

will suffer under nationalization if such men are no longer attracted by the conditions of service. Similarly, he discusses the difficult question of effective Parliamentary control over the operation of public monopolies, and suggests that the safeguard of publicity can and should be made fully effective.

Prof. Allen offers no answer to the fundamental question whether it is possible for the State to formulate far-reaching plans for the disposition of economic resources intended to promote objectives of which men in their political capacity approve, and at the same time to afford adequate opportunities in the industrial sphere for the free movements of the mind and will, without which progress is in jeopardy. Certain dangers and problems, such as those of economic discipline, of the transfer of important categories of decision from the individual to the bureaucracy, and the establishment of an administrative machine capable of reaching speedy and wise economic decisions in those fields, and the danger of perpetuating the *status quo* in circumstances inherent in 'gentlemen's agreements' between the Government and organised bodies in industry, are indicated. Prof. Allen, while indicating the limits and dangers of such methods, believes that we are likely to be so hard put to it to find help in pursuing the middle way that we should not reject any method which offers even moderate prospects of success.

Permanence of Residence as a Social Factor

A PAPER by Dr. H. M. C. Luykx, "Family Studies in the Eastern Health District: IV. Permanence of Residence with Respect to Various Family Characteristics", reprinted from *Human Biology*, is one of several studies in a district of the city of Baltimore. Its findings are summed up in a table showing the family characteristics associated with the highest and lowest proportions of families remaining in the district between the triennial censuses of 1933, 1936 and 1939. The highest proportion of permanence was found among whites, owning their houses or paying the highest rent, with children and several wage-earners in family, where the family head was a skilled worker or foreman, middle-aged, foreign born, and not highly educated. With the present concern over labour mobility between industries, this study has considerable 'social significance'. Education, and renting rather than owning houses, seem indicated as favourable factors that social policy can control.

Directory of Natural History Societies

IN December 1943 the Committee of the Amateur Entomologists' Society agreed to compile a Directory of Natural History Societies. Quite independently, Miss R. S. Shove suggested in *School Nature Study* of January 1944 that a list should be prepared of school natural history societies and field clubs. As a result it was decided to trust the entire work to the Amateur Entomologists' Society, the School Nature Study Union agreeing to assist in the preparation of a schools section. In its early stages the compilation was directed by W. G. Rawlings; he was later succeeded by H. K. Airy Shaw. The Directory has now been completed and contains a list of all organisations with any biological interests, excluding bodies of an economic or professional nature. All societies, past and present, of which the Society could find any record in the British Isles, have been included. These have been arranged first to give information about national societies and then local societies, arranged in order of counties. The material arranged

under each entry in the Directory is sufficient to guide naturalists in a distant county to a group of like-minded individuals. Not the least important parts of the Directory are the particulars of so many school natural history societies. The Directory can be obtained from the Secretary, Amateur Entomologists' Society, 1 West Ham Lane, London, E.15.

Nairobi Scientific and Philosophical Society

IN spite of the speed of modern communications, the sense of isolation arising among scientific men working in the Colonies and elsewhere overseas is still very real; one way of mitigating the difficulty is the formation of local scientific societies. The Nairobi Scientific and Philosophical Society is such a body, which arose from the need for co-operation between various scientific and technical officers working in Kenya. A meeting was held at Nairobi on April 9, 1947, at which the chairman, Mr. A. Walter, stressed the need for a central meeting place for scientific men, and the first formal meeting took place a month later. Now the Society has been able to issue vol. 1, part 1, of its *Proceedings*, and to claim a membership of fifty within six months of formation; this shows a very creditable interest among the necessarily small number of scientific and technical workers within reach of Nairobi. The *Proceedings* includes accounts of five meetings held by the Society; the subjects dealt with include *radio-sonde* in meteorology, the sociologist in industry, primitive agriculture in the modern world, development planning for the African and hormone weed-killers. The sociological bias shown is accounted for by the facts that advantage had to be taken of the availability of visiting guest speakers, and that the Society itself has arisen in a country where the development of a primitive people is taking place at an unprecedented pace. The Society is to be congratulated on the progress it has made as a centre for the discussion of problems of broad scientific and technical interest in Kenya. The officers of the Society are: *President*, A. Walters; *Vice-Presidents*, Dr. E. B. Worthington and V. A. Beckley; *Joint Honorary Secretaries*, W. A. Grinstead, P.O. Box 931, Nairobi, and H. E. Watson, P.O. Box 560, Nairobi; *Honorary Treasurer*, Dr. D. Harvey; *Honorary Librarian*, Dr. H. C. Pereira.

Earthquake in Iran

ON October 5, a great earthquake shook large areas in the province of Khurasan in north-eastern Iran, together with parts of Russian Turkestan. The large area of destruction appears to indicate either that the depth of focus of the shock was greater than normal, or that there was more than one shock. Two hundred people are reported killed and thousands injured at Meshed, with two hundred killed at Dereges. Askhabad, a Russian town with 150,000 inhabitants, suffered severely, four hundred people being reported killed. Six thousand injured people have been evacuated by air, and a temporary water supply has had to be organised to replace the town's water supply disrupted by the earthquake.

The area is a particularly seismic one, 140 earthquakes of varying intensity having been experienced during the last seventy years, and large earthquakes having occurred, according to Sir Arnold Wilson, at Kuchan in 1852, 1871, 1872, 1893 and 1895, at Meshed in 1673 and 1895, and in the whole area in 1929. This latter shock was also reported in *Nature* of May 11, 1929. On May 1, 1929, twelve distinct