

Education in the Royal Air Force

THE Secretary of State for Air has announced that the Air Council has decided to set up an Educational Advisory Council for the Royal Air Force with the following terms of reference: "To keep under review the educational policy for the Royal Air Force and to advise the Secretary of State for Air on such matters connected with education in the Royal Air Force as they think fit and upon any educational questions referred to them by him." The following will, in addition to representatives of the Ministry of Education, the Scottish Education Department, and the Ministry of Labour and National Service, serve on the Council: Dr. Keith A. H. Murray, rector, Lincoln College, Oxford (*chairman*); Mr. Harold E. Clay, president, Workers' Educational Association; Miss M. C. Glasgow, secretary-general, Arts Council of Great Britain; Mr. Ronald Gould, general secretary, National Union of Teachers; Miss V. Holmes, member of the Council of the Women's Employment Federation; Mr. J. C. Jones, director of education, the Polytechnic, Regent Street, London; Air Chief Marshal Sir Edgar Ludlow-Hewitt, R.A.F. (retired); Mr. H. Morris, chief education officer, Cambridgeshire; Mr. J. H. Nicholson, principal, University College, Hull; Dr. D. R. Pye, provost, University College, London; Mr. W. E. Williams, director, Bureau of Current Affairs; Mr. J. F. Wolfenden, headmaster, Shrewsbury School.

Science in the New India

THE presidential address of D. N. Wadia at the thirteenth annual general meeting of the National Institute of Sciences of India, after referring to the ten-acre site which the Institute has acquired for its building and to the organisation and expansion of its secretariat and mentioning the formation of two strong committees to advise the Government on research in the Indian academies, institutes and universities, was devoted to a discussion of the role of science in building the new India. Science, in its comprehensive application to problems of human existence, is the one agency which, in the transition period through which India is passing, will lift the country out of its abnormal economic and industrial depression and put it on the high road to progress and human welfare. The first requisite is that India should align her scientific organisation with that of the progressive countries of the world, and Mr. Wadia welcomed the multiplying ties of India's leading men of science with representative men of science of Great Britain, the United States, the U.S.S.R. and the rest of Europe, referring in particular to the value of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, of the international scientific liaison offices, and to the work of the Royal Society Empire Scientific Conference and of the Commonwealth Scientific Official Conference.

Discussing India's response to the latter Conference, he insisted that the unhealthy distinction between official and unofficial scientific workers must go, and that the universities, private research institutions and societies will more and more be the spearheads of scientific progress. Striking progress has been made in the last few years in irrigation and hydraulic research, and the Government during the last year has sanctioned large-scale operations on several hydro-electric power, irrigation and reservoir projects, giving high priority to three large projects

connected with the harnessing of the Damodar, the Mahanadi, and the Kosi Rivers. A committee formed under the Board of Scientific and Industrial Research has drawn up a long-range programme of research in nuclear physics and artificial creation of atomic particles to be carried out at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research and at the Palit Laboratory, University of Calcutta. In regard to minerals, the Government is taking steps to bring under Federal control those of strategic importance and was convening a Conference to formulate a mineral policy for India and to establish executive machinery for guiding production, conservation and utilization of the mineral products mined.

Winchester City Museums, 1847-1947

JULY 15 of this year marked the centenary of the Winchester City Museum, and the curator, Mr. Frank Cottrill, has appropriately marked the occasion with a short account of its history and growth. Established in 1847 as the Hampshire Museum, this institution set out to save for posterity collections illustrative of local history, antiquities and natural history which might otherwise have been "lost or disregarded, retained in private hands, or have found their way to distant exhibitions". For a time the Hampshire Museum flourished on private donations and subscriptions, but later, as has been the case in so many of the local museums founded during or near the same period, this form of support was not maintained. The nature of the collections, however, and the increased use of the Museum by the public, fully justified the upkeep of the institution. Accordingly, in 1851 it was transferred to the custody of the Winchester Town Council, under the government of which it remains at the present time. A Museum Committee was appointed, and the institution from then on became known as the City Museum. In this way was the safety of the Winchester collections safeguarded. Originally housed in the Hyde Abbey schoolroom, the collections were removed first to part of the old jail in Jewry Street, then to the top floor of the Guildhall, and finally, in 1903, to the present building in the Square. Prior to that, in 1898, the Museum was extended by the opening of the Westgate as a second museum. This was largely due to the interest and beneficence of Alderman W. H. Jacob, a keen local historian. A beautiful old building dating from the thirteenth century, but unfortunately overshadowed by modern constructions entirely out of keeping, Westgate to-day houses, among other things, the City's famous collection of weights and measures ranging in date from the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries. Here, also, is preserved the Winchester moot-horn of about A.D. 1200.

Mr. Cottrill's proposals for the reorganisation of the Collections concern mainly the very overcrowded City Museum, and he rightly stresses the need for the relegation to store of much of this material if the Museum is to illustrate effectively and teach the early history and subsequent development of the town and county. (Storage in this connexion does not mean that collections will become inaccessible to students and others specifically interested in them.) There is an ever-growing tendency for the smaller museums to specialize in the interests of their own particular region, and this, without doubt, is the only way in which the majority of them can become effective units in the community they serve. The curator of the Winchester Museums clearly wishes for development along similar lines, and if his plans are adopted

the Winchester collections, already well known to students at home, should attract to "the capital city of Alfred and Canute" visitors from farther afield. In the reorganised Museum, he also points out the need for a printed guide and the maintenance of a small reference library. These are matters which are often overlooked by an authority responsible for an otherwise good museum service.

