

Economic Minerals

THE third number of *Sands, Clays and Minerals*, a new quarterly magazine devoted to economic minerals, contains a series of articles covering a varied and attractive field. Particularly noteworthy is a paper on British coals by Mr. A. L. Curtis in which a wealth of interesting information on the origin, composition and classification of coals and related materials, such as graphite, jet and peat, is gathered together. This is effectively illustrated by a beautifully produced coloured plate showing typical hand-specimens of fourteen of the materials dealt with. Other articles describe raw materials such as sands, tripoli powder, and sapphire (with two plates of rough and cut stones); research methods involving the application of ultra-violet light, elutriation, magnetism and heavy liquids; the mining of china clay, the properties of refractory cements, the decay and restoration of building stones, and the sources and uses of tantalum and niobium. The magazine is likely to be of great service to technical and commercial men who are interested in mineral products but may not have the time or opportunity to follow the more specialised literature. It is published by Mr. A. L. Curtis, Westmoor Laboratory, Chatteris, the annual subscription being 5s.

Researches on Cacao

THE first annual report on cacao research in 1931 carried out by the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, Trinidad, has just been published. Founded in 1922, the first years of the life of the College were necessarily occupied in academic duties, and although cacao was included in the scheme for long-range research work in 1927, it was not until 1930, when contributions from the cacao-producing Colonies and some of the manufacturers in Great Britain allowed of the purchase of a small estate and the recruitment of three special research officers, that any large development in this side of the work took place. The report deals with the results of the first year's investigations and it is a tribute to the College that so much fundamental information should have been gained in such a short time. On the botanical side, the problem has been approached from three main aspects, namely, propagation studies, genetical survey and studies of fruitfulness, and it is proposed to continue the work on similar lines in the future. The chemical and ecological section has begun an environmental study of the cacao tree and has carried out a soil survey of the Gran Couva district with a view of determining how soil types and environment affect productivity. Both growers and manufacturers alike should profit from the improved yield and quality in the crops, which there is every hope will result from these investigations. The report, price 1s., may be obtained on application to the Editor of *Tropical Agriculture*, Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, Trinidad, British West Indies.

Deaf and Dumb in England and Wales

THE National Institute for the Deaf has issued a memorandum commenting upon a report by the late Dr. Eichholz to the Minister of Health and the

President of the Board of Education on "A Study of the Deaf in England and Wales, 1930 to 1932". It is considered that the proposals contained in the report are inadequate to meet the needs of the deaf and dumb and of those who become deaf through disease or accident. Disappointment is expressed with regard to some of the proposals, and suggestions are made which it is considered would better the position, though it is realised that it may be impossible at present to incur fresh expenditures upon the work necessary to ensure the well-being of these classes.

Bibliography of Earthquakes

THE Dominion Observatory at Ottawa has continued its useful work by publishing a list of one hundred memoirs on earthquakes received during the third quarter of 1932. With very few exceptions, the memoirs belong to the last two years. All the principal countries in which earthquakes are studied are well and uniformly represented, a result that is no doubt due to the appointment of collaborators in Italy, France, England, Canada, Japan and Germany, as well as in various parts of the United States.

New Air Speed Record

WARRANT OFFICER FRANCESCO AGELLO, of the Italian Air Force, set up a new air speed record on April 10, when he attained an average speed of 423.76 miles an hour. Agello was flying a Macchi-Castoldi 72 seaplane at Desenzano, Lake Garda, and it is stated that on one run he reached a speed of more than 430 miles an hour. The machine was one of those originally intended for the Schneider trophy race of 1931. The previous record, 408 miles an hour, was set up on September 29, 1931, in a Vickers-Supermarine S 6B seaplane flown by Flight-Lieut. G. H. Stainforth.

New Director of the U.S. Bureau of Standards

IT is announced by Science Service, Washington, D.C., that Dr. Lyman J. Briggs has been appointed director of the U.S. Bureau of Standards, in succession to Dr. G. K. Burgess, who died on July 2, 1932. Dr. Briggs has been chief of the Division of Mechanics and Sound of the Bureau since 1920. He has carried out much research on aerodynamics, gyroscopic stabilisation and properties of liquids. He is the co-inventor, with Dr. Paul R. Heyl (also of the Bureau of Standards), of the earth inductor compass that is now widely used in aircraft. For this invention, Drs. Briggs and Heyl shared the Magellan fund and medal, awarded by the American Philosophical Society for "the best discovery or most useful invention relating to navigation, astronomy, or natural philosophy".

Sectional Meeting of World Power Conference

THIS year the World Power Conference sectional meeting will be held in Scandinavia, on June 26-27 and July 8. Everyone interested in the energy problems of large industrial undertakings is cordially invited to take part. The Conference opens at Copenhagen