

distinctive title than to carry into effect the scheme of the Gresham Commissioners." These will sufficiently indicate the Annual Committee's views.

Convocation's method of conducting business, it may be hoped, is peculiar to itself. Although an extraordinary meeting was convened on April 10 "to consider the Report of the Commissioners appointed to consider the draft charter of the proposed Gresham University in London, and also the Report of the Annual Committee thereon," it was debarred from expressing its opinion, either by discussion or vote, on the Commissioners' Report *as a whole*, and directed to confine itself to such matters as arose out of whichever resolution of the five might be under debate. After much fruitless discussion the resolutions proposed by the Annual Committee were unanimously set aside in favour of a motion which, "with a view to the speedy and satisfactory reconstitution of the University," referred "the whole question of the constitution of this University to the Annual Committee with power to nominate members of a Joint Consultative Committee of the Senate and Convocation."

This motion, agreed upon at the close of a protracted meeting and devoid of any express instructions to the effect that delegates should be selected so as to represent interests and not individuals, and that the Commissioners' scheme should form the basis of conference, was no doubt unfortunately worded, but the use to which it might be put was certainly not foreseen at the time of its adoption. In its second order's opinion, as stated in a letter to the *Times*, "should such a Committee arrive at a workable result, this may be embodied in a new charter which may be accepted without resort to a Statutory Commission, such as the Annual Committee objected to," in other words, the Consultative Committee might be the means of indefinitely postponing the settlement of the question of University reform. And the Annual Committee, having failed to carry its resolutions, must have taken much the same view, since its delegates were, with one exception—that of a theologian—chosen entirely from its own body, while on points of order raised by two of its members in connection with the motion, discussion on the Commissioners' Report at the ordinary meeting of Convocation on May 8 was again prevented, although a notice of motion expressing general approval of the scheme was allowed to appear on the *agenda*.

Tactics such as these not infrequently meet with the reward they deserve. University reform in London has waited too long for an obstructive and dilatory attitude, whether arising out of questions of "dignity" or of inability to take a broad view of the problem, on the part of a few, to be tolerable, and fortunate it is that a salutary change has taken place in Convocation itself. A movement in favour of the Gresham scheme took definite shape a few days after the extraordinary meeting on April 10; a Committee of Graduates was formed and a circular sent out to elicit from members of Convocation an expression of general approval of its provisions, and a direct vote in Convocation on the scheme being prevented, its adherents took the only course open to them, turned out the old Annual Committee on May 8, and replaced it by one almost wholly favourable to the Commissioners' proposals. Although not a direct vote in favour of the scheme, it has with good reason been regarded as tantamount to this, since the meeting which elected the new Annual Committee would certainly have expressed general approval of the Report had not the motion to this effect been ruled out of order by the chairman.

Since May 8, events have moved rapidly. The delegates appointed by the late Annual Committee, with one exception, resigned their seats on the Joint Consultative Committee as a result of the vote adverse to themselves, and the Joint Consultative Committee with its endless opportunities for delay has been shelved. The circular

issued by the Committee of Graduates just mentioned obtained 856 replies, many of them from the best known and most influential members of Convocation, expressing "general approval of the Commissioners' Report"; and this fact with a list of signatories was embodied in a memorial praying the Senate to "use all its influence to induce the Government to appoint a Statutory Commission forthwith." At its meeting on June 13, the Senate, happy in its opportunity, passed almost unanimously a resolution in which general approval of the proposals of the Commissioners was expressed, and instructions given to its special Committee to consider suggestions for the terms of reference to the Statutory Commission. A fortnight later the Annual Committee and other invited graduates met the Special Committee of the Senate in conference, and on behalf of the former it was urged "that it is desirable to memorialise Government to take immediate steps for the appointment of a Statutory Commission to frame statutes in general accordance with the Report of the Gresham Commission, with full power to make such modifications as they may see fit, after conference with Convocation and other bodies affected." Further, four delegates from the Annual Committee attended the meeting on June 30, of representatives from nearly all the institutions which, according to the Commissioners' proposals, will form constituent colleges of the reorganised University, and concurred in the resolution of similar character, which, as reported in *NATURE* (this vol., p. 227), was passed unanimously by those having the right to vote as delegates. And now the welcome news has transpired that at its meeting on July 11 the Senate passed a resolution urging the immediate appointment of a Statutory Commission with power to modify details of the Gresham Commissioners' scheme if judged expedient after conference with the bodies concerned, and that copies of the resolution were forwarded to the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President and the Vice-President of the Council, and the Home Secretary.

