

begun. The average yearly production of the Liffey hydro-electric development is computed to be 30 million units.

Scientific and Technical Literature

SEVERAL suggestions for the improvement of scientific and technical literature are made by Commander T. W. Macalpine in the *Publishers' Circular and the Publisher and Bookseller* of July 18. Criticizing the present procedure followed by a specialist or a publishing company in regard to a projected scientific book, he suggests that the exposition of the subjects treated in scientific and technical works, etc., would be improved, their utility for easy and quick reference increased, the cost of production decreased, and their filing and storage on shelves, etc., facilitated, if there existed an independent body of recognized standing in the world of science which could furnish authors and publishers with general information and guidance. At present an author is rarely able to give much information of assistance to the publishers on such matters as form of treatment, size of volume, number of words, type or types, number and kind of illustrations, diagrams, paper, binding. Accordingly, the utility of a book is liable to be limited by the publisher's experience. An independent advisory body of recognized standing which could supply information on such matters, assist in the standardization of nomenclature and symbolism, as well as of formats and sizes of printed area on pages, and advice on subdivision, synopsis, contents list and index, etc., would make an important contribution to efficient publication.

Composition of Cereal Straw

THE seemingly facetious title, "The Two Ends of Straw", appears over an article by Dr. H. Nicol in *Agricultural History* (10, No. 1, Jan. 1936), reviewing some early, but fundamental, research upon the composition of cereal straw. The work of Prof. J. F. W. Johnston in 1842, of J. P. Norton and P. F. H. Fromberg in 1845, and of J. I. Pierre in 1863 and 1866 is collected to show that straw has a great diversity of composition between the root end, and the parts towards the flower. The work of Pierre is particularly detailed, and supplies a great deal of material not widely known at the present day. Dr. Nicol discusses some of the results in relation to the recent hypothesis of 'negative migration' of plant constituents, where nitrogen and mineral elements are returned to the soil. Several additional papers upon the partitional analysis of straw have come to light since the publication of the article under review, but the most recent is dated 1879. There is considerable gratification, but also cause for humble reflection, that modern ideas are being confirmed by work which has remained in oblivion for nearly sixty years.

Greenkeeping Research

THE spring number of the *Journal of the Board of Greenkeeping Research* (4, No. 14, from the Board's

Research Station, St. Ives, Bingley, Yorks, 2s. 6d. net) contains the annual report of the organization, which shows, *inter alia*, a very gratifying volume of advisory work. Many suggestions for future work of a practical kind have been made by the Greenkeepers' Advisory Committee, and the report of last year's annual conference is embellished by the full text of Prof. N. M. Comber's address on "The Constitution of Soil". Mr. R. B. Dawson, director of the Research Station, contributes a short but highly informative article on camomile lawns, and the previous accounts of lawn grasses, of weeds, and of fertilizers, are continued. The difficulties of accurate botanical description are being met by the publication of a glossary of botanical terms. Mr. R. B. Ferro discusses some of the difficulties of field experimentation on the golf course. Two short articles on water installations, a description of the management of a golf course on heavy clay soil, and a plea for special investigation of bowling green problems, are included in the issue.

A Journal of Marriage Hygiene and Birth Control

WITH the May issue (2, No. 4), *Marriage Hygiene* completes its second year. The objects of this quarterly journal are to secure for conjugal hygiene a proper place in preventive medicine, to publish scientific contributions treating marriage as a social and biological institution, and to promote and co-ordinate contraceptive clinics and marriage consultation centres in various parts of the globe. Each number contains notes and comments, original articles, reviews and abstracts of current literature. "The Positive Side of Birth Control" (E. B. Reuter), "Birth Prevention in France" (J. J. Spengler), and "Artificial Insemination" (H. Brewer) are some of the original articles in the present number. The yearly subscription for the volume of about five hundred pages is 18s. It is published from Kodak House, Bombay 1, India, the editor being A. P. Pillay. The London agents are Messrs. H. K. Lewis and Co., 136 Gower Street, W.C.1.

Anti-Noise Regulations

THE City Council of Philadelphia has adopted a noise abatement ordinance prepared by a Special Committee of the Philadelphia County Medical Society. The ordinance prohibits sounding of motor-horns except when absolutely necessary for the prevention of accidents, building operations at night except by special permit, the use of sound devices by pedlars, unnecessary noise in handling rubbish cans, and the use of gongs, sirens or exhaust whistles on any vehicles except those of the police and fire bureaux, and hospitals. Loud playing of radios in homes or in front of stores is also among the specific noises forbidden in the ordinance.

