birds. He intersperses his scientific descriptions with anecdotes, sometimes amusing, as of those of the hawk and the eagle, the parrot, and the wren. Turning to fishes, he first refers to some of the physical properties of water and then describes the inhabitants of the deep with a story about the plaice: fishes finished, he describes minerals, with an interesting account of the properties of the loadstone, and vegetables: and then the animal kingdom, with amusing stories about weasels, monkeys and lions: and finally comes to the 'lord of creation', man; after a talk of light and mirrors, he describes the purports of the farm-yard and the dwelling house, with an interesting discussion on silk-worms, and incidentally mentions education and the universities of his day.

British Association: Officers for 1937

THE annual meeting of the British Association will be held next year in Nottingham on September 1–8 under the presidency of Sir Edward Poulton. The following sectional presidents have been appointed: Section A (Mathematical and Physical Sciences), Dr. G. W. C. Kaye; B (Chemistry), Dr. F. L. Pyman; C (Geology), Prof. L. J. Wills; D (Zoology), Prof. F. A. E. Crew; E (Geography), Prof. C. B. Fawcett; F (Economics), Prof. P. Sargant Florence; G (Engineering), Sir Alexander Gibb; H (Anthropology), Dr. J. H. Hutton; I (Physiology), Dr. E. P. Poulton; J (Psychology), Dr. Mary Collins; K (Botany), Prof. E. J. Salisbury; L (Education), Mr. H. G. Wells; M (Agriculture), Mr. J. M. Caie.

Peking Man: Further Discoveries

RECENT excavation in the cave of Choukoutien, the home of Peking man, has proved fortunate beyond all expectation. No less than three new skulls of *Sinanthropus* have been added to the relics of this primitive type of early man. On October 22, Mr. L. P. Chia, of the National Geological Survey of China, brought to light a left mandible with teeth pronounced to be male in type, to which Sir Grafton Elliot Smith refers in a letter to *The Times* of December 5. This was followed by the discovery by the same excavator of two skulls (*The Times*, Nov. 20) and to this in turn has succeeded a further discovery of another skull, which, if the description given in the dispatch from the Peiping correspondent of *The Times* of December 8 be accepted as accurate, may well prove of even greater significance than the earlier finds of new material. With the two skulls previously known, of which the first was found by Mr. W. C. Pei in December 1929, there are now five skulls of *Sinanthropus pekinensis* in existence, while a sixth has been reconstructed from fragmentary finds by Prof. Franz Weidenreich, the director of the Cænozoic Research Laboratory of the Geological Survey. The new material is of outstanding importance in view of the fact that the skulls are those of fully developed adults, whereas the two skulls previously known were those of adolescents. Of the skulls recently discovered, the first two are of a male and a female, in age between forty and fifty years. Added evidential value attaches to the third skull owing to the fact that it is in a more complete state of preservation than any previous specimen. Certain parts of the base of the skull missing in the other skulls are here present, as well as parts of the facial skeleton and nasal structure.

Significance of Peking Man

THE relics of Peking man available for study at the Peiping Union Medical College, together with the new skulls, represent twenty-four individuals, and include twelve lower jaws and nearly one hundred teeth. They fully justify the description of them by Prof. Weidenreich as the "richest and most complete collection of human fossils ever recorded, unique in every respect" (*The Times*, Nov. 25). Since Prof. Weidenreich's appointment to the Rockefeller Institute, constituting him Director of the Cænozoic Research Laboratory in succession to the late Dr. Davidson Black—an appointment made on the recommendation of Sir Grafton Elliot Smith, as the latter now reveals in his letter to *The Times*, where, however, by a clerical error the name appears as "Weideman"—he has naturally devoted much time and attention to the study of Peking man, and in a recent publication (see NATURE, **173**, 73) has put forward some interesting and suggestive conclusions as to the relation between *Sinanthropus* and Mongolian man, while further important results have accrued from his comparative studies based more particularly on the examination of the endocranial casts (NATURE, Oct. 17, p. 689). With this additional important material at his disposal, illuminating studies may be anticipated. While it is too early, and too little information is available, to attempt any forecast of the direction in which results are likely to tend, it is interesting to note that it is stated that the female skull has many similarities to *Pithecanthropus*, while the male skull is much higher and nearer Neanderthal man. Further, Prof. Weidenreich is reported to have said that the various specimens of Peking man form links between *Pithecanthropus* and Neanderthal man. Sir Grafton Elliot Smith's letter to *The Times*, relying on information supplied by Mr. W. C. Pei, now superseded, expresses some anxiety as to the future of these investigations. Clearly, in view of the importance of the material now awaiting examination, any serious interruption or even break in continuity would be a catastrophe.

