

In 1926 the Severn Barrage Committee of the Department of Civil Research decided to carry out investigations on a working model of the Severn Estuary, with the view of determining the probable effect on the physical and hydrodynamical features of the estuary, of the introduction of a barrage for generating tidal power at the English Stones, between Beachley and Avonmouth. This model was constructed and operated in Prof. Gibson's laboratory.

PROF. GIBSON dealt with the problems involved in the construction and operation of such models, and with a comparison of the results obtained from the Severn model with those observed in the estuary. The successful use of a model depends largely on its being of a suitable scale, and on the possibility of being able to reproduce with reasonable accuracy the physical conditions tending to produce movement of the bed materials. This is more easily accomplished in an estuary having well-defined physical characteristics, with a large tidal range in which the action of the ebb and flood currents are all important. In such a case experience shows that the behaviour of the model reproduces closely that of the estuary. In other types of estuary having comparatively small tidal ranges, and especially if very exposed to gales, the results are mainly likely to be of value in so far as they enable the effect of any training works on the set and velocity of the currents and on the tidal range and period to be determined.

Close of Excavations at Ur

WITHIN a few days of the publication by the British Museum of the volume reporting on the excavation of the Royal Tombs at Ur, Dr. C. Leonard Woolley in the *Times* of April 13 announces the close of the brief season's work, and with it the end of the joint expedition of the British Museum and the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania to Mesopotamia. For twelve years this expedition has been engaged in an excavation which has produced results comparable in their far-reaching effect on archaeological studies with the epoch-making discoveries of Sir Arthur Evans in Crete. The results reported by Dr. Woolley in what all will regret to know is his final dispatch in the long series he has contributed to the *Times* since 1922, form a fitting and impressive climax to what has preceded. The main objective of the season was the discovery of a cemetery of the early Jemdet Nasr period, for which the search, in default of guiding indications, was in the nature of an act of faith. It was abundantly justified by the discovery, after prolonged and strenuous digging, of a stratum of 10 ft. containing burials, in the upper levels of which the characteristically flexed human skeletons were surrounded by large numbers of stone jars in a variety of forms and material. One grave alone contained thirty-three vases. In the upper range the stone vase had entirely ousted that of clay. As Dr. Woolley remarks, it "was a luxury that had become a commonplace". As Ur stands in a stoneless land and the material had to be brought from either the north of Meso-

potamia or from the area of the Persian Gulf, it would be difficult to find a more impressive testimony than this closing discovery to the early accession of Ur to wealth and importance, of which Dr. Woolley's excavations have afforded cumulative evidence year by year.

SINCE the trial excavations made by Dr. R. Campbell-Thompson at the end of the War for the purpose of a report to the British Museum, and the more or less tentative expedition of the late Dr. H. R. Hall to Ur and Al 'Ubaid before Dr. Woolley began systematic excavations in 1922, the archaeology of the Middle East has advanced far and fast. Stimulated by Dr. Woolley's results, expeditions have worked at Kish, Nineveh, Arpachiyah, Tell Asmar and elsewhere, each site helping in the work of amplifying and elucidating material which in the long run, it is not unfair to say, gains its full significance by reference to the evidence from Ur and the outline of early Mesopotamian history which that site has afforded. It will be some time, perhaps years, before the place of Ur in archaeological studies will have attained its final adjustment. Possibly from this point of view it may be no bad thing that further discovery here has ceased for the time being, affording an opportunity for comparison and reflection. Results must be weighed and pondered; they must be brought into closer relation with what has been done on the fringes of this great archaeological province. It may then appear that by no means the least important outcome of the broader view now taken of the archaeological field, of which Ur has been made the centre, has been its bearing on the discovery of the prehistoric civilisation of the Indus Valley. This discovery would never, in almost any circumstances, have been passed over as unimportant, but the systematic examination of the site and its interpretation would have been far different, and certainly less fruitful, had it been made before, instead of after, the early excavations at Ur. Archaeologists, indeed, owe a deep debt of gratitude to those who have taken part in the work of the expedition, with Dr. Woolley at their head, and to the institutions by which the joint expedition has been supported.

Jubilee of the Society for the Study of Inebriety

THE fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the Society for the Study of Inebriety and Drug Addiction, and the centenary of the birth of its founder, Dr. Norman Kerr, who died in 1899, were celebrated on April 10 by a luncheon held at the Langham Hotel, at which the Minister of Health, Lord D'Abernon, the Bishop of Norwich, Sir Thomas Barlow, the presidents of the Royal College of Surgeons and of the Royal Society of Medicine, and Sir Josiah Stamp were the principal guests. The luncheon was followed by a commemoration address delivered by the president, Sir Humphry Rolleston, who gave a sketch of the life of the founder and the activities of the Society. Norman Kerr, who was the author of numerous works on various aspects of the alcohol problem, regarded inebriety as a disease