

## University and Educational Intelligence

LIVERPOOL.—Through the gift of Mr. William Horton, the Science Library has gratefully received a sum of money, to be expended over a period of seven years, towards the maintenance of science journals.

The Senate and Council have resolved to confer honorary degrees at the summer graduation on the following: Mr. Stephen Gaselee, librarian and keeper of the papers at the Foreign Office, Miss Eleanor Constance Lodge, until recently principal of Westfield College, London, Prof. G. I. Taylor, Yarrow research professor of the Royal Society, Sir J. Eric Drummond, secretary general of the League of Nations, Mr. R. D. Holt, chairman of the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board, Mr. F. W. H. Groom, until recently head of the Liverpool Institute, the Rev. Father Joseph Howard of Liverpool, Miss D. C. Keeling, secretary of the Liverpool Personal Service Society, and Mr. Percy J. Robinson, chief electrical engineer of the City of Liverpool.

Huddersfield Technical College has been able to report a record attendance of students during the past academic year, the increase in the number of day students (461) being specially marked. The volume of work has increased by 121 per cent since 1920, when a new Textile Department was opened. Among other developments reported by the Principal are the formation of additional practical classes to meet the extraordinary demand for instruction in smoke abatement and fuel economy and provision for helping unemployed adult engineers by reserving the workshop at certain times for fitters, turners and machinists who wished to practise their trade and to use machines of which they had had no previous experience.

MEXICO's new rural schools, known as "Houses of the People", are described in Bulletin No. 11 of 1932 of the United States Office of Education, a brief summary of which appears in the November issue of *School Life*. They are the product of a bold scheme designed to build a new civilisation incorporating a revival of the best features of indigenous culture—Mayan, Toltec and Aztec as well as that of the Spanish conquistadors. The federal government selects and pays the teachers and buys the books, but the local community provides the building and equipment and guarantees an ample attendance of both children and adults. As soon as the teacher has been selected, the building of the school is begun, the labour being provided by the community, men, women, and children, working under the direction of the teacher and using materials (adobe brick) obtained locally. Classes are conducted meanwhile in the open air. Courses are not prescribed by the central authorities but the teacher who lives in and knows the community is left to initiate projects of education adapted to local needs. Health, including dietetics, is a basic school subject and the teacher undertakes such simple medical service as vaccination and dispensing remedies for common complaints. The school garden and playground are regarded as indispensable adjuncts. How Mexico finds teachers competent to perform the varied tasks demanded of them is not explained. Hitherto an enthusiastic belief, on the part of teachers and taught, in the value of the scheme appears to have overcome all obstacles to its success.

## Calendar of Nature Topics

### The Ice Bridge

The Great Lakes of America and the waterways of the St. Lawrence and its estuary are firmly frozen over every winter. The ice begins to break up towards the end of March, and from the middle of April to the middle of May large quantities of drift ice are swept down into the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The opening of this Gulf is almost entirely blocked by Newfoundland and Cape Breton Island, and nearly every year the gap between these islands is completely filled by great masses of ice. This block sometimes lasts for three weeks; it completely prevents the passage of ships, and is known as 'the Bridge'. As many as 300 ships have been held up at one time, and the Bridge is the cause of frequent wrecks on the coast of Newfoundland.

### Clover Mites Invade Dwelling Houses

Clover mites (*Bryobia pratensis*) live amongst grass and upon the twigs and foliage of many fruit trees. In late autumn the females deposit eggs which hatch in spring, and during April the newly hatched individuals have been known to invade dwelling houses in enormous numbers. In such a case investigated by the writer in 1929, the mites appeared on the outer wall of a house near Edinburgh, on the window sills, and within the house upon the woodwork of the window and shutters, in such numbers that although each mite is less than a millimetre in length, their presence attracted the notice of the householder and was regarded by her as disturbing and troublesome (*Scot. Nat.*, 1929, p. 126). The house was recently built and the explanation of the invasion was that close to it was a grass plot, part of the original pasture field in which the site had been chosen. The invasion lasted several weeks, but the thorough spraying of the grass plot with an insecticide put an end to the plague. In the United States there are records of large numbers of clover mites invading houses, but there the invasions have taken place in the autumn.

### The Lambing Season in Great Britain

The peak of the lambing season occurs in spring and indeed it is one of the accepted signs of spring for general observers. Watching the young lambs in field or fold, we may not realise that a farming enterprise of some uncertainty is in progress, in which success or failure depends on a high degree of skill on one hand and much applied science on the other. It is a case of the economical production of an article intended for a discriminating market. The first problem is the choice of suitable breeds of both ram and ewe, and this in itself is no simple matter. In a recent survey of the south-west counties of Great Britain, it was found that no less than 82 distinct crosses were in use. Prolificacy and hardiness in the ewe, with early maturity and quality in the offspring, are the main points looked for, and thus an exacting standard is set up.

The first few weeks of life present many dangers both to mother and offspring, and even under good management serious losses are not uncommon. When this critical stage has been passed a keen watch for disease must still be kept. Veterinary science has already done much to mitigate the effect of internal parasites and foot rot (a virus disease), but there are