

twenty-first annual report a very convenient general survey of research completed and in progress during the academic year 1949-50. The departmental summaries are accompanied, as in the previous report, by particulars of theses approved for higher degrees and by lists of published work for the academic year 1949-50 which can be regarded as contributions to original knowledge. The whole presents a concise but impressive picture of the contribution coming from the University of Birmingham, and its value would be only enhanced if all universities followed this example. The increasing dependence of universities upon the State for financial assistance makes such reports a desirable, as well as a reasonable, complement to the reports coming from the University Grants Committee itself.

### Personnel Management

IN a recent issue of the *Journal of the Institute of Personnel Management* (33, No. 314; March-April 1951), the personnel officer in a large industrial organization puts forward constructive proposals why the 'closed shop' policy in industry should be accepted. In reply, other personnel officers suggest that to make membership of a trade union a condition of employment in any firm is an unwarrantable interference with the liberty of the individual. Among other articles in the *Journal* is one by Miss Helen Baker, the associate director of the industrial relations section at Princeton University, giving her views on joint consultative practice in British industry, a report on promotion policy in nationalized industries prepared by the Acton Society Trust, and an account of the training of new entrants for the Westminster Bank by L. C. P. Cann.

### Penicillin Formation in Pea Juice

POPULAR interest in penicillin is matched by concentrated research to find more about the mechanism of its production. Dr. R. P. Cook and Dr. Margaret B. Brown have studied the production of penicillin on media containing juice of the pea (*Pisum sativum*) and compared it with that from media of known chemical composition (*Proc. Roy. Soc. Edinburgh*, B, 64, Part 2, No. 6; 1950). High yields of penicillin were obtained with one fraction of the pea juice, obtained by adding ethanol to the extract. The chemical composition of this fraction is complex; but the chief constituents have been determined. Other experiments with chemically defined media suggest that the highest yields of penicillin have been obtained only in the presence of a complex mixture of nitrogen-containing compounds. Excess of carbohydrates such as glucose caused an increase in growth but a rapid decrease in the production of penicillin. The Peoria strain 1249 B21 of *Penicillium notatum* was used in these experiments.

### Correspondence of Lavoisier

DR. DOUGLAS MCKIE, University College, Gower Street, London, W.C.1, writes: "In 1948 the Academy of Sciences of Paris appointed a committee for the editing and publication of the correspondence of Antoine Lavoisier (1743-94), the great French chemist. A preliminary catalogue of all letters and documents so far traced in France was compiled by the secretary of the committee, Prof. René Eric, of the University of Clermont-Ferrand; and copies were distributed in 1949 to many libraries throughout the world with the request for further information, as a result of which many important items were

located. As there may be others still untraced in Great Britain, I would be grateful to librarians and private owners for information of any such letters or documents in their care or possession."

### Royal Statistical Society: Officers

AT the annual general meeting of the Royal Statistical Society the following elections were announced: *President*, Prof. Bradford Hill; *Honorary Secretaries*, Mr. R. F. George, Mr. Richard Stone, Mr. Philip Lyle; *Honorary Treasurer*, Mr. R. F. Fowler. Mr. F. A. A. Menzler, president of the Institute of Actuaries, was awarded the Society's Guy Medal in silver.

### Announcements

PROF. E. GUYENOT, professor of zoology and comparative anatomy in the University of Geneva, has been elected a non-resident member of the Paris Academy of Sciences in succession to the late Prof. L. Cuénot.

DR. LILLIAN M. GILBRETH, president of Gilbreth Incorporated and a member of the board of directors of the American Management Council, has been elected an honorary fellow of the British Institute of Management. This is the first occasion on which the Institute has made such an election.

'OPEN DAYS' at the Chemical Research Laboratory, Teddington (Department of Scientific and Industrial Research), have been arranged for September 19 (afternoon), September 20 (morning), September 21 (morning or afternoon). Applications to attend should reach the Director before August 31; firms already on the invitation list need not apply.

THE forty-seventh Autumn Foray of the British Mycological Society will be held at Hereford during September 12-19, with headquarters at the Training College, Hereford, at which accommodation will be available. Those wishing to attend should notify the secretary, Dr. C. J. Hickman, Department of Botany, University, Birmingham 15, not later than August 11.

THE Faraday Society, on the invitation of the National Research Council of Canada and various Canadian industries, will hold a general discussion meeting at the University of Toronto in September 1952. The subject will be "The Reactivity of Free Radicals". In addition, visits to various universities and industrial concerns are being planned. Those interested should communicate as soon as possible with the Secretary of the Faraday Society, 6 Gray's Inn Square, London, W.C.1.

A "NAME Index of Organic Reactions", by Prof. T. S. Wheeler and J. E. Gowan, published by the Society of Chemical Industry (56 Victoria Street, London, S.W.1; pp. 46; 5s. net), gives briefly the nature of various reactions named after their discoverers, and should be useful to students of organic chemistry and others who may not recall what a particular reaction denotes. There are references to literature.

ERRATUM. In the communication "Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> Content of Soft- and Hard-shell Clams" (*Nature*, July 7, p. 36), the organism mentioned in paragraph 3 is *Lactobacillus leichmannii*; in the last line of the same paragraph, for "0.4  $\mu$ gm." read "0.5  $\mu$ gm."