British Launderers' Research Association

EXTENSIONS to the laboratories of the British Launderers' Research Association were opened by Sir William Bragg on December 1. Mr. W. H. Markham, chairman of the Association, mentioned, in his introductory remarks, that the recent extension of the basis of membership of the Association has met with a good response from the industry, and also that, with an increase of the maximum grant received from the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, the income of the Association in the coming year will exceed £10,000. The Association,

which was formed in 1921, early commenced a systematic investigation of each section of the laundry process. It instituted methods of measuring colour and observing the efficiency of cleansing on washed articles. Research work now in progress includes studies of the fundamentals of detergency, for example, an investigation of the physical properties of soap and alkaline solutions as well as those of the new detergents known as sulphonated fatty alcohols. Work is also proceeding upon engineering problems which are encountered in laundry machinery. The examination of plant, products and materials, of new and laundered fabrics, is a part of the routine work of the laboratories. In addition, an analytical department undertakes the analysis of products used by the launderers. The information gained is published in the form of reports to members, and a bulletin is issued quarterly in order to inform members of the work in progress, etc. The Association has published three books : "Control of Laundry Operations", "Chemistry of Laundry Materials" and, recently, "Technology of Washing".

Ancient Egyptian Sculpture

MR. C. S. GULBENKIAN'S loan to the British Museum (Bloomsbury) of fourteen pieces of ancient Egyptian sculpture from his collection, for a period of eighteen months, which is now on view in the entrance hall, not only illustrates Egyptian art for a period of 2,000 years from the Middle Kingdom to Ptolemaic times, but it also serves to bring out in a marked degree certain characteristics in which the masterpieces of that art stand out, as against the products of the classical period, and in which it is, in fact, closely akin to the aims of certain schools of modern art. Egyptian art, and more especially Egyptian sculpture, when freed from the conventions imposed by the necessities of formal presentation for State or official purposes, showed a remarkable, and indeed an exceptional, ability to express character and individuality in portraiture. While this is generally admitted in the obvious instance of the Tell el-Amarna school under the influence of Akhnaton, which usually, though not invariably, emphasizes and idealizes a defect, it would seem, in preference to strength, it is equally true of the more robust tradition, which can be traced so far back as the Fourth Dynasty and produced, for example, such well-known specimens as the statuette of Khufu and the effigy of the "Sheikh ed-Beled". That this tradition persisted through a prolonged period can be seen in some of the later exhibits in the British Museum loan collection, such as, for example, the remarkable head of a man in green schist of the sixth century B.C., though possibly many may consider the gem of the collection to be the head in obsidian attributed as a portrait of Amenemhat III to the Twelfth Dynasty, in which the characterization is no less remarkable than the technical skill, which could subdue so refractory a material to its purpose. Another exhibit, in bronze, though of a different genre, attracts attention, and charms by its unusual subject—a cat with two kittens playing.

Sir Robert Hadfield's Gift to Harvard

IN a supplement to the *Engineer* of November 20, there were reproduced photographs of four very striking water-colour drawings depicting war-time work in three departments of Messrs. Hadfields Ltd., of Sheffield. The artist, Mr. Herbert J. Finn, in these drawings, has succeeded in conveying in a remarkable manner the sense of intense activity and vibrant energy of the giant furnaces and myriads of whirling belts of an engineering shop, which may come to be regarded as characteristic of this machine age. Equally vivid, but of totally different character, is Mr. Finn's water colour "Oxford from the Sheldonian Theatre", a pictorial representation of Oxford's spires and domes—a vista breathing the peace and quietude of medieval England. Sir Robert Hadfield has acquired this picture and has presented it to Harvard University in connexion with the occasion of its tercentenary celebrations. Harvard's leading metallurgist, Prof. Albert Sauveur, himself an old friend of Sir Robert, is well known in British engineering circles, for he was the recipient in 1924 of the Bessemer Gold Medal of the Iron and Steel Institute ; on the other hand, Sir Robert is probably equally well known on the west of the Atlantic, for he is a foreign associate of the National Academy of Sciences, he received the John Fritz Gold Medal of the United Engineering Societies of the United States in 1921 and the Elliott-Cresson Gold Medal of the Franklin Institute in 1901. Sir Robert's gift is not only a mark of his own respect and admiration for a great centre of learning in the United States, but also a further link between the universities of Great Britain and the New World, helping to hold them together in the ever-intensifying quest for knowledge.

The Parliamentary Science Committee

THE Council of the British Association resolved, at its meeting on Friday last, that the Association should become a constituent member of the Parliamentary Science Committee, and appointed as its representative Prof. Allan Ferguson, one of the general secretaries of the Association. The arrangement made is subject to revision after three years. The announcement will afford particular pleasure to the members of the British Science Guild, which has now been incorporated with the British Association. The Guild and the Association of Scientific Workers were the parent bodies of the Parliamentary Science Committee, which came into being in October 1933, almost immediately after the presidential address of Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins at the Leicester meeting of the British Association.

Research Co-ordination Group

AT a meeting on December 2 at River Court, Hammersmith, London, W.6 of the Research Co-ordination Group (see NATURE of February 22, p. 311, and May 30, p. 898) a number of problems dealing mainly with (1) rise in the standard of living and (2) security, were suggested for the attention of scientific investigators. Among these were : the standardization and extension of statistical information, both as