

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