

Burushaskicæ", glance at broader issues. Others, however, such as the contributions by Dr. T. Grahame Bailey or Prof. A. Barannikov, to name two only, which deal with the relation of the Sanskrit to other elements in the vernaculars, or Dr. F. Otto Schrader on the Uralian element in the Drāvidā and the Munda tongues, have a direct interest for those who are dealing with current problems in Indian ethnology; while the value of linguistic studies in cultural investigation is shown by such inquiries as those of Prof. J. Block on the character of the Vedic plough and the late Dr. J. Charpentier on the meaning of 'Śakudhūma' and the suggestion arising therefrom as to ritual recognition of the Pleiades in Vedic times. It is remarkable, however, how on every side there is evidence that in these investigations the work of Sir George Grierson and his linguistic survey of India have been fundamental.

#### Chemical Society: Annual General Meeting

THE ninety-fifth annual general meeting of the Chemical Society was held under the presidency of Prof. N. V. Sidgwick in the University of Bristol on Thursday, April 16. Fellows and their guests were received by Dr. Stanley H. Badock, treasurer and pro-chancellor of the University. At the annual general meeting, it was reported that the following had been elected on the Council: As vice-presidents who have filled the office of president: Prof. H. E. Armstrong and Sir William Pope. As vice-presidents who have not filled the office of president: Mr. J. Davidson Pratt, Sir Robert Robertson and Prof. R. Robinson. As honorary secretary: Prof. J. W. Cook. As ordinary members of council: Town Members: Prof. C. K. Ingold, Dr. R. P. Linstead and Dr. R. E. Slade. Country Members: Prof. G. R. Clemo, Mr. T. W. J. Taylor and Prof. R. V. Wheeler. The presidential address delivered by Prof. Sidgwick was on "Structural Chemistry: Old and New".

THE Longstaff Medal for 1936 of the Chemical Society was presented to Prof. George Barger, and in making the presentation the president stated that it was the highest distinction which the Society could bestow on one of its fellows. He referred to the importance of Prof. Barger's researches on natural products of physiological interest, mentioning his researches on ergot and its constituents, and to Prof. Barger's work in increasing our knowledge of a large number of alkaloids, many of which he had synthesised. In presenting the Harrison Memorial Prize for 1935 to Dr. Leslie E. Sutton, the president remarked that the prize, which was founded in memory of an eminent fellow of the Society who gave his life to the service of his country in the Great War, is awarded every three years to the chemist less than thirty years of age who has made the most meritorious original contributions to chemical science. The president referred to Dr. Sutton's work in increasing our knowledge of molecular structure, which has helped to elucidate the formulæ of divalent carbon compounds, the oximes and the azides; he also referred to his work on the

relation between dipole moment and substitution in benzene derivatives, and on electron diffraction. The anniversary dinner of the Society was held in the Great Hall of the University of Bristol on the evening of April 16. Prof. N. V. Sidgwick presided; and the number present was 158. The Hantzsch Memorial Lecture was delivered by Prof. T. S. Moore in the H. H. Wills Physics Lecture Theatre of the University of Bristol on Friday, April 17.

#### British Society for International Bibliography

THE eighth ordinary meeting of the British Society for International Bibliography was held in the Science Museum, South Kensington, on March 25. After the president, Prof. A. F. C. Pollard, had opened the meeting, Dr. Van Heurn, director of the Intelligence Bureau of the Amsterdam Laboratories of the Royal Dutch Petroleum Co., gave a description of the work and organisation of this Bureau. The secretary of the Society, Mr. E. Lancaster-Jones, followed with an account of the progress of the English edition of the Universal Decimal Classification. He reported that the first fascicule of the work is now available, while the second will be ready very shortly. Messrs. Simpkin Marshall, Ltd., are the British agents. The main item on the agenda—a discussion on the preparation of indexes to periodical bibliographies and allied publications—then followed. This was opened by Dr. P. S. Hudson, deputy director of the Imperial Bureau of Plant Genetics at Cambridge, who described the preparation of the yearly cumulative indexes to *Plant Breeding Abstracts*, the quarterly publication of his Bureau. The abstracts are classified by the Universal Decimal Classification; hence the preparation of the index, in which the entries are arranged in numerical order of their classification numbers, is extremely simple.

DR. A. S. NEAVE, assistant director of the Imperial Institute of Entomology, then spoke on the alphabetical index to the *Review of Applied Entomology*, pointing out the advantages of this type of index over a numerical one, in the particular case of this subject, with its extremely detailed nomenclature and its somewhat volatile systematisation. The discussion following centred around the relative advantages of a classification as the basis of an index. Dr. S. C. Bradford contended that most alphabetical indexes are based on concealed classifications. Mr. W. T. Astbury instanced the difficulty of obtaining uniformity in alphabetical indexing among a number of contributors. It was pointed out that a classified index in no wise precludes the employment of explanatory terms, or standard nomenclature. The classification itself possesses an alphabetical index, which serves automatically to correlate all synonyms to a unique class symbol, and thereby saves unnecessary repetition.

