

tions of these steels are concerned, M. Chevenard says that "chromium exerts a very favourable influence upon the mechanical properties of the austenitic nickel steels, especially at high temperatures. At the same time it renders these alloys very resistant to oxidation and to the attack of a large number of corrosive agents." These facts are already being applied industrially in the newer varieties of stainless iron and steel.

The volume ends with a paper on butt-ended standards of length which forms the continuation of previous work.

### The Supply of Information.

IN October 1924 the President of the Board of Education appointed a Departmental Committee to inquire into the adequacy of the library provision already made under the Public Libraries Acts, and the means of extending and completing such provision. Those who recognise that an efficient library system is the essential foundation for progress in education and culture, without which no people can hold its own in the struggle for existence, will welcome the Report<sup>1</sup> of the Public Libraries Committee, a volume of some 350 pages now published, as offering the basis for a reorganisation long overdue.

The Committee recommends a national system of co-operation between libraries, whether borough, urban district, county, or special, with the Central Library for students, reconstituted as a department of the British Museum, acting as a central bureau of exchange for the whole system, and as a national lending library to supplement the resources of other libraries. It is contemplated that, in the first place, an application for a rare or expensive book needed for the purposes of research will be made to the local public library. If the public library does not possess the book and does not consider it reasonable to buy it, the librarian will refer to the 'regional library,' provided such an organisation has come into being. If the regional library cannot supply the book, the application will be sent to the Central Library. The Central Library will supply the book from its stock, endeavour to borrow the book from the institution likely to possess it, accepting responsibility, or purchase the book.

A considerable proportion of the books for which application will be made under this scheme will be scientific literature, and in particular scientific periodicals. The necessity for a central library to provide for the needs of scientific workers has been widely recognised and was emphasised by Dr. Chalmers Mitchell at a conference of the Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux in 1925, when he said: "Some of the periodicals are contained in no library in Great Britain. I am glad to be able to state that the Library of the Science Museum is making a great effort to fill the gap. In my view there is no more urgent need than the establishment in this country of a central library, the duty of which shall be to contain a copy of every periodical publishing scientific research."

The nucleus of such a library already exists in the Science Library at South Kensington, with its great collection of periodicals. The Committee suggests that the most easy and least expensive way of solving the problem will be to make the Science Library complete, and it recommends that an additional sum of £3500 a year, with a small contingent increase of staff, should be granted to enable the Science Library

to obtain most of the volumes of which it stands in need. The Science Library has already assumed many of the functions of a central library, by the extension of borrowing facilities to approved institutions where scientific or technical work is carried on, and should be the principal source on which the Central Library will depend for the supply or loan of books needed by research students in science.

If scientific research is the foundation of commercial prosperity, it is no less true that such research cannot be carried out efficiently without the means of consulting the records of previous work. The organisation necessary to secure this end would not be very great. It is estimated that the cost of all the proposals, including those relating to the Central Library and the Science Library, would not exceed £12,000 a year during the next few years, while the benefit to learning, research, manufactures, and trade can scarcely be estimated.

### University and Educational Intelligence.

EDINBURGH.—At the recent graduation ceremonial, the honorary degrees conferred included the following: *Doctor of Divinity*: The Right Rev. Ernest William Barnes, Lord Bishop of Birmingham; *Doctor of Laws*: Sir John Carruthers Beattie, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Capetown; the Abbé Henri Breuil; Prof. C. E. Jenkin, professor of engineering, University of Oxford; Prof. J. C. Meakins, professor of medicine, McGill University, Montreal; Prof. A. C. Seward, Master of Downing College and professor of botany, University of Cambridge. The degree of Doctor of Science was conferred on Douglas A. Allan, *thesis*—"The Geology of the Highland Border from Tayside to Noranside"; T. W. M. Cameron, *thesis*—"Studies in Economic Helminthology"; John Macqueen Cowan, *thesis*—"The Forests of Kalimpong—An Ecological Account"; J. F. V. Phillips, *thesis*—"Forest Succession and Ecology in the Knysna Region"; C. M. Yonge, *thesis*—"Structure and Function of the Organs of Feeding and Digestion in the Septibranchs, Cuspidaria, and Poromya."

LONDON.—A course of four lectures on "Heat Transfer in Reciprocating Engines, including Internal Combustion Engines," will be given (in English) by Prof. Dr. Adolf Nägel, professor of engineering in the Technische Hochschule, Dresden, at the Institution of Civil Engineers (by kind permission) on Oct. 11, 14, 18, and 21, at 5.30 P.M. The lectures will be illustrated by lantern slides. Admission is free, without ticket.

THE International Federation of University Women in its Occasional Paper, No 6, describes Crosby Hall, the Federation's new office which was recently opened by the Queen as a club-house. University women carrying on research or other post-graduate work in London will be eligible for residence at the Hall, if members of the Federation, and the dining-hall and common rooms are available for all members visiting or living in London. The same pamphlet contains addresses by Prof. Zimmern and Prof. Kristine Bonnevie on the work of the League of Nations Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and the Federation's collaboration with it, and a note on the functions of the American National Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, described by Prof. Zimmern as the model national committee. This American committee, organised at the beginning of last year, undertakes to procure or compile whatever information from the United States may be needed in connexion with any investigation being made by the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation,

<sup>1</sup> Public Libraries Committee. Report on Public Libraries in England and Wales, pp. 356. Cmd. 2868. (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1927.) 6s. net.