are available in two sizes, 80 watts and 125 watts. The light output of these lamps is about 40 lumens per watt. This compares with the 12 lumens per watt of the ordinary coiled-coil incandescent lamp. The life is stated to be about 1,500 hours. The 'colour correction' of these lamps is effected by the fluorescent powder used. The human complexion when illuminated by the lamps shown at the meeting was very little altered, the change being scarcely noticeable. Owing to the fact that the internal film transforms the invisible ultra-violet light emitted by the mercury

vapour lamp into light of visible wave-length, the loss of light by the absorption of the bulb is compensated for by this fluorescence. No details are yet available as to the price of the lamp, but we seem to be on the eve of a new development in house lighting.

Recent Acquisitions at the Science Museum

THE Oxford heliometer of 1848 has been placed on exhibition in the Astronomy Collection (Gallery LXIV). This instrument was made for the Radcliffe Observatory, Oxford, by Messrs. A. and G. Repsold of Hamburg on the advice of the famous German astronomer F. W. Bessel, who had in 1838 with a similar instrument obtained the first satisfactory measure of the parallax of a fixed star. The distance of the star, 61 Cygni, was found to be some 400,000 times the sun's distance of 93,000,000 miles. The Oxford heliometer was for many years one of the most powerful and accurate instruments of its kind in the world. It is notable among other things for the first application of electrical illumination to an astronomical instrument. It was dismantled and taken to pieces in 1906, and so remained until its removal in 1935 to the Science Museum, where it has been renovated and set up as it was originally, a striking testimony to the nineteenth century instrument maker's art. In the Chemistry Collection (Gallery LXVI), an original tube of the metal rhodium prepared by its discoverer, Dr. William Hyde Wollaston, about 1825 has been placed on exhibition. Rhodium has recently become of interest as a non-tarnishing substitute for silver in electroplating.

Zoological Survey of India

THE report of the Zoological Survey of India, recently issued, covers the years 1932-35, coinciding with a period of retrenchment in civil expenditure and consequent restriction of activities. It records the retirement of Lieut.-Colonel R. B. Seymour Sewell in 1933, and his subsequent extensive biological investigations as leader of the Murray Oceanographical Expedition to the Indian Ocean, and is written by his successor, Dr. Bains Prasad. The investigations of the Survey include detailed work upon the *Trochus* shell fisheries of the Andaman Islands; identification of animals of economic importance from the medical or sanitary point of view, carried out for various institutions and public bodies; identification of human and animal remains excavated at various chalcolithic sites in Sind; and anthropological work connected with the census. Unfortunately, the abolition of the post of zoological collector and the necessity of restricting expenditure has greatly reduced the field-collecting and observations which used to be so desirable and characteristic an activity of the Survey.

Bibliography of Seismology

THE last two quarterly numbers of the "Bibliography of Seismology" prepared by Mr. E. A. Hodgson and printed in the Publications of the Dominion Observatory, Ottawa (12, 159, 181;

1936), complete the record for the year 1935 and begin that for the present year. The general impression that one receives in reading over the titles is that references are gathered from more varied sources and that the bibliography is increasing much in usefulness. The last number for 1935 contains an index classified according to the subjects of the various memoirs catalogued during the year. A useful feature of both numbers is the list of references to notes or short articles that have appeared in various journals, such as *NATURE*, *Science*, etc. The first number for 1936 shows that Great Britain is represented among the collaborators by Dr. E. Tillotson, 23 Roseville Road, Leeds, 8, who will be glad to receive notices of papers on any seismological subjects published in Great Britain.

Veterinary Education

THE following Committee has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Scotland and the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries "to review the facilities available for veterinary education in Great Britain in relation to the probable future demand for qualified veterinary surgeons and to report thereon, and in particular to make recommendations as to the provision which should be made from public funds in the five years 1937-42 in aid of the maintenance expenses of institutions providing veterinary education": The Right Hon. Sir Thomas Molony (chairman), Sir James Currie, Dr. Thomas Loveday, Sir John Robertson, Mr. John Smith. Mr. V. E. Wilkins, of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, and Mr. W. N. McWilliam, of the Department of Agriculture for Scotland, have been appointed joint secretaries of the Committee.

Poultry Mortality Committee: New Chairman

ARISING out of a recommendation of the Eggs and Poultry Reorganisation Commission for England and Wales, a Committee was set up some months ago by the Secretary of State for Scotland and the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries "to consider the present methods of supply and distribution of hatching eggs, day old chicks, and breeding stock, both generally and with particular reference to the reduction of poultry mortality; and to make recommendations for the improvement of those methods". The Committee's proceedings were however suspended by the illness, recently followed by death, of its chairman, the late Mr. F. N. Blundell. Sir Duncan Watson has now been appointed chairman of the Committee. The secretary of the Committee is Mr. V. E. Wilkins, of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Rat Control Film

THE Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries has recently produced a new cinematograph film dealing with the loss and damage caused by rats and mice and the measures which may be taken for their destruction. The film, which is entitled "Your Enemy—The Rat", is available in two versions—a short sound film for display in public cinemas, and a longer silent version designed for display at exhibitions, conferences, etc. Copies of the film will be

loaned free of charge. Applications for bookings should be addressed to the Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 10 Whitehall Place, London, S.W.1.

Royal Prowess in Ancient Egypt

No little interest and some amusement has been aroused by the inscribed stela of Amenhotep II discovered at Giza, on which the monarch transcends the customary royal assumption of credit for achievement by an intimate personal touch in his description of his prowess as an oarsman and athlete. The stela, which was found in the course of Prof. Selim Hassan's excavations in the neighbourhood of the Sphinx at Giza (*The Times*, Nov. 7), records that Amenhotep, when visiting Giza as a young man to pay homage to his ancestors Khufu and Khephren, had rowed a boat for three miles against the stream with an oar twenty ells long without fatigue, while his boatmen were tired after rowing for half a mile. As a horseman and archer he was no less remarkable. He had trained his horses to draw his chariot at a gallop without sweating, and shooting from his chariot he had pierced with an arrow copper targets which were as thick as his hand. The stela upon which is the inscription also bears above a representation of the king making offerings to a figure which is said to be identifiable as the god Ra. It was set up in the second year of Amenhotep's reign (1447 B.C.). The expedition of which Prof. Selim Hassan is in charge is engaged in clearing the whole area adjacent to the Sphinx, and with this purpose in view additional land, at present encumbered with refreshment booths, has been purchased to obviate interference with the work of excavation.

Institute of Physics: London and Home Counties Branch

THE inaugural meeting of the London and Home Counties Branch of the Institute of Physics was held on November 4 under the chairmanship of Mr. E. R. Davies, director of the Kodak Research Laboratory. This, the third branch of the Institute to be formed in Great Britain, has been created in response to the desire expressed by some three hundred members resident in London and the surrounding districts. The formation of these branches serves to demonstrate the growing number of physicists in industry who wish to have opportunities for social intercourse and discussion of problems of mutual interest. At the meeting numerous suggestions were made for activities that the branch might usefully undertake; these included visits to works and industrial research laboratories, discussions on professional matters, and short groups of lectures on recent advances in physics. It was emphasized that it is not intended to hold meetings for the reading of original papers, as this is the function of the Institute's participating societies, namely the British Institute of Radiology, the Faraday Society, the Physical Society, and the Royal Meteorological Society. Full particulars of the new branch may be obtained from Dr. H. Lowery, honorary secretary of the branch, North-Western Polytechnic, Prince of Wales Road, N.W.5.