

remote regions of the Union, including the Kola peninsula, the Ural-Kuznetsk Basin, Transbaikalia, the Turukhan region, East Sayan, the Irkutsk region, the Minusinsk region, Buriat Mongolia, and Tanu-Tuva, also the salt and soda lakes of the Kulundin steppe in western Siberia. Aeroplane photography will be used to establish the extent of the Siberian forests. The expedition to Kazakstan is to explore the natural resources of the Karagandin, Koundar, and the Dzeskazgan regions of the Altai and Ridder, and to investigate the possibility of reconstructing the agriculture of north Kazakstan. Seventy-five detachments are starting for Central Asia to explore the natural resources of Tadzhikistan, Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, and Pamir. It has been decided to start to explore this year the natural resources of Khirghizia, which possesses much potential hydraulic power and big deposits of ferrous and non-ferrous metals, and has suitable lands for cattle-breeding. The expedition to the Crimea is to concentrate on the exploration of the salt lakes. The expedition to Transcaucasia will examine the possibilities of utilising hydraulic power in the region, that to the northern Caucasus is to explore the deposits of rare elements such as cadmium and the mineral resources of the main ridge of mountains of the region. In Balkaria an investigation will be made of the soil of the mountain grass-lands. To cover the cost of the expeditions, the Government has allocated six million roubles, and additional sums will be supplied if necessary. These expeditions are to follow up previous exploration work carried out by the Academy of Science in the Yakutsk, Buriato-Mongolsk and Transbaikal regions, which resulted in the discovery of medicinal and other plants suitable for export, and of new areas for rice-growing.

#### Buildings for Science Departments

At the instigation of the British Science Guild, the Royal Institute of British Architects has undertaken an inquiry into the design of science departments with the view of affording guidance in the matter of accommodation, fittings, finishings, and supply services. An elaborate questionnaire has been drawn up in convenient column form asking for particulars of the sizes of rooms for definite numbers of students, their aspect, wall and floor surfaces, and various laboratory fittings considered desirable. Replies are to be sent to Mr. Alan E. Munby, Science Standing Committee, Royal Institute of British Architects, 9 Conduit Street, London, W.1. Science departments, of course, fall into different categories, and the present inquiry is confined to provisions for higher teaching and research and has been sent to the heads of departments of the universities of the British Empire and certain research institutions. Should an analysis of the returns justify it, the Council of the Royal Institute of British Architects may issue a short report which would put architects and engineers into closer touch with the specific needs of science departments. There can be little doubt that, given adequate response, the questionnaire will give designers of new science departments a valuable body of data on which to base their work.

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#### Mice Plague in Australia

PROF. W. A. OSBORNE, University of Melbourne, sends us the following cutting from the Melbourne *Argus* of March 30, dealing with the present mouse plague in Victoria, Australia: "After all wheat had been trucked from the Lah railway station, near Warracknabeal, a raid was made upon the mice. The site was fenced, and two 40-gallon oil drums were sunk in the ground. The dunnage was then cleared and the mice driven into the drums. On the first night the catch, placed on the weighbridge, weighed one ton, and on two successive nights 8 cwt. and 10 cwt. were caught, the weight for the three nights being nearly two tons." Prof. Osborne informs us that the greatest visitation of these pests occurred in 1917, when enormous stacks of bagged wheat remained in various railway sidings. The plague was first noticed in February and March of 1917; it was at its acme between April and August of the same year. At Lascelles, three tons, approximately 200,000 mice, were caught in one night. Until the end of June 1917, the recorded total caught was 544 tons, at least 32,000,000 mice.

#### International Congress of Scientific Management

THE Fifth International Congress of Scientific Management will be held at the Koloniaal Instituut, Amsterdam, on July 18-23. The subjects to be discussed include costing, markets, technical and mental education of foremen for rationalisation, systems of promotion, rationalisation as a part of education, costs of retail distribution, agricultural labour, and rationalisation in various types of industry. Papers from many countries have been contributed through the national associations or committees and are being published in two volumes in advance of the meeting; summaries only will be read at the sessions of the Congress. Excursions in Amsterdam, to Eindhoven, the Zuider Zee, and to Rotterdam are being arranged, and continental railways are giving special facilities for those attending the Congress. The general secretary for the Congress is Mr. V. W. van Gogh, Herengracht 209, Amsterdam—C. English visitors can obtain particulars from the honorary secretary, Institute of Industrial Administration, 44 King William Street, London, E.C.4.

#### South-Eastern Union of Scientific Societies

THE thirty-seventh annual Congress of the South-Eastern Union of Scientific Societies will be held in London, at the Civil Service Commission, Burlington Gardens, W.1, on June 1-4, under the presidency of Dr. R. E. Mortimer Wheeler. The presidential address, on "Field Archaeology in Great Britain", will be delivered in the evening of the first day of the Congress. The sections, their presidents, and the subjects of the presidential addresses are as follows: archaeology, Dr. W. E. St. L. Finny, "Medieval Games and Gaderings"; botany, Mr. J. Ramsbottom, "Fungi as Scavengers"; geology, Prof. H. L. Hawkins, "The Structure of the South-East of England"; zoology, Mr. Hugh Main, "The Camera as a Naturalist's Recorder"; regional survey, Mr. G. L. Pepler,

"Town and Country Planning". Evening lectures will be delivered by Sir Arthur Thomson, on "The Drama of Animal Life", and by Capt. Guy Dollman, on "Great Game Animals of Africa". There will be an exhibition of regional survey material under the supervision of Miss E. W. Spear; and a number of excursions of specialised interest, as well as others of more general appeal, have been arranged. The honorary general secretary of the Congress is Mr. E. A. Martin, 14 High View Close, Norwood, London, S.E.19.

