News and Views

Planning in Industry

PLANNING in industry was debated in the House of Commons on April 3, following a motion by Mr. A. H. E. Molson calling for the establishment of a Departmental Committee to consider the measures of industrial reorganisation necessary for the fullest use of modern methods of production and distribution in Great Britain. Mr. Molson urged the necessity for dealing with the industrial position of the country as a whole and not by Departments of State or the like singly, and referred particularly to the reduction of costs of production and the question of cheap distribution. Organisation of industry on a national basis was regarded by Mr. C. U. Peat as essential, both for the older and the newer industries; thus organised self-government would have avoided the present desperate redundancy problem in the canning industry. The essence of the proposal was that the majority of an industry should have the opportunity of putting their case before an independent tribunal, and on satisfying the tribunal that re-organisation was in the interests of producers, consumers, wage-earners and other allied industries, statutory authority should be given to the reorganisation scheme without delay, so that the industry should be organised on the most efficient basis it could suggest. Mr. H. Macmillan said further that the question was not one of Government interference with industry but the giving by Government of certain rights to industry by permissive legislation to undertake its own reorganisation. Under certain safeguards, majorities should have the right to govern.

DURING the debate, Mr. G. Le M. Mander advocated the establishment of a committee of national development to formulate a consistent and comprehensive policy for the development of our national resources and to co-ordinate the work of different Departments of State. Sir Herbert Samuel, referring to the dangers of bureaucracy, emphasised the importance of management. The ablest leaders of industry, he said, are themselves in favour of larger measures of reorganisation for the industries in which they are engaged. The opposite point of view was voiced by Mr. R. Assheton in a brilliant plea for independence and the adventurous spirit in industry on which progress primarily depends, and which is liable to be stifled by rigid organisation. The dangers of eliminating small enterprises were real and Mr. Assheton feared the effect of planning on business confidence. Mr. W. Runciman, for the Government, emphasised the success of voluntary schemes of industrial reorganisation and referred to some of the failures in rationalisation. He expressed the opinion that the reorganisation of all the great industries of Great Britain cannot be achieved by one and the same effort. The motion was by leave withdrawn.

Development of Colonial Forest Resources

THE Secretary of State for the Colonies has set up an organisation under the Colonial Office for the development of colonial forest resources. By consent of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, two of its technical officers have been transferred to the new organisation, namely, Major F. M. Oliphant, lately assistant director of the Forest Products Research Laboratory, Princes Risborough, and Major J. R. Cosgrove, lately in charge of the Section of Utilisation at the Laboratory. Major Oliphant, as forest economist, will deal mainly with the organisation of production, and will spend much of his time in the Dependencies concerned, while Major Cosgrove, as market development officer, will be engaged in market promotion work, with reference to the United Kingdom market and other markets, both British and foreign. The organisation will be chiefly concerned with timber development, but will also interest itself in other forest products, such as wood pulp, fibres, gums and resins and the like. In both directions it will co-operate with the Imperial Institute. It will also work, of course, in close co-operation with the Forest Products Research Laboratory. The Laboratory, as a research institution, will henceforward confine itself to questions involving scientific investigation and tests, while the new organisation will take over the market promotion work, including commercial service trials, which the Laboratory formerly carried out under temporary arrangements on behalf of the Empire Marketing Board. The organisation will for the present be quartered at the Imperial Institute. Inquiries should be addressed to the Colonial Forest Resources Development Department, Imperial Institute, London, S.W.7.

Statistics of Industry in England and Wales

STATISTICS of industry derived from the 1931 census of England and Wales have recently been published (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 32*s.* 6*d.*), and as the analysis is on a more comprehensive scale than any hitherto published, the volume is of exceptional interest. A valuable feature is the rough comparison with previous censuses, examples of which are given in the following table:

Industry	1911	1921	1931
	Persons (in thousands)		
Coal Mining	971	1,133	1,030
Iron and Steel	166	239	198
Building, Decorating	861	758	1,048
Agriculture	1,230	1,124	1,018
Cotton	628	596	571
Electrical Apparatus, etc.	80	166	268
Chemicals, Paints, Oils	133	198	211
Hosiery	59	80	110

In certain industries, for example, coal mining, iron and steel, engineering and shipbuilding, exceptional expansion took place during the War, but this was followed by a considerable readjustment during the last decennium. In others, for example, building, personal service, boots and shoes, there was a marked decline, but recovery followed after the War. The numbers engaged in agriculture, cotton and lace have declined in each census since 1911, though in poultry

farming there has been an increase from 12,200 persons in 1921 to 27,700 in 1931. The manufacture of electrical apparatus, chemicals, paints and oils; hosiery; food; printing and bookbinding; road transport; and a number of other industries have expanded considerably in both census periods since 1911. An interesting fact recorded in the latest census is a great increase in the number of male commercial travellers, from 81,347 in 1921 to 120,212 in 1931.

