

appeal is made for contributions towards the capital cost of the Institute and the endowment of the Trust to enable admirers of Livingstone and Rhodes to give material expression of their interest in them and the future of the country with which they were connected. Contributions may be directed to any branch of Barclay's Bank or the Standard Bank of South Africa.

#### British School of Archæology at Athens, 1935-36

IN accordance with the new arrangement for the publication of the "Annual of the British School of Archæology at Athens", the formal matter, which includes the report of the director covering the activities of members of the School during the year, the accounts, and the summary of archæological operations in the Greek area of the eastern Mediterranean in the preceding year, will in future be issued separately to subscribers, the report for the session 1935-36 being the first occasion on which the decision of the Committee takes effect. In the chronicle of the session precedence is taken by a reference to the lamented and untimely death of the director, Mr. Humfrey Payne, on May 9, 1936. Mr. A. H. G. Megaw, who took charge of the School as acting director, left in the following July to take up his duties on appointment as director of antiquities in Cyprus. Owing to the temporary closing of the British School of Archæology at Rome, a number of its students worked in the School at Athens. Excavations by members of the School were carried on at Monasteri in the Perachora, at Siphnos and at Trapeza in eastern Crete. Miss W. Lamb excavated at Kusura in Anatolia. Supplementary excavations in the Heræum of Perachora, which had been planned by Mr. Payne, were postponed until the following season. The manuscript of the account of the excavation of this important site was left in an advanced state by the late director, and it is anticipated that publication of the first volume will not be long delayed. In the chief descriptive notes of the activities of the School reference is made to some interesting discoveries in Crete. Although no further investigation of the Roman villa was possible, surface finds east of the basilica indicate that this was an important residential quarter of the Roman town in the first and second century A.D.

#### Speleological Conference at Bristol

FURTHER particulars of the second annual conference of the British Speleological Association to be held at Bristol on July 23-26 next (see NATURE, May 29, p. 919) are now available in the advance programme which has been issued. Through the hospitality of the University of Bristol the conference and exhibition will be held in the Great Hall of the University. The exhibition will include contributions from nearly all the important caves in the world, as well as some unique illuminated transparent photographs. Probably the largest and most valuable collection of 'Blue John' will be exhibited. On the evening of July 24 an illustrated public lecture will be delivered by the Abbé Breuil on some aspects of the

French and Spanish caves. Among the lectures announced is a brief account by Mr. C. R. Hewer of some of the caves to be visited on the Continental tour on July 27-August 7 when members will have the opportunity of visiting caves not as a rule accessible to the public. At Nurnberg, after a visit to the Museum for Prehistory, the party will proceed to Teufelshöhle, Maximiliansgrotte, and other caves of archæological, geological and palæontological importance at Pottenstein, where also a mesolithic cave shelter has been especially excavated for the visit by the "Gaukulturamt". At Brno, Czechoslovakia, Prof. C. Absolon will conduct the party over the Museum, with its unique collection of archæological finds from the Moravian caves, which include remarkable examples of palæolithic plastic art; and in the afternoon of the same day the caves, which are the centre of the great mammoth hunters' culture of Moravia, will be visited. Passing through Vienna the party will proceed to the famous 'Drachenhöhle' from Mixnitz, the Lower Lurhöhle from Peggau and the Eisriesenwelt—ice cave from Werfen, the last place of call being Salzburg.

#### The Swiss Society of Natural Sciences

THE recent issue of the *Verhandlungen der Schweizerischen Naturforschenden Gesellschaft* contains an account of the annual meeting of the Society held at Solothurn in August 1936 and also reports of the work of the previous year. The object of the Society is to promote the study of all branches of natural science in Switzerland. Between the annual meetings for the presentation and discussion of papers, the work of the Society is carried on by a number of commissions. Some of these are concerned with the administration of endowments, while others undertake field work in various sciences. The latter are financed partly from members' subscriptions, but mainly from Government grants. Among the commissions performing work of national importance is the Geological Commission, which is engaged in the publication of a geological survey of Switzerland on scales of 1 : 25,000 and 1 : 200,000. In addition to the purely scientific commissions, there is a Commission for the Preservation of Nature, which is doing valuable work in preserving sites of scientific interest or scenic beauty, as well as in promoting legislation for the protection of forms of wild life which are in danger of extermination. Besides administering Government research grants, the Society also acts as the official representative of Switzerland on international scientific unions, and the volume under notice contains the reports of the Swiss delegations to a number of such unions.

THE presidential address at the annual meeting in 1936 was given by Dr. Karl Dändliker, who took as his subject, "Birth-Rate Decline and Surplus". He showed how, in spite of the excess of births over deaths, the population of many countries in Europe is bound to decrease before long. A paper was read by H. Brockmann on "Swiss Farm-Houses", in which two types of buildings were distinguished: one type