#### World Power Conference

A SECTIONAL meeting of the World Power Conference will be held in Scandinavia on June 26–July 10, 1933. All countries represented on the organisation are invited to attend and take part in the discussions, which will be mainly in connexion with large factories taking power in bulk and traction. The iron and steel industries, railways, and marine transport will be specially considered. Many attractive excursions have been arranged, and receptions will be held in Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Oslo. A contingent will also make a visit to Finland by aeroplane. In a bulletin issued from the office of the World Power Conference, 63 Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C.2, D. N. Dunlop, the president of the International Executive Council of the Conference, contributes an interesting article on its functions. He says he has little belief in the ability of politicians and bankers by themselves to solve the problems that at the present moment menace our civilisation. By 1933 the immediate problems will probably have changed, but no real beginning to economic reconstruction can be made until the nations of the world embark on a rational policy for the organisation of production and distribution. The world needs practical vision. Without this, what we have already brought about in the way of technical and scientific co-operation may be swept away. The scientific and technical industries of the world are the result of the creative activity of men of all nations; it is on us that there now falls the task of seeing that this activity is fully utilised.

#### Announcements

THE Lister Medal for 1933 for distinguished contributions to surgical science has been awarded by the Royal College of Surgeons to Sir Charles Ballance, who will deliver the Lister Memorial Lecture at the College on some date in 1933.

It is reported by the Madrid correspondent of the *Times* that a great part of the University of Valencia was destroyed by fire on May 12. Much damage was done, the astronomical observatory and the faculties of natural history, physics, and chemistry, with their collections and laboratories, being destroyed. Most of the contents of the library have apparently been saved.

THE need of qualified people, able to interpret scientific thought and activity so as to make it available

to a larger public, has led the School of Journalism of Paris (part of the Institut des Hautes Études) to arrange a course of lectures on scientific journalism. It is intended both for students and for practising journalists. The lecturer, M. René Sudre, scientific editor of *Le Journal*, is well qualified for his difficult task. The journalistic profession will certainly benefit by its realisation that scientific reporting is a branch of journalism that requires special training.

A CATALOGUE (No. 19) of some 321 second-hand books on gardening and botany has reached us from Mr. J. H. Knowles, 23A Beulah Hill, S.E.19.

THE latest catalogue of Messrs. Dulau and Co., Ltd., 32 Old Bond Street, W.1 (No. 199), relates mainly to second-hand botanical books and periodicals, herbals, floras, and general natural history. There is also a section of interesting miscellaneous works. Copies may be had free upon application to the publishers.

AN interesting catalogue (New Series, No. 27) of upwards of 800 second-hand books on gardening (including herbals), agriculture, and husbandry (1481–1800) has just been issued by Messrs. Wheldon and Wesley, Ltd., 2 Arthur Street, W.C.2. Many rare volumes are offered for sale, and useful bibliographical notes are appended to some of the titles.

APPLICATIONS are invited for the following appointments, on or before the dates mentioned:—A teacher of chemistry for day and evening classes at the Wandsworth Technical Institute—The Secretary, Technical Institute, Wandsworth (May 25). A full-time teacher of engineering subjects at the Acton Technical College—The Principal, Technical College, Acton, W. (May 27). A Graham scholar in pathology in the University of London—The Academic Registrar, University of London, South Kensington, S.W.7 (May 29). A lecturer in mechanical and aeronautical engineering at the Northampton Polytechnic Institute—The Principal, Northampton Polytechnic Institute, St. John Street, E.C.1 (May 31). A lecturer in production engineering in the Department of Mechanical Engineering of the Birmingham Central Technical College, and a lecturer in building and allied subjects in the Department of Building and Structural Engineering—The Principal, Central Technical College, Suffolk Street, Birmingham (June 3). A joint professor of mining in the University of Glasgow and the Royal Technical College, Glasgow—The Secretary, University Court, The University, Glasgow, W.2, or The Secretary, Royal Technical College, Glasgow (June 11). A secretary of the Chartered Surveyors' Institution—The Hon. Secretary, Chartered Surveyors' Institution, 45 Parliament Street, S.W.1 (June 20). A Tennent professor of ophthalmology in the University of Glasgow—The Secretary, University Court, University, Glasgow. A woman temporary lecturer in mathematics at the Lincoln Training College—The Principal, Training College, Lincoln. A director of the West of Scotland Neuro-Psychiatric Research Institute, Glasgow—The Secretary, Hawkhead Asylum, Crookston, Glasgow.