

completed, so that publication will be discontinuous and will probably cover a period of about ten years. To subscribers parts will be sold at Kr. 1.00 per sheet, and the whole work is estimated to contain about 100–150 sheets. The two parts first to be published have been received—R. Spärck on “The Benthonic Animal Communities of the Coastal Waters”, and E. Wesenberg-Lund on “Gephyrea”. Both authors find that the fauna with which they deal consists mainly of an arctic and an arctic-boreal admixture, in which the latter predominates, and with which rare forms, such as the gephyrean *Sipunculus norvegicus*, represent a southern fauna which may have survived from a warmer period. In summing up the conclusions of his investigation, Spärck points out that the absence of a boreal shallow-water fauna seems to indicate that in post-glacial time no land connexion can have existed between Iceland, the Faroes and the continent of Europe. But the fauna itself is by no means a sparse one, since in quantity it compares favourably with the fauna of the North Sea, which is generally considered to be very productive and is richer than the corresponding faunas of East Greenland and northern Russia. This relative wealth of bottom fauna may be a dominant factor in determining the presence of a fish population, which in turn has determined the importance of the fisheries in Iceland waters.

Plants and the Dwelling-House

Most people readily admit the value of cut blooms and growing plants for decoration of the home, but not all plants can make good growth in the somewhat trying conditions of the average dwelling-house. A recent publication of the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, is entitled “House Plants” (No. 20, 1937, 35 cents). It has been written by Mr. R. van Tress, and maintains the well-known practical outlook of this Museum’s publications. Such well-trying subjects as the *Aspidistra* (here called, most appropriately, the ‘cast iron plant’), the small conifer *Araucaria excelsa*, various geraniums, and the india-rubber plant (*Ficus elastica*) are known to all. The leaflet also shows that hybrid species of *Hippeastrum*, *Hydrangea*, *Poinsettia*, *Begonia*, *Azalea*, *Primula sinensis*, heliotrope, the African violet (*Saintpaulia ionantha*), the shrimp plant (*Beloperone guttata*) and many others, including the common English ivy, are suitable for domestic conditions. They give greater and more varied beauty than the better-known species. Many illustrations enrich the leaflet, and there would seem to be no reason why the plants mentioned therein should not succeed in Great Britain as well as in the United States.

Supraconductivity

THE issue of the *Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences* of June 15 contains the address of the retiring president of the Academy, Dr. F. B. Silsbee, of the Bureau of Standards, delivered in January. It extends to twenty pages, and deals with the additions which have been made during the last two or three years to our knowledge of the electrical

properties of metals at very low temperatures. References are given to previous summaries up to 1935 and to nearly thirty memoirs on the subject which have been published since, most of them in 1936. The original description of a supraconductor as one in which the resistivity is zero is beginning to be replaced by the newer one that the magnetic induction is zero and that any current which flows in it is confined to an excessively thin layer at its surface. The abruptness of the change of conductivity as the temperature is lowered has been investigated, and in the case of tantalum has been expressed by means of the error function. The paradox of how a magnetic field which cannot penetrate a supraconductor can still affect its conductivity is still unsolved, and the reasons for the decrease of heat conductivity and increase of specific heat in the supraconducting state have still to be determined.

Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences

THIS year the Academy celebrates its one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary, and the opportunity has been taken of relating to friends and members in a special report the work accomplished during the past year. The title chosen for the report is “Discovery” (which unfortunately duplicates the name of a well-known British scientific periodical). The year was marked by the announcement of an ambitious programme which included the strengthening of the scientific work of the Academy, the inauguration of an Education Department which would correlate the work of the Academy with the public and private school system in Philadelphia, the erection of modern educational exhibits, and the re-establishment of the Department of Geology and Palaeontology. For the support of the educational programme over a five-year demonstration period a sum of 374,915 dollars was required, and the response to the end of 1936 reached the fine total of 241,135 dollars. Already important steps have been taken towards the accomplishment of the programme, and we note with satisfaction that the first step was to restore the reductions which had been made during the period of stress in the salaries of the staff. We join with the Academy in lamenting the death on January 22 of its president, Mr. Effingham B. Morris, who since his election to the presidency in 1928 has been the leader and stimulus in all phases of the Academy’s work for science and for the community.