Costing Returns of Hospitals and Sanatoria

IN recent years, the value of costing methods in securing business efficiency has become increasingly recognized, not only in industry but also in local government. The Ministry of Health has issued Part 1

and Part 2 of the costing returns of hospitals for the year ending March 31, 1935 (H.M. Stationery Office, 1936. Price 1s. and 1s. 3d. net). Part 1 contains particulars of Poor Law hospitals, general hospitals administered by local authorities under the Public Health Acts or the Local Government Acts, sanatoria and other institutions for the residential treatment of tuberculosis, and maternity homes and hospitals. Part 2 contains the similar particulars for Poor Law institutions and separate casual wards.

Research at the London Hospital

THE annual volume of "Researches Published from the Wards and Laboratories of the London Hospital during 1935" has recently been issued (London : H. K. Lewis and Co., Ltd., 136 Gower Street, W.C.1. Price 7s. 6d. net). The matter has been selected and issued by the Publications Committee for Researches from the London Hospital, of which Prof. Bedson is honorary secretary. The volume includes twenty-seven papers, all published in various current journals, which cover a wide range of subjects included in the science and art of medicine.

A Large Sunspot

THE rising solar activity continues to yield, amongst other phenomena, a fairly high frequency of sunspots—about six groups a day being visible. These groups are usually of moderate extent, but about a dozen seen since the beginning of 1936 may be discriminated as naked-eye spots. These spots or groups of spots have areas of not less than 500 millionths of the sun's hemisphere or about 585 million square miles. The latest of these large spots is now crossing the sun's disk, from August 25 until September 6, with central meridian passage on August 30.7 U.T. Its growth to a large spot with multiple umbrae was considerable between August 27, when its area measured 400 millionths, and August 29, when it had increased to 900 millionths. The spot was surrounded by extensive faculae, as seen in integrated light, and by flocculi as seen in hydrogen light ($H\alpha$) or in that of ionized calcium (H and K). There was marked activity recorded with the spectrohelioscope at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, on August 27 and 28—in particular a bright eruption, visible in $H\beta$ as well as in $H\alpha$, on August 28 between 10^h and 11^{1/2}^h.

Announcements

FOLLOWING her record-breaking westbound passage across the Atlantic from Bishop Rock to the Ambrose Lightship, the *Queen Mary* has recently beaten the eastbound record. She passed Bishop Rock at 7.12 hr. G.M.T. on August 30, having taken 3 days 23 hr. 57 min. for the crossing. The average speed for the voyage of 2,939 miles was 30.63 knots, as compared with the average of 30.31 knots for the 3,015 miles which gave the *Normandie* the blue riband of the North Atlantic in June, 1935.

A WORLD Peace Conference is being held at Brussels on September 3–6. It has been organized by the International Peace Campaign; the Viscount

Cecil and Pierre Cot are joint presidents; Miss Rose Manus, 48 Boulevard Botanique, Brussels, is the international secretary; Dame Adelaide Livingstone is vice-chairman of the British National Committee, which has its office at 27 Chester Terrace, Eaton Square, S.W.1. The Congress has special committees on medicine, science and education, and will raise general points, too, likely to be of interest to scientific workers.

DR. FRIEDRICH KÜSTNER, of Mehlem a. Rh., professor of astronomy and formerly director of the observatory of Bonn University, celebrated his eightieth birthday on August 28.

AN Institute for Industrial Medicine has recently been inaugurated in Milan.

THE twenty-fifth Congress of the German Society of Legal and Social Medicine will be held at Dresden on September 17–19. Further information can be obtained from Dr. Schrader, Lahustrasse 9, Marburg a.d. Lahn.

THE Association for Photographic and Cinematographic Documentation in Science will hold a Congress in Paris on October 9–15. Further information can be obtained from Dr. Claoué, rue Scheffer 39, Paris, 16^e.

ERRATUM.—In the letter entitled "Measurements of Cosmic Rays in a Deep Mine" by Drs. J. Barnothy and M. Forró in NATURE of August 22, p. 325, lines 9 and 15, for "2,500 m." read "1,500 m."; line 15, for "0.09" read "0.18".

APPLICATIONS are invited for the following appointments, on or before the dates mentioned :

A lecturer in electrical engineering in the Borough Polytechnic, London, S.E.1—The Principal (September 9).

A lecturer in mechanical engineering in the Handsworth Technical College, Golds Hill Road, Handsworth, Birmingham—The Principal (September 12).

A junior bacteriologist in the University of Bristol—The Registrar (September 12).

A vice-principal (industrial and/or mining engineering) of the Wakefield Technical College—The Director of Education, Education Department, 27 King Street, Wakefield (September 14).

An assistant lecturer in mathematics in the University of Sheffield—The Registrar (September 15).

An investigator for research in problems of falls of ground and haulage in coal mines to the Safety in Mines Research Board—The Under Secretary for Mines, Establishment Branch, Mines Department, Dean Stanley Street, London, S.W.1 (September 19).

A demonstrator in mechanical engineering in the University of Leeds—The Registrar (September 21).

A regius professor of natural history in the University of Aberdeen—The Private Secretary, Scottish Office, Whitehall, London, S.W.1 (October 31).