Diseases of Flax

IN February 1943 the Minister of Agriculture (Eire) set up a Flax Development Board for the purpose of encouraging flax production. Owing to the stimulus of better prices and a guaranteed market for flax under war-time conditions, the area cropped in 1942 had already risen to 18,552 acres compared with only 4,123 acres in 1939. The Board's activities resulted in a further sharp rise in area under flax, the peak being reached in 1945 when just over 32,800 acres were grown. Such intensive cultivation inevitably introduced fresh problems, and diseases and pests became more prevalent and assumed greater significance. At the request of the Board, Dr. R. McKay has prepared a bulletin, "Flax Diseases" (price 5s.), which will meet a long-felt want. Though the information contained in this publication does not claim to be new, it has hitherto been so scattered in various scientific and agricultural journals as to be quite inaccessible to the ordinary farmer, flax inspector or mill-owner. The diseases are grouped according to the causative factor, whether it be fungus, parasitic flowering plant or non-parasitic agent, such as weather conditions. Insect pests are also included. The symptoms are clearly described and illustrated in each case and control measures suggested where possible. References are supplied for those who wish for more detailed information, and a useful glossary of scientific terms included.

Pacific Science

THE University of Hawaii has long been an active centre for scientific investigations in the Islands, as has the Bishop Museum, Honolulu. This work will now be intensified as the result of the wise co-ordinating policy laid down by the National Research Council of the Pacific Science Conference at its meeting in Washington in June 1946. Partly as a result of this, the University has undertaken to sponsor a new quarterly journal, entitled *Pacific Science*, which is devoted to the furtherance of biological and physical sciences in the Pacific region. Two numbers of this publication, those for January and April, are now to hand and they are excellently printed, illustrated and produced. The personnel of the editorial board covers a wide range of subjects and, interestingly enough, the editor-in-chief is the head of the Department of English.

Each number consists of sixty-eight pages, very similar in size to *Nature*, and is provided with an attractive coloured cover on the inside of which are useful instructions to authors for the preparation of papers. The two numbers include papers on forestry, geology, ornithology, parasitology, mycology, botany, an apparatus for chloride and oxygen determination for pond waters in the field, and the Tsunami, that long-period gravity wave associated with volcanic disturbance, one of which in April 1946 created such havoc in the Islands. No. 1 contains, as a sort of appendix, the interesting recommendations of the National Research Council referred to above, and No. 2 similarly reviews the facilities for research in

the Islands provided by more than twenty government or private institutions. The subscription to *Pacific Science* is 3.00 dollars per annum, payable to the Office of Publications, University of Hawaii, Honolulu 10, Hawaii. With the extraordinary wealth of material available not only in the Islands themselves but also in the rest of the Pacific group which will be included in its scope, the journal should have an assured future, and we wish it every success.

Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851

THE report of the Board of Management, Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851, dated December 1946, covers the seven years since July 25, 1939 (from the Commission, 1 Lowther Gardens, London, S.W.7). The award of industrial bursaries was discontinued on the outbreak of war, and in July 1946 only seven of the twenty-nine bursars appointed in 1939 and none of those appointed earlier remained on the books. While the Board has already given 'rehabilitation' grants to a few bursars who wished to complete their industrial training and who have been unable to obtain assistance for this purpose under the regulations of the Ministry of Labour and National Service, the Board has resolved to suspend the scheme for the present and to re-examine the position when industry in Great Britain and its pattern of recruitment have acquired a more definite pattern. The Board has, however, increased to £500 a year the value of the post-graduate scholarship in naval architecture, and new regulations have been prepared which will open the field to candidates from all university institutions in the United Kingdom which have departments of naval architecture or engineering science. The scholarship will be tenable normally for two years, and the conditions have been designed to make it attractive to the trained research worker. Arrangements have also been made for the partial resumption of the activities of the British School at Rome, and discussions on the re-development plan for the South Kensington estate have been renewed. Certain modifications in the plan have become necessary in view of the urgent importance of extending the Fuel Technology Laboratory already on the site to the west of the Royal College of Music, and which the Imperial College of Science and Technology had originally proposed to relinquish.

The Board of Management also endorses the views expressed by the Science Scholarships Committee in a separate report covering the proceedings of the Committee since April 1939. The Committee, reviewing the working of the Science Research Scholarships Scheme between the two Wars, agrees that no major change is needed in the general principle of the overseas scheme, but recommends that the value of the scholarships should be increased to £350 a year with a £50 annual grant for fees, and that a second annual scholarship should be allocated to India. On the other hand, it recommends that the value of the senior studentships should be increased to £500 a year with a possible extra £50 for expenses, but that the number of annual awards should be reduced from five to four. The additional expense of giving effect to these recommendations is estimated at rather more than £3,000 a year. Particulars are included in the report of the appointments made for 1946 in accordance with these recommendations; although normally only ten overseas scholarships are awarded, an additional scholarship has this year been granted to New Zealand in view of the exceptional merits of the two candidates put forward.