

The University of Liverpool.

OPENING OF THE LADY HERDMAN GEOLOGICAL LABORATORIES.

ON Monday, Oct. 21, the Rt. Hon. Stanley Baldwin formally opened the new geological laboratories of the University of Liverpool. The building is a memorial to the late Lady Herdman, who, jointly with her husband, Sir William Herdman, Derby professor of natural history in the University from 1881 to 1920, founded the chair of geology. On her untimely death in 1922, Sir William Herdman added to his earlier munificent gifts to the University a sum of £20,000 towards the cost of new geological laboratories. The generosity of his family and of other friends in Liverpool provided the further funds necessary to enable the scheme he had in mind to be completed.

The new building has a frontage of 97 ft. on Brownlow Street (Fig. 1) and consists of four storeys. An entrance hall occupies the centre of the ground floor and contains on its south wall a bronze memorial tablet to the late Lady Herdman. Also on the ground floor are the professor's room, private laboratory, secretary's room, etc., as well as a large rock-cutting room and laboratory assistants' room, all of which lie on the northern side of the entrance hall, while on the southern side are a map room, research rooms, and a lecturer's room. One of these research

rooms is specially fitted for rock-analysis and chemical work. The map room serves as a drawing office and is, moreover, equipped for use as a subsidiary lecture-room. On the first floor is a similar central hall to that below, flanked on one side by a spacious library and on the other by the lecture theatre. The library, 50 ft. in length by 30 ft. in width, is fitted in dark oak, and has accommodation for 20,000 volumes in bays around the walls. Centre tables allow more than thirty students to read in comfort. The lecture theatre is also furnished in dark oak, and accommodates rather more than a hundred students. It is equipped with lantern screens and map screens in duplicate, so that the epidiascope (with micro-projector) and an additional lantern may be in use at the same time. Adjoining the lecture theatre are a preparation room and a lecturer's room.

On the second floor the central area is occupied by the museum, with a balcony surrounding its upper part. Lighting from both top and sides can be adjusted. North and south of the museum are large laboratories, each 50 ft. by 30 ft., for petrological and palaeontological work respectively. These rooms are well lit by large windows, in part of plate-glass.

The flat roof is specially strengthened in order that it may take a further storey if and when required.

On the lower ground floor are the library and other storerooms, cloak-rooms, and two optical laboratories. Like all the laboratories in the building, the optical rooms can be completely darkened. They are fitted for goniometry, optical mineralogy, and photomicrography. One of them gives access to a good-sized photographic dark-room. In a constant temperature chamber in the central hall of the lower ground floor is a concrete block designed to support earthquake-recording apparatus. This is sunk into the solid rock-foundation and is free from any direct connexion with the building.

In appearance, whether viewed from within or with-

out, the building is pleasing. Critics will find nothing to offend their aesthetic sense; admirers would simply describe it as beautiful; but both would be impressed by its freedom from any trace of subordination of scientific requirements to internal or external appearance. This is an achievement on which the architects (Messrs. Briggs and Thornely, of Liverpool) are to be congratulated. Those who will have the opportunity of working in the building will find



Photo by

FIG. 1.

[Stewart Bale.]

in their surroundings a real expression of the University's motto: *Haec otia studia fovent.*

Mr. Baldwin, before declaring the building open, spoke of the wide field of interest that presented itself to students of geology. As an example of the growing interest in the subject at Liverpool, he mentioned that the Workers' Educational Association had recently asked that an evening class in this subject should be established. After commenting on the relationship between geology and allied subjects, he referred to the increasing importance of experimental geology. Mr. Baldwin laid special stress on the practical side of geology, a side on which the Liverpool school is particularly well equipped. He expressed his pleasure in opening a department that would take its part in training men to spread the knowledge of geological science and promoting the development of the great country from which they sprang.

The opening ceremony was preceded by a largely attended meeting in the main University buildings, presided over by the Chancellor, the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G. He was supported by a number of distinguished visitors, including the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, the Mayors of Birkenhead, Wallasey, and Bootle, and many leading British geologists.