

tried out on a large scale by employees, who are given the footwear free, and are then asked to report on attractiveness, comfort, wear, etc.

Members of the Assembly also visited the new Medical Faculty, created at Hradec Králové in 1945. The building, which had been a military school, and had been occupied by the Red Army, was vacated

by the Soviet Commander in order to provide accommodation for the new school, with the comment that it was fitting that Mars should make way for Athene.

After visiting the Medical Faculty, the members were received at the Institute of Glass Technology, a research and consulting centre for one of Czechoslovakia's chief industries. J. G. CROWTHER

NEWS and VIEWS

Experimental Zoology at Manchester :

Dr. Ralph Dennell

THE science of zoology underwent a profound change at the end of the First World War. The orthodox approach to the subject through a study of comparative anatomy was largely abandoned, and all energies were devoted to the new outlook afforded by experimental zoology. Despite this complete change-over, no new academic posts were created to cater for this new method of approach. For a short time, there was a readership at Cambridge, but that was all. Now, to fill this obvious want, the University of Manchester has established a full chair in experimental zoology, to which Dr. Ralph Dennell has been appointed. Dr. Dennell has the advantage of having made his name first of all as a functional morphologist. He commenced work on the feeding mechanism of various Crustacea, and later turned his attention to the luminous organs of certain deep-sea prawns. During the Second World War, he undertook a study of the feeding mechanism of the grain weevil, and this led him to an experimental investigation of the process of hardening of the insect cuticle, a problem which he is extending to the whole of the Arthropoda. At present, he is in Bermuda, with a Leverhulme fellowship, studying deep-sea luminous forms.

Assyriology at the British Museum :

Dr. Sidney Smith, F.B.A.

It has been announced that Dr. Sidney Smith has retired from the post of keeper of the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities at the British Museum, and has been succeeded by Mr. C. J. Gadd, formerly deputy keeper of the Department. Dr. Sidney Smith entered the British Museum in 1914 and has been keeper since 1930. There are probably few living Assyriologists who can speak with authority, as he does, not only on textual and philological matters, but also on every subject connected with Near Eastern and Egyptian archaeology. He was one of the first to correlate the complicated stratigraphical and epigraphical data yielded by recent excavations in Syria and the Hatay, and his new scheme of chronology published in 1940 is being accepted by an increasing number of scholars. He is a controversialist who does not tolerate loose thinking; but serious students have always had reason to be grateful to him for his constant readiness to place the fruits of his learning at their disposal. It is understood that as professor of ancient Semitic languages and civilizations at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, he hopes to have more time in future for his own researches.

Mr. C. J. Gadd, F.B.A.

MR. C. J. GADD, who in terms of service in the British Museum is only five years junior to Dr. Smith, is an Assyriologist of no less eminence than

his predecessor, and is a profound and erudite scholar, whose deep understanding of the ways of thought of the Babylonians and Sumerians is exemplified in his Schweich Lectures, recently published under the title "Ideas of Divine Rule in the Ancient Near East". With his generous and self-effacing personality, he brings to his new appointment the goodwill of his staff and of all who know him.

Festival of Britain, 1951

GENERAL LORD ISMAY, chairman of the Council of the Festival of Britain, 1951, presided at a meeting on October 14 to announce progress in the plans for the Festival. Mr. Gerald Barry, director-general, emphasized that it is hoped to mark 1951 in three ways: by events centrally organised and financed by the Festival organisation itself; by events organised by other interests, which may be associated with and assisted by the Festival authorities; and by unofficial events throughout Great Britain. There is to be a central exhibition in London on the south bank of the Thames between the County Hall and Waterloo Bridge; the river front is to be cleared and a concert hall built on the site. The exhibition itself will be in temporary fabric structures of a new type; it will be on a small scale and an attempt will be made to tell the story of British life and achievement. It was emphasized that it will not be a trade fair. The Council of Industrial Design will be responsible for selecting contemporary industrial exhibits. A Council of Science and Technology, specially created for the Festival, will ensure that scientific achievement will be adequately represented both in the central exhibition and in other ways. An Architectural Exhibition, elsewhere in London, will take the form of a full-scale cross-section of a residential area in various stages of building, which can be completed and handed over for actual use after the Festival closes. There will also be one or more travelling exhibitions visiting the principal cities of the country; and it is hoped to co-operate with bodies holding annual meetings, such as the British Association. Finally, the Vice-Chancellors of the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and London have been invited to arrange special vacation courses in the summer of 1951 in subjects relevant to the main theme of the Festival. In this way, it is hoped to demonstrate the contribution of British thought in philosophy, literature, religion and science to the progress of civilization.

