

News and Views

The Formosa Earthquake

ON April 21, at 6.2 a.m. (local time), the most destructive of recorded earthquakes in Formosa devastated the two north-west provinces of Taichu and Shinchiku. According to the latest official figures, 3,152 persons were killed and 8,991 injured, while 19,217 houses were destroyed and 18,472 damaged. In the great earthquake of March 17, 1906, the corresponding numbers were 1,249, 2,378, 5,667 and 3,233. According to the Tokyo correspondent of *The Times* (April 22), the centre of the earthquake was in the upper reaches of the Koryuki river, the area of greatest damage being 50 miles long and 25 miles wide. The focus is placed by the Japanese seismologists as near the surface at a point 25 miles north-east of Taichu. At Taiho, fires broke out after the earthquake, and it is feared that the town will be completely destroyed. Taichu suffered less, only about a hundred of 50,000 inhabitants being killed. Thus, the area chiefly affected runs from Taichu along a line parallel to the coast, but stopping short of Taihoku. It is of some interest to note that this great shock occurred in a district in which earthquakes have been infrequent during the present century. The principal zones are those in the districts of Kagi in central Formosa, and Karenko and Giran on the east coast. To the Kagi centre belonged the earthquake of 1906 during which the crust was dislocated along a fault about 30 miles in length. According to Omori (*Imp. Earthq. Inv. Com. Bull.*, 1, 53-72; 1907), the displacement seems to have been unique. In the western half, the ground on the north side was sheared relatively eastward and depressed, while, in the eastern half, the south side was sheared westward and depressed.

Rural Water Supplies in Great Britain

THE subject of national water supplies again came up in the House of Commons on April 20 when on the motion for the adjournment Mr. A. Greenwood raised the question of the expenditure incurred by authorities in rural areas on the provision of new supplies, and inquired the Government's intentions in regard to the Water Supply (Exceptional Shortage Orders) Act which will lapse at the end of the present year unless steps are taken to extend it. Mr. Alan Chorlton expressed regret that the water survey which at long last has been agreed to does not extend to allocation, and asked what steps are being taken within the Ministry of Health to set up a central body as advocated in the report of the water authorities. Mr. G. H. Shakespeare, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, in reply, gave no indication whether a continuance of the emergency legislation will be necessary, but stated that the grant of one million pounds voted in aid of rural schemes last year has fostered the promotion of schemes estimated to cost three times that amount and is expected to do as much again during the current year. Out of just over 2,000 parishes requiring permanent sources

of supply, schemes for 1,600 parishes have been prepared and are in various stages of realisation. He alluded to the recently formed Water Survey Committee, and stated that two meetings have been held and that the Committee is actively pursuing its inquiries into the actual water supplies of the country.

Award to Sir Aurel Stein

IT is announced that the gold medal of the Society of Antiquaries of London has been awarded to Sir Aurel Stein. The services to archæology of Sir Aurel Stein, which are thus recognised by what may be regarded as the highest award in Great Britain for archæological studies, are too well known to need recapitulation. His journeys in the Central Asiatic desert, and his excavations among its sand-buried cities, pursued almost without intermission for more than thirty years at a cost of great personal hardship borne with never-failing endurance, have rewritten a long chapter in the history of Asiatic civilisation which had been lost, and brought to light the unsuspected glories of an art which had grown out of the otherwise unrecorded contacts of the classical world and India with the Far East. His explorations of the lands of the North-West Frontier of India, among other discoveries, have retraced the march of Alexander the Great and illuminated the course of one of the great campaigns of world history. While regret is universal that a nationalist policy in China should have put an end to Sir Aurel's investigation of the great complex of mountain and desert of Central Asia, by which he was unravelling the causes which led to the decay of this arena of a great civilisation, by diverting his activities to other fields, it may, should his hopes of discovery in Persia be realised, add still further to the indebtedness of archæological knowledge to his genius in exploration.

Indian Art in Great Britain

IT is not surprising, in view of the long and intimate connexion of Great Britain and India, to learn that a search has revealed a number of examples of Indian art in public and private collections in Great Britain, which in the aggregate and in artistic quality and historic interest is impressive. In the last few months, Dr. K. N. Sita Ram, curator of the Central Museum, Lahore, according to a note in *The Times* of April 20, has been engaged in a comprehensive survey of the examples of Indian art and archæology in museums and art galleries throughout the British Isles. After identifying and cataloguing the Buddhist sculptures from Amravati in the British Museum, at the suggestion and with the co-operation of the Museums Association he has examined some fifty collections, travelling so far afield as Elgin, Dublin and Belfast. Not only did he assist in rearranging and relabelling these collections, but he also advised on spurious or indifferent specimens, and in a number of instances discovered treasures which had been overlooked or of which the interest