

The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

THE history of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, the new home of which was opened by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales on July 18, goes back to 1921, when a committee appointed by

of Tropical Medicine so established, first at the Albert Docks and, since the War, at Endsleigh Gardens, always under the ægis of the Seamen's Hospital Society, has rendered constant service to the Empire.

Negotiations with the Seamen's Hospital Society led to the absorption of this school into the new institute; and in August 1924 the resulting "London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine", affiliated with the University of London, was incorporated by Royal Charter, a union which serves to emphasise the fact that the fundamental needs of hygiene are the same throughout all climates.

Now that the School is about to take possession of its new premises, it is possible to gauge the magnitude of the task which has been entrusted to the director, Dr. Andrew Balfour. The School consists of six divisions: Public health; epidemiology and vital statistics; bacteriology and immunology; biochemistry (including chemistry as applied to hygiene); medical zoology (including protozoology, helminthology, and entomology); and tropical medicine and hygiene. These divisions will collaborate in providing courses of instruction for the diplomas of hygiene and of tropical medicine and hygiene; independently they will provide advanced teaching in their special subjects; and they will afford ample facilities for research. It has been the constant aim of those concerned with the organisation of the School

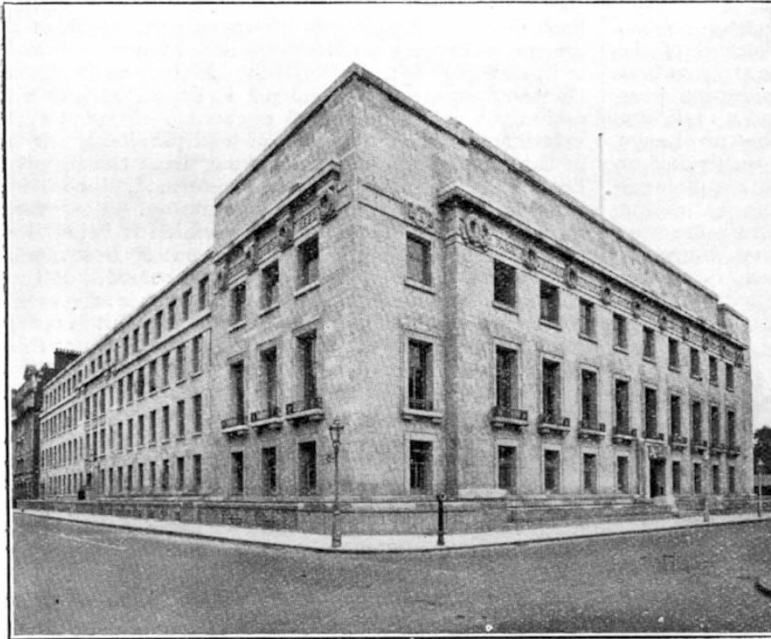


Photo.]

FIG. 1.

[Walshams, Ltd.]

the Minister of Health of that day, Sir Alfred Mond, now Lord Melchett, under the chairmanship of the Earl of Athlone, to report upon the needs of post-graduate medical education in London, advocated among other things the establishment of a central institute of preventive medicine. This recommendation began to bear fruit in the following year, when the Trustees of the Rockefeller Foundation in New York generously offered £460,000 for the building and equipment of such an institute, if the British Government would be responsible for its staffing and maintenance. In the course of their campaign of preventive medicine in all parts of the world, the authorities of the Rockefeller Foundation had arrived independently at the conclusion that a great teaching centre of this nature, with an international outlook, was required if the teachings of hygiene were to be adequately promulgated; and they realised that London, as the capital of the British Empire, the centre of the world's commerce, and the cradle of modern public health administration, would form the ideal site.

Thirty years ago, as is well known, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, when Colonial Secretary, at the instance of Sir Patrick Manson, founded a school for the study of the diseases of the tropics; and the London School

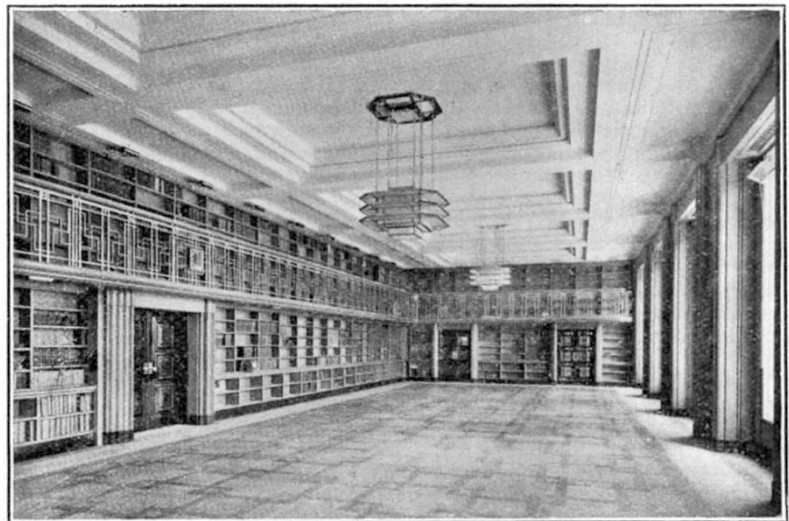


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FIG. 2.