Economic Study of Japan's Population Problems

"CONFLICT and Co-operation, Economic and Political, in the Pacific" formed the theme of the Cawthron Lecture, 1934, delivered by Mr. Frank Milner, at Nelson, New Zealand (Nelson, N.Z.: Cawthron Institute, 1934). There are, he said, ominous explosive potentialities in Japan's growing population pressure with its increase of more than one million per annum. Her population density is now 437 persons to the square mile, and though this is exceeded by Java, Belgium, England and Holland, the situation is complicated by the fact that only 16 per cent of the land is arable. With 2,774 persons living on each square mile of such land—not a foot of land being wasted—Japan has reached the point of complete saturation. Half the farms are less than $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres in extent and three-quarters less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres. The Japanese are not an emigrating people, and there are only about 635,000 living abroad. The only feasible solution of the basic population problem of Japan is the development of manufacture and trade, though inadequate resources of coal, iron ore, petroleum and other raw materials handicap her industrial expansion. Moreover, Manchuria, according to scientific experts, cannot provide coal or iron ore of the type needed for Japanese blast-furnaces. The shift from an agricultural to an industrial economy is far from complete, and at present less than 10 per cent of the population work in factories employing more than five persons. Japan to-day is the real problem of the Pacific, and her isolation is breeding an ugly mood in her militarists. The solution may involve regional allocation of raw materials and markets to Japan involving heavy sacrifices, but such co-operative effort must be made if a cataclysm is to be avoided.

François Emmanuel Fodéré

THE centenary of the death of Francois Emmanuel Fodéré, who was born on January 8, 1764, is to be celebrated on April 12 at Strasbourg, where he was professor of medical jurisprudence from 1814 until 1834. His "Traité de médecine légale et d'hygiène publique ou de police sanitaire", of which the first edition was published in 1798 and the second in 1813, was the standard work in medical jurisprudence in France during the early part of the last century. In 1819 he was appointed lecturer in the history of epidemic diseases and hygiene at Strasbourg, his lectures being afterwards published in four volumes in 1822–24. His other works included "Traité du goître et du crétinisme, précédé d'un discours sur l'influence de l'air humide sur l'entendement humain" (1790), "Essai historique et moral sur la pauvreté des nations, la population, la mendicité, les hôpitaux et les enfants trouvés" (1825), "Recherches sur la nature, les causes et le traitement du Choléra-morbus" (1831) and "Essai sur les diverses espèces de folie" (1832).

Moses Maimonides

THE January issue of *Medical Life* is a Maimonides number containing an account by Prof. Louis Gershenfeld, of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science, of the Hispano-Jewish physician, astronomer and theologian, Moses Maimonides or Abu Amran Musa Ben Maimon, on the occasion of the octocentenary of his birth. Born at Cordova in Spain on March 30, 1135, he studied under Averrhoes, and in 1160 left Spain for Fez, finally settling in 1165 at Cairo, where he died on December 13, 1204. His best-known medical work is a collection of 1,500 aphorisms from Galen's writings with forty-two critical comments. His other chief medical works are a treatise on diet and personal hygiene written at the request of Saladin's eldest son, who suffered from melancholia, and a book on poisons and antidotes. In a work on astronomy, he recognised the limitations of astrology, and declared that all works on the subject were the products of fools. He differentiated between astrology and astronomy, maintaining that in the latter only was to be found true and necessary knowledge. His most famous work, however, was the "Guide for the Perplexed", which was not intended for popular consumption, but claimed to be written by a philosopher to the philosophically minded, his purpose being to reconcile Aristotelian philosophy with Jewish theology and the doctrines of Judaism.

Water with Heavy Oxygen

THERE has recently been erected in the Chemistry Department of the University of Manchester an apparatus of the type first described by Hertz (*Z. Phys.*, **79**, 108; 1932) and afterwards modified by Harmsen (*Z. Phys.*, **82**, 589; 1933) for the separation of gaseous isotopes by diffusion. The immediate object is to prepare oxygen containing an excess over the normal of the O^{18} isotope. For this purpose it is convenient to diffuse water vapour rather than oxygen itself. The abundance of H_2O^{18} is approximately 1 : 500 and the ratio of the vapour densities of the 'heavy' and 'normal' water is 10 : 9. The apparatus was designed to yield water containing about one per cent of H_2O^{18}. The process of separation is very much slower with water vapour than with permanent gases owing to the adsorption of the vapour on the walls of the porous tubes used for the diffusion. This adsorption is large even at 100° C. A trial run just completed has yielded about 20 mgm. of water the density of which is greater than normal by about 25 parts per million, which is scarcely if at all outside the experimental error of the density measurement. The apparatus is now being modified somewhat to allow of faster working, and it is hoped that it will yield about 20 mgm. a day of water