

News and Views

The Royal Society: Officers and Council

THE anniversary meeting of the Royal Society was held on Saturday, November 30, being St. Andrew's day, and the following officers and members of council were elected: *President*: Sir William Henry Bragg; *Treasurer*: Sir Henry George Lyons; *Secretaries*: Sir Frank Edward Smith, Prof. Archibald Vivian Hill; *Foreign Secretary*: Prof. Albert Charles Seward; *Other Members of the Council*: Prof. Edgar Douglas Adrian, Mr. David Leonard Chapman, Prof. Arthur William Conway, Dr. William Henry Eccles, Prof. Arthur Stewart Eve, Prof. Louis Napoleon George Filon, Dr. James Gray, Sir Alfred Daniel Hall, Dr. Stanley Wells Kemp, Sir Patrick Playfair Laidlaw, Sir Gerald Ponsonby Lenox-Conyngham, Dr. Gilbert Thomas Morgan, Prof. Robert Robison, Dr. Bernard Smith, Prof. Walter Stiles, Mr. Wilfred Trotter. An unusually large number of fellows took part in this election on account of a notification that it was to be contested. Several months ago, a group of about ninety fellows of the Society signed a memorial advocating certain changes in the methods of nominating and electing the officers and members of council and in their periods of service. Following up their suggestions, the memorialists substituted other names for those of fellows nominated officially as president, treasurer, two secretaries, and foreign secretary, and of four members of council. Fellows were not asked to support the individual claims of those included in the unofficial list, but to record their votes for them as an expression of no confidence in the existing methods of selecting officers and council. The result of the ballot was nearly ten to one in favour of the Council's list printed above, the number of votes for each officer and member of council in this list being about 190 and that of fellows in the unofficial list being about 20. In the absence of a postal vote, it may therefore be assumed that the general body of fellows of the Society are satisfied with the existing rules and with the statement issued by the Council after full discussion of the changes suggested by the memorialists.

Industry and Technical Education

THE Right Hon. Oliver Stanley, president of the Board of Education, distributed prizes and certificates at the Northampton Polytechnic, Clerkenwell, on November 28. During the course of his address, Mr. Stanley referred to the changes which have been accelerated by the War and which have resulted in the loss of the advantage as an industrial nation which we acquired a century earlier. Yet with all these difficulties in the way of production, we have got to compete if we are to live; and we are being driven more and more to rely on superior skill, superior technique, superior training and superior workmanship, to take the place of those more fortuitous advantages which used to give us our superiority before the War. We can only regain the

prosperity of our own traditional industries if we adopt new and up-to-date methods. We are forced to keep ahead of new and severe competition in the new industries, and it is natural that we should turn to institutions like the polytechnics to ask how they can help and are helping both with the old and with the new. Speaking of the type of training for which polytechnics are responsible, Mr. Stanley said that in talking with leaders of industry about technical education he has found everywhere the feeling that colleges should keep in closer touch with actual experience in the workshop. From this point of view he commended the 'sandwich' course of training in engineering, and expressed his regret on learning from the Principal's report that, owing to changes contemplated in the University of London regulations for degrees in engineering, difficulties have arisen with regard to the organisation of such a course in the future.

The Engineer and the Community

IN an address to the Birmingham and District Association of the Institution of Civil Engineers on October 31, Mr. C. H. Bailey made an eloquent plea for wider vision and much closer concern on the part of the engineer with the consequences of his work. We live to-day in an engineer's world, he said, yet an attempt to give a continuous direction to the efforts of the engineer is needed, and in the past, engineers have too lightly assumed that all their achievements result in benefits to their fellow men. Machines are neither wholly good nor wholly bad. They are bad in so far as they hinder men and women from developing creative skill of hand and eye; the mere use of better and more abundant goods can never compensate for the loss of constructive opportunities or powers. It is certain, however, that such production must go on, and that the engineer must continue to strive for more and more efficient machines while mankind learns to adapt itself to the new conditions. While, however, the engineer has transformed our powers of production and means of communication, we are still attempting to force these inventions into an economic, financial and political system which they do not fit. On the other hand, these same developments in production and communications have brought men closer together and made them more dependent on one another. At the same time, the engineer has given the world a greater chance of real freedom than ever before, if we learn to use our new resources and try to modify the new conditions, seeking to create new beauty where we have destroyed. While the engineer should beware of extravagant claims to a larger share in the control of the community, he should endeavour to participate more effectively in the planning required under the new conditions, and to devise some form of co-operation which would make available the benefits latent in his achievements.