The unexpected, therefore, has happened. In every way in which it has been permitted to do so, Convocation, like the Senate, has expressed general approval of the Commissioners' proposals, and the University of London instead of being placed, by divided counsels, in a position deplorable to all friends of higher education in London, is now at the head of the movement for a University worthy of the greatest city of the world. Now that extensive approval of the Report by the great majority of the institutions concerned has satisfied the condition laid down by the Home Secretary as one to be complied with before action could be taken by the Government, it may be hoped that before Parliament is prorogued an Act appointing the Statutory Commission will be added to the legislative achievements of the Session.

W. PALMER WYNNE.

THE OXFORD MEETING OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION.

SINCE the last account of the preparations for the meeting of the British Association on August 8 appeared in these columns, the local arrangements have made steady progress, and the arrangements for the Sectional and other meeting rooms are nearly complete. It may be well to explain that only a few of the Sectional meeting rooms can be darkened for the use of a lantern. It has been found impracticable to darken the large writing rooms in the Examination Schools in which Sections E and F will meet; and the same may be said of Hertford College Hall (Section C) and Keble College Hall (Section F). The Clarendon Laboratory Theatre (Section A), the Anatomical Theatre and Laboratory (Sections D and H), and the Physiology Theatre, are provided with dark blinds; and the large Lecture Theatre

in the Museum will be available for meetings of Sections in which the lime-light is indispensable. The dates and hours at which this room will be available must be settled by the Recorders of Sections during the meeting.

The arrangements for excursions in the neighbourhood are now complete. The list is not as long as has been the case in some recent meetings, as the localities of general interest which are accessible from Oxford are few in number. On the Saturday afternoon parties will be taken to Dorchester and Wallingford, to Abingdon, to Blenheim Palace and Woodstock, and to the Roman remains at Silchester, and Prof. Green will take a geological party through Fawler to the classical grounds of Stonesfield. On the Thursday, whole day excursions are arranged for Windsor and Eton, Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon, Compton Wynyates, Broughton and Wroxton, Reading, and the Great Western Railway Works at Swindon.

The total number of those who have up to the present signified their intention of attending the meeting amounts to a little over 1500. As the Sheldonian Theatre, on the most liberal estimate, will not accommodate more than 1800 persons, and as it is very probable that the number of applicants for places will be greater than this, members and associates are recommended to apply for places in the Theatre for the President's address and evening lectures as early as possible. The allotment of seats will begin on Monday, August 6.

Up to the time of writing, but little information has been received respecting the work of the various Sections. In Section D (Biology) the President, Prof. J. Bayley Balfour, will deal in his address with the aspects of forestry in Great Britain, and among other papers which will be read to the Section, Prof. Ray Lankester will make a communication on chlorophyll in the animal kingdom, Prof. A. A. W. Hubrecht will read a paper on the Didermic blastocyst, and Mr. J. T. Cunningham on the specific and generic characters of the Pleuronectida.

In Section E the President, Captain W. J. L. Wharton, R.N., will deal in his address with our present knowledge of the physical conditions of the sea. And among other papers which will be read at the meeting are the following:—Colonel Godwin Austen, on Bhotan; Mr. Osbert H. Howorth, on the Sierra Madre of Mexico; Miss Baidon, on a visit to New Guinea; Mr. D. G. Hogarth, on a recent journey in Asia Minor; Mr. W. H. Cozens Hardy, on Montenegro and Albania; Dr. H. Schlichter, on the natural wealth of British East Africa; Mr. G. G. Chisholm, on the orthography of Place-names; Mr. J. Theodore Bent, on Hadramut; Mr. A. Montefiore, on the equipment of the Jackson-Harmsworth Arctic Expedition; Mr. H. N. Dickson, on the physical condition of the North Sea; M. A. Delbecque, on the lakes of France, and Dr. H. R. Mill, on the geography of the English lakes. The proceedings of the other sections will be announced as soon as they are communicated.