Peace Movements

THE “Peace Year Book, 1937” (London: National Peace Council. 2s.) contains a good deal of useful information on international affairs and should prove a reliable book of reference on the peace movement throughout the world. It includes directories of peace organizations in Great Britain, of national organizations, Anglo-foreign societies and local peace organizations as well as peace and kindred organizations abroad. The appendixes include the text of the Covenant of the League of Nations, a bibliography of books and pamphlets, notes on the reform of the League, the Mandates System, an analysis of the

armaments situation and an extensive summary by Dr. Hilda Clarke of the report of the Royal Commission on the Private Manufacture of and Trading in Arms. The first part of the book contains articles on international affairs, the situation in Spain receiving special attention, and the work of the League of Nations in 1936 is reviewed by Maurice Fanshawe. Of special interest to scientific workers is an able article in the second part of the book by J. D. Bernal on "Science and Peace", in which some account is given of the work of the Science Commission of the World Peace Congress. The general resolution on the attitude of scientific workers to war is given in full, together with the report of the Science Sub-Commission, and Mr. Bernal indicates some of the responsibilities of men of science in this matter.

Training in Domestic Science

In the *Electrical Age* of July 1, a quarterly journal published by the Electrical Association for Women, an interesting description is given by Anne R. Macarthur of the Glasgow and West of Scotland College of Domestic Science, one of the most important women's training colleges in Great Britain. There are now three hundred students taking the three years (sometimes four years) 'teaching diploma' courses. In addition to the usual household subjects are cooking for sailors and yachtsmen, hygiene, etc. The college was built in 1911, the rooms being light, airy and spacious, but it was no sooner finished than it was taken over as a War hospital. During the past session, 1,697 students have attended the college for diploma courses as teachers of domestic science and as dieticians. They have the advantage of working with every type of equipment which they are likely to meet on completion of their course. Electricity figures prominently in the 24 kitchens, 5 laundries, 14 sewing rooms and in the residences and model flats of the College. The College residences are lofty houses overlooking Kelvingrove Park and all have bedrooms for one, two or more occupants, pleasantly furnished sitting-rooms and modern bathrooms. A common room with a parquet floor and softly coloured furnishings extends the full width of the building. On the roof, a bijou isolation hospital, with a small electrically equipped kitchenette offers comfort and most hygienic conditions to invalids.

Natural History in the Schools

THE annual reports of two school societies, the Marlborough College Natural History Society and the Rugby School Natural History Society, suggest that the schools are taking their due place in the training of the naturalists of the future. Both Societies have had a busy year. Marlborough has dropped from the report the local hand-lists, which must have given to young collectors many a useful pointer towards identification of species, and it has discovered that the members prefer an informal ramble to the massed expedition of a formal field day, which is all to the good from the point of view of training observation. Rugby includes long lists

of the seaweeds and marine fauna of Port Erin, which do not seem to be particularly appropriate, although the introduction on the zoning of marine forms illustrates a useful type of observation. Both reports contain records of the local fauna made by members, and both Societies have a useful credit balance on the year's accounts, notwithstanding that Rugby spent more than £400, mostly in erecting a new vivarium and in altering and redecorating the rooms of various sections.

Agricultural Research in Great Britain

THE annual reports on the work carried out at the various agricultural research institutes in the United Kingdom during 1934-35 have now been published (H.M. Stationery Office. 5s. net). The volume also includes reports of certain other agricultural investigations carried out under the auspices of the Agricultural Research Council, and an account of the research activities of the agricultural advisory officers. In view of the scope of the work described, it has of necessity been published in summarized form, but those desirous of further information will find references to the original papers in the appropriate section, and the names and addresses of the directors of the institutes to whom inquiries may be sent.

Grants for Metallurgical Research

THE Iron and Steel Institute offers annually a limited number of grants from the research fund founded by the late Mr. Andrew Carnegie in aid of metallurgical research work. The object of the scheme is to enable students who have passed through a college curriculum, or have been trained in industrial establishments, to conduct researches on problems of practical and scientific importance relating to the metallurgy of iron and steel and allied subjects. The value of the grant will depend on the nature of the proposed research work, but the maximum amount granted in any one year will, as a rule, not exceed £100. Applications for grants must be made before September 30. Further information can be obtained from the Secretary, Iron and Steel Institute, 28 Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

Third Prehistoric Congress of the Far East

THE third Prehistoric Congress of the Far East will take place at Singapore on January 24-29, 1938. Membership of the Congress is confined to delegates nominated by their respective Governments or by scientific societies and institutions. Other anthropologists and prehistorians, however, will be allowed to attend the sessions of the Congress as visitors. They will enjoy all the privileges of members of the Congress, with the exception of the right to vote. The official languages which will be recognized are English, French and German. There is no subscription. Applications for invitation should be addressed to the Director, Raffles Museum, Singapore, Straits Settlements.