

War Agricultural Committee

THE Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries has appointed a War Agricultural Executive Committee for each county in England and Wales and has made an Order (The Cultivation of Lands Order, 1939) authorizing these committees to exercise on his behalf certain powers conferred on him by the Defence Regulations for the purpose of increasing home food production in time of war. In a Circular Letter to the committees, the Minister states that they will be given as free a hand as possible to proceed as a matter of urgency with all possible steps to increase the production of foodstuffs in their areas. Their immediate task is to see that additional land is brought under the plough with all speed. The aim is to obtain for next year's harvest an increase of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ million acres in the tillage area in England and Wales compared with the acreage in June last. Each county has been allotted its share of this total, and the committees have been urged to see that every effort is made to complete their allotted tasks—and, if possible, to exceed them. The committees have already been holding informal meetings and have made good progress with their preparatory work.

Roman Temple at Albury, Surrey

ROMANO-BRITISH studies are greatly indebted to the Surrey Archæological Society for the work of excavation and conservation which has been carried out on the site of the Roman temple on Farley Heath, Albury, Surrey, by A. W. G. Lowther and R. G. Goodchild on behalf of the Society. The complete plan of the building has now been traced, and marked out by stones from the original structure, bedded in concrete. The site has been known for a long time. It attracted the attention of Elias Ashmole; and in 1670 and 1847 it was despoiled of much of its stone. Little, however, was known of its structure or its relation to surrounding buildings, if any. Recent excavation has shown, it is reported in *The Times* of August 18, that the temple consisted of a simple cella, or shrine, measuring 18 ft. internally, and surrounded by a corridor, or veranda, 8 ft. wide. It has been too much damaged for any details of the architecture to be known, but red tesserae and red wall plaster hint at the character of the internal decoration. It stood within a polygonal wall, approximately 240 ft. in diameter, which probably was intended to demarcate the sacred enclosure. An inner enclosing wall has been found on the north side. Few smaller antiquities have been found in the recent excavations, the most important being a fragment of a terra-cotta "votive lantern", similar to those found at Ashstead, Surrey, and Verulamium. The ground had been too thoroughly turned over by previous diggers to make it probable that many of the smaller class of objects would be found. Further, the excavations of 1848 had provided a rich spoil—more than 1,000 coins, mostly Roman, but including some rare British in gold and silver, and numerous enamelled brooches, while a thin strip of bronze, crudely embossed with human and animal figures, has since been identified as a pagan priest's ritual

sceptre. The foundations of the temple were of local ironstone and chalk from the North Downs, but the superstructure was of Bargate sandstone. Wealden clay had been used for the tiles, baked, in all probability, in the tile-kiln discovered in 1936 in Wykehurst Farm, Cranleigh, four miles away.

Archæological Explorations in the United States

A DETERMINATION to limit public expenditure and opposition to the President in the United States of America have recently eliminated most of the intellectual activities which had been subsidized out of Federal funds in the desire to stimulate prosperity by State aid. Archæological investigations in the field, however, so long as they worked within the States, have survived attack owing to the fact that they provide occupation for a considerable number of the unemployed. This consideration does not affect expeditions working abroad and in the Old World, and these have had to be curtailed on the ground of economy. Nearly one hundred archæological expeditions, it is reported by Science Service of Washington, D.C., have taken the field in the course of the present summer; and of these, thirty-two in twenty-two States are financed as part of the W.P.A. programme, the Government supplying the labour—2,500 men and women in all—for excavation work under the direction of representatives of museums, universities and scientific institutions sponsoring the respective expeditions. Two investigations in particular have been made possible by the advantageous conditions. Of these, one is a combined effort on the part of the Universities of Montana, Wyoming, and other of the south-western States to find evidence of the line of advance of the earliest immigrants into America through the Siberia-Alaska gateway towards the south-west. The other will make a rapid and intensive examination of the mounds and other relics of early occupation in the vast region in the States of Tennessee, Alabama and Texas, which is marked for inundation when the dams of the Tennessee Scheme of water supply are built. It is hoped that it may be possible to trace the relation of the cultures of the Mississippi Valley to those of the south before it is too late, and the evidence disappears for ever.

Excavations at Caerleon

FURTHER excavations on the site of the Roman fortress of Caerleon-on-Usk have been necessitated by building development on two acres at the north-east angle. Evidence for the defences here, it is reported by Lady Fox, who directed the excavation on behalf of the Caerleon Excavation Committee (*The Times*, Aug. 5), comprised the primary clay bank and ditch of the occupation by the Second Augustan Legion in A.D. 75, and the foundations of the stone walls and one of the internal turrets set up about A.D. 100, when the internal early timber buildings were reconstructed in stone. The construction of the rampart roadway, which provided access throughout the circuit of the fortress behind the ramparts, was examined. A block of barracks,