THE BIOLOGICAL INSTITUTION IN BERGEN, NORWAY.

LAST autumn a biological institution was opened in Bergen. It forms part of the museum, the library and collection of which the students are at liberty to use.

The building is of wood, two storeys high. On the ground floor there is one large hall surrounded on three sides by aquaria, which are open to the public on payment of a small entrance fee. Then there is the pump-room, and other rooms, one of which is used for experiments in hatching, and in the others the collected matter is examined and studied, and the dredges and other instruments are kept. There are two hatching apparatus,

each containing eight hatching-boxes. A hatching apparatus for fresh water is much required, so that the biological questions in connection with the salmon-fishing may be worked out.

Fig. 1 is the plan of the ground floor.

The first floor is set apart for scientific work, and consists of two large rooms, the smaller of which is used for chemical work, and is furnished with all necessary apparatus.

The larger room has four windows on each side; those on the east are separated by wooden partitions, curtained off from the rest of the room, thus forming four small work-rooms, each of which is furnished with a microscope and writing-table and other conveniences for the work of one person. In front of the windows on the west side, there are tables (L, M, N, O, Fig. 2).

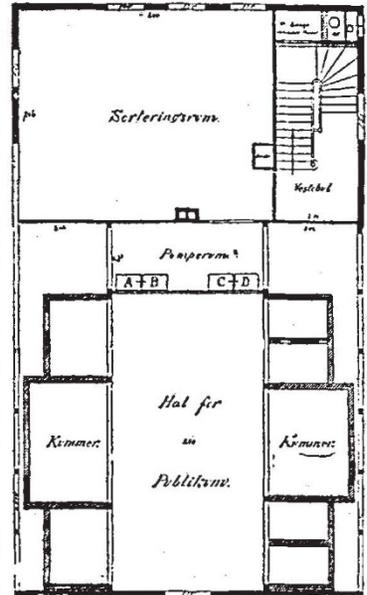


FIG. 1.—Ground floor

Altogether ten work-tables are provided in the institute.

In the middle of the larger room there is a long low sink (E, F, G, H, Fig. 2), which has a small channel in the middle connected with a waste-pipe. On each side of this sink, but raised slightly above it, there is a shelf running the whole length of it, and wide enough to hold the small experimental aquaria, which consist of glass bowls. Above the shelves are pipes from the sea-water-reservoir, with numerous taps, thus supplying flowing water when necessary.

The sea-water supply is conveyed to the pump-room by means of a long pipe from the middle of the Paddefjords, at a depth of ten metres; from here it is pumped up to the reservoir, which is on the top storey, whence it supplies the laboratories.

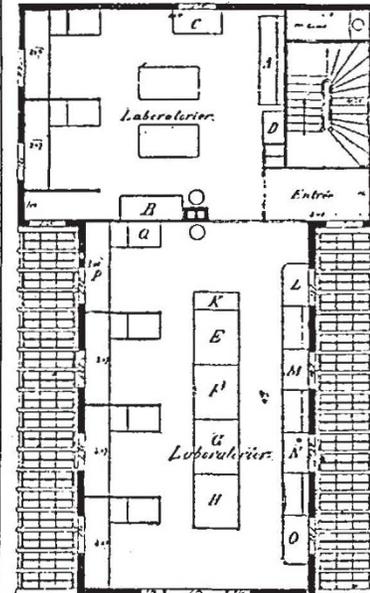


FIG. 2.—First floor.

The fauna is very rich; the flora has not yet been much studied.

The biological institution is for foreign as well as Norwegian students. The monthly cost for the use of