

medical discoveries should be subject to any restrictions whatsoever. In our present commercial economic system, however, and with existing laws and business practices, such an ideal is difficult to attain, since not all may live up to it. We must, therefore, guide ourselves in accordance with the economic situation that exists to-day and seek to attain our ideals through the existing economic machinery rather than to ignore it entirely on the ground of ethical consideration alone.

The act of securing patents for medical discoveries is not unethical in itself, and such act does not necessarily mean that personal profits are sought. Under our existing laws and commercial practices dedication to the public of important medical discoveries by mere publication is not always the best procedure to follow. The public can often be best served by receiving the benefits of a new medical discovery under the control of a patent. Through making a medical discovery it may become the duty of the investigator to make sure by means of patents that the public will actually benefit from his discovery and not be subjected to unfair exploitation by others who may commercialise his discovery.

NON-PATENTABLE SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES

The proposal that the discoveries of scientists be given some legal protection appears on its face to be very reasonable and plausible. It would seem that scientists should be the first to desire such rights as a means of receiving compensation for their contributions to industry and society. A careful analysis of the whole problem, however, has led the committee to the opinion that no effort should at present be made to develop a plan for protecting scientific property. There appears to be no need for such legal protection from the view-point of incentive to the scientist or public policy. The Committee recognises that the present economic crisis has tremendously diminished the normally available funds for carrying on research so that other sources of potential funds are to be carefully considered at this time. It believes, however, that the legal and practical difficulties involved in enforcing any scientific property would eventually arouse an unfavourable public opinion against scientists, owing to the difficulty of enforcing scientific property and the inherent nature of its broad monopoly. The results of irksome scientific monopolies would react to the disadvantage of scientists and thus defeat the very purpose for which this proposal is made.

University and Educational Intelligence

CAMBRIDGE.—The Jane Ellen Harrison Memorial Lecture will be given on May 5 at 5 p.m. in the College Hall, Newnham College, by Dr. L. S. B. Leakey, of St. John's College. The subject of the lecture will be "The Problem of the Origin of Man".

Prof. Buxton has been appointed to represent the University at the Twelfth International Veterinary Congress to be held in New York in August.

SCHOOL libraries in the United States are credited with having contributed in no small measure to the improvement in efficiency which has taken place in the schools in the last three decades. According to

the Dean of the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago, Dr. L. R. Wilson, whose views on increasing the significance of the school library are published in *School and Society* of December 30, the once prevalent use of the single textbook recitation procedure has been superseded by a method of instruction by which many books and materials are studied. Although his theme is the development and fuller utilisation of the school library, his argument implies that its functions are already of great importance. He refers, for example, to the librarian's "responsibility of co-ordination and generalship in the field of supervised study" and to the library being "the principal integrating agency of the entire school". He mentions as deserving imitation the present effort on the part of the librarians of colleges and secondary schools in the Southern States to work out a co-operative plan for supplying school library facilities in rural areas. He advocates the provision, in library schools or teachers' colleges, of training for the part-time teacher-librarian in small schools, and the investigation of a number of problems relating to the school library which, he says, have as yet been only slightly considered. These he proceeds to discuss under the headings: administration, teaching the use of books in libraries, standards for school library service, distribution of library resources, measurement of school library influences. During the past twelve months, the *Journal of Education* (London) has published a series of articles, by specialists in various subjects, on the library requirements of secondary and public schools in Great Britain.

TENDENCIES in university education are discussed in the John Adams lecture given in the Institute of Education, University of London, on October 10 by Dr. E. Deller, principal of the University (London: Oxford University Press. 1s.). Dr. Deller examines some of the implications of the growth in number of students which has marked the recent history of so many universities. He discerns a danger of over-mechanisation, and a menace to academic freedom. University administration is susceptible of hypertrophy, as in those Russian institutions where the head is a director, responsible in the same way as the controller of a factory. Extensive student enrolment has led in Germany, where the number of unemployed graduates has been estimated to be 90,000, to other perils: "The university is to-day a temporary haven of refuge," said Prof. Dibelius recently, "for innumerable individuals who otherwise as soon as their school years were over, would sink to the ranks of the proletariat . . . what a dangerous mass of inflammatory, revolutionary material and social embitterment are heaping themselves up now in those old homes of German culture." The number of students in England is not as yet, Dr. Deller thinks, excessive, but he holds that the line of advance for the future must be qualitative rather than quantitative. How views as to the proper functions of a university increasingly diverge he shows by quoting from "The University in a Changing World": in Russia and Italy, and more recently in Germany also, the view prevails that all learning must be related to the dominant political creed. He suggests that universities can best help forward the rehabilitation of a distressful world by ascertaining truth rather than by attempting the adjustments and compromises, which are the proper task of the statesman, and also by extra-mural teaching.