

**Editorship of *Discovery* :** Mr. S. E. Gamarekian

S. EDWARD GAMAREKIAN has been appointed editor of *Discovery*. He carried out research and development work at the General Electric Company's Laboratories in Schenectady, New York, for many years and lectured at Rutgers University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and the Georgian Institute of Technology. He later became the scientific correspondent for *The Washington Post* and recently came to Britain to report on scientific developments for *The Guardian* during a three-month exchange of science correspondents between the two newspapers.

**Recovery of Capsules from *Discoverer* Satellites**

THE first success in retrieving an object which had returned to Earth after being in orbit in space was achieved on August 12, when the re-entry capsule from the United States satellite *Discoverer* 13 was recovered from the North Pacific. *Discoverer* 13 (1960 θ) was launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, at 20h. 40m. U.T. on August 10, and entered an orbit inclined at 83° to the equator. Its height varied between 260 km. at perigee and 700 km. at apogee, the orbital period being 94.1 min. Seventeen revolutions later, the re-entry capsule was detached from the main body of the satellite when it was travelling south near the Aleutian Islands, and, after its speed had been substantially reduced by a retro-rocket, it descended through the atmosphere. In the last few miles of its descent it was further retarded by parachute and was finally recovered from the sea north of Hawaii. It was found to have withstood well the heating encountered during its descent. On August 19 there was successful recovery of a second capsule, ejected from the satellite *Discoverer* 14 (1960 κ), which was launched at 19h. 58m. U.T. on August 18 into an orbit similar to that of its predecessor. On this occasion the capsule, which weighed 85 lb., was intercepted during its final parachute descent, being caught by an aircraft at an altitude of about 10,000 ft. over the north Pacific.

**The Satellite *Echo* 1 (1960 ι)**

THE first successful balloon-satellite was launched from Cape Canaveral in Florida at 09h. 40m. U.T. on August 12. The satellite, known as *Echo* 1, consists of an aluminium-coated plastic sphere 100 ft. in diameter, which was inflated at high altitude. Its orbit is inclined at 47° to the equator, with a period of revolution of 118.2 min. initially. The orbit is nearly circular, the height being 1,530 km. at perigee and 1,690 km. at apogee. The satellite, which is designated 1960 ι 1, is accompanied in orbit by its final-stage rocket (1960 ι 2), and three other fragments. The main purpose of the satellite is to act as a reflector for radio waves, and many transmissions have been successfully received via the satellite. It thus serves as a first step towards a world-wide communications system which would be independent of ionospheric disturbances. The satellite is also admirable for optical tracking, and during its first week in orbit was easily visible from most of the northern hemisphere, as a slow-moving object of stellar magnitude zero. The satellite should also yield the first information on air density at heights above 1,000 km., and evidence of its behaviour under the impact of meteorites is awaited with interest.

**Australia's Second Atomic Reactor**

AUSTRALIA'S second atomic reactor is to be called by the aboriginal name of *Moata*. This is the first

in the world to bear a tribal name. The name *Moata* is used by the Ngerikudi tribe in Northern Queensland to describe instruments for making heat or 'native firesticks'. *Moata*, an Argonaut type of experimental reactor, is now under construction at the Advanced Technology Laboratories at Mountain View, California, and will be installed at Lucas Heights early next year.

**Information Centre for Food Irradiation**

AN international information centre for food irradiation has been set up as a result of a contract signed between the European Productivity Agency of the Organization for European Economic Co-operation and the Centre d'Etudes Nucléaires at Saclay, France. M. Pierre Lévêque has been appointed director of the Centre, which will be set up at Saclay. The functions of the Centre include the preparation, publication and distribution of a quarterly international newsletter on food irradiation in both English and French. The Centre will also serve as a point of contact between scientists, food technologists and the government and industrial circles interested, and will encourage closer international co-operation in the development and application of knowledge in the field of food irradiation. The contract, which has been signed for an initial period of two years, provides for the payment by the sponsoring bodies of a sum of 32,000 new francs to cover printing and translation costs and other incidental expenses of the Centre. It is hoped that the work of the European Information Centre for Food Irradiation will encourage investigation and research and promote the successful industrialization of the results obtained.

**Bibliographies on Technical and Vocational Education**

A SERIES of bibliographies on technical and vocational education has been launched by Unesco. Besides an international bibliography, surveys have been published giving details of publications in the United Kingdom and in the U.S.S.R. concerned with the technical and vocational aspects of education. To these is now added a bibliography of technical education publications in the United States (Educational Studies and Documents No. 36: Technical and Vocational Education in the U.S.A.—a Bibliographical Survey prepared by the United States Office of Education. Pp. 24. (Paris: Unesco; London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1959.) 3s. 6d.) The booklet is in five parts and lists separately publications dealing with general technical and vocational education, agriculture, distribution, home economics and industrial education; there is an explanatory note to cover each publication described, stating briefly its contents and purpose.

**Low-priced Books for Overseas**

SINCE this scheme was first started, some 2,000 titles have been submitted by publishers and others to the Advisory Committee on the Selection of Low-priced Books for Overseas under the chairmanship of Mr. A. L. P. Norrington, president of Trinity College, Oxford, and vice-chancellor (designate) of the University. The Committee will shortly be submitting its list of recommendations to the Ministers concerned. Some measure of priority is being given to university text-books, as the importance attached to the supply of books of educational, scientific and technical value was clearly brought out at the