

members of the public, because then the venture is even more hazardous. The first number has now been published of *Studies in Conservation* (1, No. 1; October 1952. Pp. 48. London and Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd; about 2 Nos. a year, 21s. net a year), which is the journal of the International Institute for the Conservation of Museum Objects, and it raises this very issue, for, although the public to which the journal is addressed is small, it is very important inasmuch as the preservation of the world's art treasures depends on the standards maintained in practice by a relatively small number of professional conservators. When "Technical Studies in the Field of the Fine Arts" discontinued publication, conservators were left without any medium of communication of a strictly comparative type; it is this gap that it is hoped the new journal will fill. The policy adopted and the scope of the work covered by the journal is well expressed in the editor's preface: "Whereas nothing less than the best—and that implies the most meticulous—in the way of scholarship will suffice, there is every reason why studio and laboratory processes should receive equal prominence. Knowledge advances by the mastery of technique . . .". This statement is fully upheld by the contents of this first number, which contains articles written by authorities in their respective subjects covering a wide field; they include an account of a detailed investigation of the Dirk Bouts altar-piece, an interesting X-ray examination of an ancient metal object, and a record of valuable data concerning the hygroscopic behaviour of wood. All the investigations have yielded results that are of great interest to those engaged in the conservation of museum objects. The number closes with reviews of books dealing with the treatment of pictures, metallurgy in antiquity, defects of paint films and the surface chemistry of solids. The editor and publishers are to be congratulated on the production of a most acceptable first number, both on account of the choice of material and the quality of the printing and the reproductions. The journal should appeal not only to those who are directly concerned with the problems of conservation but also to the far wider circle of those who take a general interest in museum objects.

#### New Spectrophotometer for Visible and Near Infra-red Radiation

A NEW spectrophotometer, the 'SP. 600', for accurate colorimetric measurements within the visible and near infra-red regions of the spectrum, has been designed by Unicam Instruments (Cambridge), Ltd., of the Arbury Works, Cambridge. With this instrument the analysis of a sample, or comparison with a reference substance, can be speedily carried out. Over the greater part of the spectral range the band-width is about 30 Å., and this is sufficiently narrow to reduce to a minimum effects commonly associated with spectral impurity at the selected wave-lengths. The instrument controls are simple to operate and consist of the following: a wave-length dial, calibrated in 10-Å. divisions from 3600 to 4500 Å. and then in 20, 50 and 100 Å. to 10,000 Å.; controls for slit width, dark current, transmission or optical density; and a selector switch for a red or blue (for use below 6500 Å.) photocell. The light source is a tungsten lamp, and the optical system is a simple Littrow monochromator with glass prism. The photocell output current is amplified. Bias and high-tension voltages are pro-

vided by dry batteries housed underneath the spectrophotometer, but lamp and heater supplies must be obtained from an external 12-V. source. The illustrated pamphlet describing the instrument includes a transmission/wave-length graph of Chance O.N. 12 didymium glass taken on a standard form of the spectrophotometer, and details of the dimensions and accessories of the instrument.

#### Educational Grants for Training in Plastics

THE trustees of the Plastics Industry Education Fund have decided as an experiment to allot up to £2,000 over a period of two years for maintenance grants for students attending a new two-year full-time course in plastics at the Borough Polytechnic, London. The course, which is for a minimum of eight students of about sixteen years of age who have taken the General Certificate of Education, will follow the syllabus of the City and Guilds of London Institute, leading to the diploma of the Plastics Institute at the end of the second year. Applications to attend the course should be made to the Principal, Borough Polytechnic, London, S.E.1. The trustees have also decided to allot £2,000 for capital equipment in technical colleges in Great Britain, which will include the Acton Technical College, the College of Technology, Birmingham, the Newton Heath Technical College and the National College of Rubber Technology.

#### Awards for Technical Articles on Radio

THE Radio Industry Council is continuing its practice of making awards of 25 guineas, up to an average of six a year, for technical articles on radio published during the past year in any public journal. The principal criteria in judging will be the value of an article in making known British achievement in radio and electronics, originality of subject, technical interest and presentation and clarity. Only authors whose salary is not mainly or wholly gained by writing are eligible. They should submit their work (five copies if possible) to the Secretary, Radio Industry Council, 59 Russell Square, London, W.C.1, from whom all further particulars can be obtained.

#### Research Fellowships at Government Scientific Establishments

FOR several years Ministry of Supply research fellowships, tenable at Harwell and certain other Ministry of Supply establishments, have been offered annually, and now a small number of similar research fellowships is being instituted at other government scientific establishments. A considerable choice of subject will be allowed to research fellows, provided that it falls within the field of work covered by the establishment to which they are attached. The fellowships will be tenable for three years and will carry benefits under the Federated Superannuation System for Universities. Remuneration will depend on individual merit and experience and will be £800–1,000 a year inclusive for senior awards and £500–700 for junior awards. The fellowships will be advertised by the Civil Service Commission as the occasion arises, and advertisements for the first awards should appear within the next few weeks.

#### Colonial Service: Recent Appointments

THE following appointments in the Colonial Service have recently been announced: B. G. Kinloch (assistant game warden, Uganda), game warden, Uganda; A. F. W. Sheffield (principal agricultural