[Walshams, Ltd.]

to secure a nice balance between these several activities, and much of the space available in the building has been so allotted that it may be used for teaching or research as occasion may demand. It

is most desirable that men on furlough from the tropics should have somewhere to go where they can finish off any research work that they may have on hand. The services of the library to the man in the tropics, as well as to the worker in Great Britain, will be no less valuable. For, with the collaboration of the Bureau of Hygiene and Tropical Diseases which will be housed in the building, it is hoped to develop something approaching an international information bureau in all subjects within the purview of the school. The museum also, which will be open to the public, will play an important part, both educational and propagandist. It consists of three parts: sanitary engineering, general hygiene, and tropical medicine. Many of the exhibits have been prepared and presented, and will be kept thoroughly up-to-date by large commercial interests concerned in public health activities of various kinds.

The building which is to subserve this varied array of functions is a massive block in Portland stone lying just north of the British Museum (Fig. 1). The successful design was submitted by Mr. P. Morley Horder, and Mr. Verner O. Rees, in association with Mr. Horder, has carried through the execution of the design so submitted; and despite the economy in external ornament, dictated by the practical needs of the building, the architects have succeeded in making a very pleasing contribution to the architecture of Bloomsbury. The building consists of four main stories with a recessed floor above these, and finally a small top floor composed mainly of animal houses. The walls and foundations have been so constructed that they will support another story should this eventually become necessary.

The general plan of the building is that of a letter H, with the long sides on Gower Street and Malet Street, a cross-bar uniting the two and separating the north and south courts, and with the foot of the H closed by the main front which faces south on to Keppel Street. The severity of the Keppel Street elevation is relieved by a wide frieze composed of wreaths and of the names of some of the pioneers in hygiene and tropical medicine; and a lively series of gilded designs, representing some of the animals which concern the hygienist most closely, are set in the metal balustrades below the first floor windows. These ornaments are continued some way along Gower Street and Malet Street, but beyond this the side elevations are relieved only by the prominent entrances. The main entrance, in Keppel Street, is surmounted by a large panel engraved with the handsome seal of the School.

Probably the most striking feature about the interior of the building is the abundant supply of light and air. The passages are considerably wider than is usually the case in a building of this type,

and this reflects the intention of the architects to ensure that the School should in no way fall short of those principles which it will be its main function to inculcate. With the exception of the main lecture theatre, ventilation is secured throughout by natural means; the large open courts help to make this possible. The working departments occupy the sides and cross-bar of the H, and the planning of these departments has varied with their respective functions. The base of the H, the Keppel Street front, contains those sections which are of more immediate concern to the outside public; and in this part, naturally, more concession has been made to architectural effect.

Immediately beyond the entrance hall and occupying the south court is the main lecture theatre. It is the easiest part of the building to find; a most convenient arrangement, for this theatre will frequently be used for 'outside' lectures. On the first floor, the entire frontage is occupied by the library, a wide, imposing room, unbroken by pillars, panelled throughout with oak (Fig. 2). Immediately behind the library, access is provided to the flat roof of the lecture theatre, which will be laid out as a garden court. The second and third floors comprise the museum; the lower devoted to hygiene, the upper to tropical medicine, both splendidly illuminated by large windows in the north and south walls and by three open wells admitting light from above.

The opening ceremony was performed by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales on July 18, almost exactly three years after the foundation stone was laid by Mr. Neville Chamberlain as Minister of Health. The Prince of Wales was received by Lord Melchett, chairman of the Board of Management, who read an address of welcome which outlined the history and functions of the School. In his reply, the Prince of Wales stressed the importance of this great benefaction as a sign of Anglo-American friendship, and expressed his belief that the opening of this School would inaugurate a new era in preventive medicine. When Sir Holburt Waring, chairman of the Court of Governors, had returned thanks to the Prince of Wales for his attendance, and had been supported by Sir Gregory Foster, Vice-Chancellor of the University, His Royal Highness visited the various departments of the building. The assembled company was entertained to luncheon as the guests of Lord Melchett, the building was thrown open for general inspection, and a series of cinematograph displays showing some aspects of preventive medicine were exhibited in the lecture theatre. The School achieved a very gay and successful debut, and, given adequate financial support, there is every reason to expect that it has before it a long and prosperous career "in the Service of Mankind".

History of Science Exhibition at Florence.

THE first National Exhibition of the History of Science is being held from May to October of this year at Florence. It is of great interest to those concerned with the story of the development of scientific thought, although this development is somewhat obscured by the grouping of the exhibits according to their local origin rather than in logical or chronological order.

Of the various sections of the Exhibition, perhaps the most important are those in the rooms illustrating the discoveries of Leonardo da Vinci and Galileo Galilei. Here are interesting models of flying machines constructed in accordance with the descriptions in Leonardo's "Codice del Volo degli Uccelli". Among them is a machine to be fitted to the shoulders, and

another of a canvas wing, the formation of which, similar to that of a Venetian blind, was imitated from the wing of a bird. Other designs show Leonardo's final device for the motion of the wings, his "macchina volante con piano portante", representing the final perfection of the type. There is also Leonardo's parachute and his instrument devised for the solution of the problem of the Arabian mathematician, Alhazen.

A number of models illustrate the experiments and discoveries of Galileo. There is the inclined plane for testing the rate of descent of bodies, the semiparabola illustrating the path traversed by objects horizontally projected, and the apparatus that illustrates the action of the pendulum. Here, too, are the 'Compasso di proporzione' or 'military compass',