

the Administration Council on July 26 that it has been decided to ask all the experiment stations in the Union of South Africa and in Southern and Northern Rhodesia to co-operate in a common plan of campaign for an intensive attack on the problems of insect pest control. A first step is to be the recording of the activities throughout the whole season of the different insects that damage cotton crops. A reliable technique for this has been worked out at the Barberton Station. It was also announced that it is intended to hold a conference of workers on cotton-growing problems in London next summer, similar to that which was held at the Shirley Institute in 1930. Mr. H. Niblett, one of the members of the Oversea Mechanical Transport Directing Committee, gave a short description of the work of that Committee. In 1927 the Corporation suggested to the Colonial Office Conference that the problem of motor transport in the cotton fields is so important that the investigations should be extended and the work financed by the Empire governments concerned. The Oversea Mechanical Transport Council and Directing Committee were appointed as a result, and are now testing two motor transport units, each consisting of an 8-wheeled tractor and two 8-wheeled trailers capable of handling a useful load of 15 tons. The report of the Executive Council has recently been published (Empire Cotton Growing Corporation, Millbank House, 2 Wood Street, Millbank, London, S.W.1.)

#### Improvement of Farm Crops

At the annual general meeting of fellows of the National Institute of Agricultural Botany at Cambridge on July 27 the chairman of the Council, Mr. E. W. K. Slade, presented the John Snell Memorial medal to Dr. Kenneth M. Smith, entomologist of the Potato Virus Research Station, in recognition of his valuable research work on the virus diseases of the potato. Mr. Slade afterwards described some parts of the work of the Institute which particularly appeal to him as a practical grower. Crop improvement work is impossible until agriculturists know the material they are dealing with. Thanks to the Potato and Cereal Synonym Committees farmers are unlikely in future to be misled by a fine new name into buying an old variety which they have already given up. Mr. Slade welcomes the active co-operation which the Institute is receiving from the seed trade; by doing away with fictitious names, and putting on the market pure seed of improved varieties, each under a single name, merchants contribute greatly to the general welfare. The principal part of the Institute's task is to find out which of the new varieties that come to it are best in yield and quality and in which districts they should be grown. This is work which farmers cannot do for themselves. Many crops are being studied and a feature of this season is the inauguration of widespread trials of mangolds and swedes with the help of the seed trade. Mr. Slade finally referred to the assistance given by the Official Seed Testing Station in the scheme for the registration of wild white clover seed.

#### International Congress for Scientific Management

AN International Congress for Scientific Management is to be held in London in 1935 and the Prince of Wales has consented to be its patron. The subjects for discussion include the introduction of management principles and practice in undertakings of various sizes, methods of controlling production by the comparison of actual results with forecasts, examples of the application of scientific management in problems of distribution, standardisation in agricultural development, methods of selection and training for higher administrative positions, and scientific management in the home. A meeting of the organising council of the Congress, under the chairmanship of Sir George Beharrel, was held recently at the offices of the Federation of British Industries and it was announced that a representative executive committee is being formed. It will be recalled that early in the year a manifesto on "The Management Factor in Industry" was issued over the signatures of many well-known men of science and others (*NATURE*, January 14, p. 52), in which the field surveyed was similar to that of the forthcoming Congress.

#### Birds within Cities

SINCE Gilbert White's recording of the house-martins nesting in Fleet Street and the Strand, ornithologists have never failed to interest themselves in birds about cities. A day-to-day census of the birds of the Liverpool Cathedral Wild Birds' Sanctuary, established in 1927 in an old quarry, now a cemetery, in the heart of Liverpool slums and five miles from the nearest trace of open country, has recently been completed by Mr. Eric Hardy. Thirty species are recorded: house-sparrow, starling, robin, blue tit, hedge-sparrow, song thrush, blackbird, wren, greenfinch, domestic pigeon, great tit, missel-thrush, chaffinch, rook, linnet, redwing, herring-gull, common gull, kestrel, jackdaw, cole-tit, yellow-hammer, gold-crest, chiffchaff, willow-wren and whitethroat, the first twelve of which nest. The goldcrest is now a regular spring passage migrant since the establishment of food tables, etc., though the first specimen was recorded in March, 1931 (*Proc. Liverpool Nat. Field Club*, 1931, p. 41), while the willow-warbler soon established itself as a regular passage migrant, spring and autumn (*Liverpool Review*, Annual Report, February, 1933).

FOR London, Mr. A. H. Macpherson recorded a list of 126 species, of which 21 breed regularly, 8 have been known to breed during the present century, the remainder being visitors, 20 of which are regular and 77 occasional, in an area extending 2½ miles due north and south of Charing Cross and 4 miles east and west. In *British Birds*, March, 1933, Mr. Macpherson added the puffin, from Finsbury Gardens 1932, the brambling from specimens seen in Kensington Gardens, April 1932, the pied flycatcher in the grounds of the Natural History Museum, April 26, the green woodpecker in St. James's Park, August to November, and the scaup on the Serpentine in February, 1932. The eighteenth