

Scientific Progress and Employment

At the recent annual meeting of the London branch of the Association of Scientific Workers, the chairman, Mr. R. W. Western, read a paper on "How Scientific Research may best help in the Present World Crisis". Mr. Western pointed out that there is a widespread belief that the progress of science tends to create unemployment by substituting machinery for men and replacing highly-trained operatives by unskilled labourers. Innovations resulting from scientific research are generally found to have injurious secondary effects because: (1) land formerly employed in production may be rendered useless, for example, that utilised for a railway is spoilt for other purposes, while ferro-concrete constructions cost nearly as much to demolish as to erect; (2) fixed capital sunk in superseded processes is rendered obsolete; (3) the number of workers required to produce a given output is reduced; (4) innovations may necessitate costly expenditure on advertisements to get the product known—but the trading community is reluctant to undertake this and prefers to advertise opportunities for gratifying wants already realised. These considerations lend support to the view that what is most wanted are new ways of meeting unsatisfied needs by adapting available capital, rather than innovations which save labour or supersede capital assets. If an innovation founded on the results of scientific research is to produce good results, free from immediate drawbacks and therefore wholly beneficial at the present time, it should render possible the application of idle plant to the commercial utilisation of the waste products of existing processes by employing labour now surplus. The best help that scientific research can give in the present crisis will consist in exploring the channels least subject to the drawbacks previously enumerated.

Race and Culture in India

It is not without interest to note that Dr. J. H. Hutton's tentative correlation of race and culture in his Indian Census Report for 1931 not only receives commendatory reference but also is closely followed in method in the presidential address on "Sramanism" delivered by Rai Bahadur Ramaprasad Chanda to the Anthropological Section at the recent Bombay meeting of the Indian Science Congress. Analysing the concepts of Sramanism, which underlie the doctrine of renunciation, the animating principle of the mendicant and ascetic orders, the president showed that in early times the Vedic religion stressed the rites of the householder and had no place for the Sramanas, the forest dwellers and religious mendicants. Hence he deduced that the Sramanas are to be derived from the pre-Vedic, pre-Aryan peoples and their practitioners of magic, tracing the practice of asceticism back to the initiatory period of seclusion and abstinence of the shaman. This interesting conclusion, which traces one of the most important elements in modern Hinduism to a non-Aryan origin, is supplemented by further considerations bearing on certain of Dr. Hutton's ethnological arguments

which have been subjected to critical comment. Ramaprasad Chanda suggests that the ingrained love of life disclosed by the religions of Saktism and Vaisnavism among the Bengalis, comparable to that found among the Aryans, is a racial psychological trait to be associated with the brachycephalic Bengali castes, the Indo-Alpines, of whom Dr. Hutton has suggested that they had acquired an Aryan language before they entered India. Hence, it is suggested, the strength of the Durga-Kali cult in Bengal, which only in recent times has begun to give place to the renunciation of sramana.

Palaeolithic Gravels of Farnham

FOLLOWING the exhibition of Miss Garrod's finds on Mount Carmel, a series of flint implements has been arranged at the British Museum to illustrate the sequence of industries in the terrace-gravels south of Farnham, Surrey. Two cases at the head of the main staircase, in the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities, contain not only a number of accurately located specimens in the Sturge collection as presented by Major A. G. Wade, but also maps and diagrams showing the terraces of the Wey and the Pleistocene history of the Farnham branch of that river. The area has been recently surveyed by the Geological Survey ("The Geology of the Country around Aldershot and Guildford, 1929"), and Mr. Henry Bury's papers in the *Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society* and *Proceedings of the Geologists' Association* have been freely drawn on in order to explain the importance of this area for the dating of terrace-deposits and the classification of implements. It may be eventually possible to identify these four levels with the recognised sequence of terraces in the middle and lower Thames; and the local river-captures should explain the presence of some types and the absence of others in the Blackwater and Wey valleys. This exhibition will remain open until the middle of July.

Recent Acquisitions at the Natural History Museum

IN connexion with the gorilla group to be arranged in the Upper Mammal Gallery, the British Museum (Natural History) has received from Mr. Reginald Akroyd a quantity of vegetation collected during a trip which he made for this purpose to the Birunga Mountains, Uganda, last winter. This vegetation consists of sections of trees, boughs of giant heaths and giant groundsel, a number of giant lobelias, ferns and tree-ferns, and a large quantity of the arboreal lichen which is so characteristic a feature of these mountain forests. The Zoological Department has recently received as a donation from the Rowland Ward Trustees a female specimen of a rare howling monkey (*Alouatta ursina*) from Brazil. A male, presented by the same donors some years ago, is bright orange-red in colour, whereas the female is brown. Isolated crystals of native gold from alluvial deposits on the Muti stream, Buhwezhu county, Uganda, have been presented to the Department of Minerals by Mr. Michael Moses. Two minerals new to science have