#### The Reclamation of the Zuider Zee

THE epoch-making enterprise on which the Dutch nation embarked in 1920, and which is ultimately destined to add to the Netherlands more than half a

million acres, or about 7 per cent of the former area of the country, is now about to be advanced a further stage towards completion. It is announced from The Hague that a sum of two million florins (about £154,000) has just been voted in the national budget for continuing the work of reclaiming the Zuider Zee, and it is likely that additional grants will follow shortly. The scheme was described in detail in an article which appeared in the issue of *NATURE* of September 21, 1929 (p. 446), at which date the first section, the North-west Polder of 50,000 acres, was at the point of complete enclosure. This polder was pumped clear of water in the following year, and it has since been brought into cultivation with satisfactory results. It is now intended to proceed with the reclamation of the second section, the North-east Polder, containing 117,000 acres. The cost is estimated at about £9,600,000 and the work will take about five years, providing work for about 5,500 men. Another ten years will be required to bring the salt-saturated soil into a completely effective state of productivity. The outer dyke, or embankment, enclosing the polder, starts from Lemmer in Friesland and follows a widely sweeping curve, first westerly, then southerly and finally easterly to a point on the coast-line north of Kampen. It will be 35 miles long, and for a great part of that distance will run parallel to a new canal. The reclaimed area will lie at two different levels, one about 13 feet and the other about 18 feet below water-level at Amsterdam, and three large pumping stations are to be provided to deal with the fresh-water drainage after completion.

#### Oldbury Hill, Ightham

An attempt to save Oldbury Hill, Ightham, from development for building purposes, is one which has a strong claim on the practical support of all archaeologists. This Kentish woodland plateau, lying between Sevenoaks and Ightham, is for British archaeology historic ground. At its summit is a prehistoric fortress, which is dated at about 200 B.C.; but its chief interest lies in its evidence of prehistoric man of a far earlier period. It is a part of the country over which Benjamin Harrison of Ightham, the apostle of the eolith, had his hunting ground; and through him it is linked with the great names in the study of British archaeology—Sir Joseph Prestwich, Sir John Evans, Lord Avebury, and many others. The fortress itself is scheduled for protection under the Office of Works, and in the event of building development, provision for access will have to be made in the inevitable encroachment; but the character of the site with its associations and its wide views over pastoral lands, which preserve the meaning and purpose of its fortification, will be irretrievably lost. The extent of the estate now offered for sale is about 157 acres, and the owner, who is not in a position to present the site to the public, has fixed at the lowest possible figure the price at which he would be prepared to effect a transfer to the National Trust. This body, however, has no funds with which to purchase; but an effort is being made, up to the present with indifferent

success, to organise a local fund. The importance to science of the high terrace gravels in which the evidence has been found for what is claimed to be the earliest traces of man's handiwork is obvious; the fact that that evidence has not been accepted universally makes it all the more important that such a site as Oldbury Hill should be preserved for the inspection and investigation of later generations.

#### History of the English Parliament

It is announced that H.M. Stationery Office will publish at an early date a volume, the first to be issued, of the "History of Parliament", which has been in course of preparation for some time under the supervision of a committee presided over by the Marquess of Salisbury. This undertaking, which will cover the whole period of parliamentary government from its inception in 1264 up to 1918, is an outcome of the report of a committee which was appointed in 1929 with Colonel J. Wedgwood as its chairman, to examine the material available for a record of the personnel and politics of the members of the House of Commons. A joint meeting of both Houses decided that the scope of the work should be extended so as to make it as complete a record as possible of "the people in Parliament—their ideas, standing, and politics—and to trace the gradual growth of Parliamentary representation and government". The work will fall into seventeen or eighteen periods, the material for each being grouped into two or three volumes. This material will comprise biographies of members of the Commons, complete lists of the members of both Houses with identifications, a preface to each Parliament with a commentary on its composition and the work done, and conclusions, appendixes, documents, etc. It is expected that the "History" will consist of some forty volumes, and that it will be completed in about thirty years; but as the price—possibly not more than £2 2s. per volume—will cover cost of printing and publication only, the rate of production will depend upon the funds available for the collection and preparation of the material. For the first volume to be issued, covering the period 1439-1509, Colonel Wedgwood, it is understood, has been largely responsible. Subscribers to the whole work will be charged three-quarters of the published price, a first payment of £10 being required with the undertaking to subscribe, against which the cost will be charged as each volume is issued.

#### Higher Paraffins as Liquid Fuel

HIGHER paraffins such as butane are easily liquefied at air temperature, and give a concentrated and easily vaporised liquid fuel—the most concentrated fuel commercially available having a heating value of 21,000 B.T.U. per lb. In several countries this product has been recovered from natural sources or oil refineries, and distributed in cylinders. In the United States this 'bottled gas' has become extensively used in rural areas, and the development of coal hydrogenation in England has led to its being marketed now under the name of 'Calorgas'.