Research and Recovery

MR. HERBERT MORRISON, Lord President of the Council, addressed the chairmen of councils and directors of the industrial co-operative research associations at a conference in London on October 15. The express purpose of this conference was that the delegates should acquaint the Government of their progress and difficulties in research so that the

findings could be integrated into Great Britain's overall economic programme. Mr. Morrison believes that the first problem of economic recovery is one of increased productivity, and the key to this is to be found in more knowledge—knowledge both of technical processes and also of human relationships. The Government is fully aware of the importance of the issue and is prepared to support State and private research with every financial help; thus the trend of increase in cost—£470,000 in 1938, £2 millions last year and an estimated £2½ millions next year—is not a matter for concern but a sign of the ever-growing importance of research and a pointer to bigger things to come. Recent material results have convinced Mr. Morrison that the money is well spent, and he referred, for example, to the technical advances made in pottery firing operations, infra-red drying of paints, fitting of shoes, adjusting of peak electrical loads, production of linen, improvement of iron foundries and development of 'nodular cast-iron', design of more efficient domestic grates, scientific research into better houses, and the improvement of road surfaces. It is important that manufacturers should bear in mind the improvement of quality and lowering of costs in addition to increased productivity. All these problems can be solved by more scientific investigation, and Mr. Morrison considers that research is the spearhead of the advance of industry by which we will determine whether we are going to hold our place in competitive world industry or degenerate into a third-rate Power. Not only must the value of research be recognized, but also the conditions of scientific workers must be improved and their status acknowledged. Responsible people do realize these points, but are they fully understood by the general public? The research associations must publicize their activities and see that the world knows of the excellent results being obtained by British research effort.

Operational Research Club

ABOUT a year ago, a number of men of science interested in operational research began meeting together in the rooms of the Royal Society to discuss the development of methods and the application of this field of science. Papers were read and discussed in connexion with road traffic, productivity in the cotton industry, use of fertilizers by farmers, the organisation of inspection in the steel industry, etc. An "Operational Research Club" has now grown out of these meetings, and a healthy programme of papers for this session has been planned. In order to maintain the informal nature of the meetings, it has been necessary to limit the membership; but it is intended to include representatives from most of the operational research teams working in industrial and other civil fields, together with some from the defence services. The honorary secretary of the Club is Mr. D. Neville-Jones, 24 Rutland Gate, London, S.W.7.

Motor Industry in Britain

A CLEAR picture of the British motor industry is presented in a broadsheet prepared by Political and Economic Planning (No. 284). The broadsheet traces first the development of the industry before the War, examining factors such as taxation which influenced demand in the United Kingdom and the growth of the Nuffield Organisation, the Ford Motor Co., the Austin Motor Co., Vauxhall Motors, the Rootes Group, and the Standard Motor Co. The effect of conversion to war demands and subsequent reconversion is then described, and, after a review of

the post-war structure and home demand, the labour force of the industry is analysed, and its trade organisations and export markets are considered. The broadsheet makes no recommendations as to future policy, but indicates that if the shortage of foreign exchange could be left out of account, there is sufficient shortage of vehicles in the world to give both Britain and the United States ample scope for some time to come. Such comparison with pre-war figures as is practicable suggests that the industry's labour force is about 25 per cent greater than before the War.

The Original Wright Aeroplane

THE original Wright aeroplane of 1903—the first power-driven man-carrying aeroplane to make a free, controlled and sustained flight—was lent by Mr. Orville Wright in 1928 for exhibition in the Science Museum, London, for an initial period of five years. On October 18 it was taken down for packing in crates in readiness for its return to the United States. This machine was designed and built by the brothers Wilbur and Orville Wright at Dayton, Ohio, in 1903, and was flown at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, on December 17. The first flight lasted 12 sec. and was made in a wind of about twenty miles per hour, the machine being piloted by Mr. Orville Wright; altogether four flights were made on the morning of that day. The last flight was one of 59 sec., when the distance covered was 852 ft.; the machine was then overturned by a gust of wind while left unattended, and the damage caused prevented further experiments at that time. After these first flights, the aeroplane was preserved in the Wright Laboratory at Dayton. Certain parts which were damaged were replaced by Mr. Orville Wright himself, and the machine was restored to its original condition. An exact replica of the aeroplane has now been made and will be exhibited in its place at the Science Museum. Dr. H. Shaw, director of the Museum, is to accompany the machine to the United States, where it will be preserved in the National Air Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. It should arrive there in good time for the forty-fifth anniversary of its first flight on December 17, 1903.

Economics and State Control

PROF. G. C. ALLEN's inaugural lecture at University College, London, on March 4, 1948, which has now been published (London: H. K. Lewis and Co., Ltd. Pp. ii+18. 2s. 6d. net), emphasizes that while the trend of economic opinion in pre-war days was in favour of a more active intervention by the State in economic affairs, such intervention was not inconsistent with the preservation of the system of private enterprise; it was deemed necessary for improving the operation of the system. Present policy, however, of State intervention goes much further than the achievement of 'full employment', an acceptable distribution of the national income, and the promotion of structural adjustments in industry by fiscal or financial measures. Prof. Allen devotes most of his lecture to an examination of the economic implications of the policy at present being pursued both in the nationalization of industry and in the guidance of private industry by substitutes for the compulsion of the market. He points out the importance in industries that depend to any extent upon innovation of being able to attract the outstanding personalities with initiative and organising capacity; the administration and efficiency of such industries