

vault a little more pointed than the modern skull. It will be remembered that Prof. F. G. Parsons some years ago examined a large number of seventeenth and eighteenth century skulls of Londoners, when a graveyard, presumably of the adjacent St. Clement Danes, was discovered on the demolition of King's College Hospital in Portugal Street. He then concluded that little change had taken place in the physical characters of the Londoner during the last two or three hundred years, except that the skull showed a slight tendency to broaden.

Recent Excavation at Meare, Somerset

A FORTNIGHT'S work of excavation at Meare Lake Village by Mr. H. St. George Gray and Dr. A. H. Bulleid has brought to light an interesting variant in the method of constructing their dwellings employed by the inhabitants. The season's work, as already indicated (see NATURE, Aug. 28, p. 352), is directed to the investigation of the central portion of the eastern half of the village. Excavation of the area surrounding Dwelling Mounds Nos. 16, 17 and 19, which, it is reported in *The Times* of September 13, has now reached the southern half of the floors of the circular dwellings, has shown that there are at least two floors, or layers of clay, separated by a quantity of ash, black earth and refuse deposited during the occupation. The peat in this part of the village is so firm that the usual timber foundations for the support of the clay floors appear to have been unnecessary. In the area surrounding the dwellings the refuse from the huts is found to contain a considerable amount of ornamented pottery (Iron Age "B") and evidence of weaving in the form of loom weights, spindle whorls and bobbins. Portions of bone needles also have been found. In the occupational refuse between the clay floors, the proportion of bones and pottery sherds found to the area at present examined is unusually high. The bones are mostly of lamb and young oxen, but there are also the remains of a small horse, pig and dog, a few bones of red and roe deer and also of birds. Here there is further evidence of weaving—spindle whorls of baked clay, stone and tin, bobbins, etc., as well as a highly polished bone needle and two bone pins with mouldings and long slots of a type unusual in western Britain. Objects of iron are not plentiful, but include a butcher's knife with convex edge. In bronze are a couple of fibulae, an openwork harness ornament, and a hinge-plate with rivet holes. The ornaments include shale bracelets, and among the beads is one of blue, strung on a bronze wire.

Recent Earthquake in Sussex

SHORTLY after 1 a.m. on September 8, an earthquake of intensity 5 or more (according to the Rossi-Forel scale) was felt in the west of Sussex, especially at Horsham and the neighbouring village of Warnham. The earthquake is of some interest owing to its connexion with the series of shocks that have occurred for nearly three centuries in the district around Chichester, the first known to us being that of the year 1553. A little more than a

century ago, between September 1833 and August 1835, there was a series of eight earthquakes in the district, which were studied by a small committee, the first ever instituted for the study of British earthquakes. One of the most important of these earthquakes was that of January 23, 1834. It was of about the same intensity as the recent shock. Its centre lay 4 miles west-north-west of Chichester, and the longer axis of its disturbed area of 780 sq. miles, if produced, passes through Horsham. Readers who are willing to aid in the investigation of the new earthquake should send their accounts to Dr. A. T. Dollar, Emmanuel College, Cambridge.

Mechanization in the Modern World

AMONG the matters handled at the meeting of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation at Paris on July 12-17 was the inquiry into mechanization in the modern world. The plan of this inquiry has been approved by the Committee and preparations are now in hand by the Institute. National lists of organizations concerned with social sciences are also being collected by the Institute, and lists have already been received from the United States, France, Japan, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Belgium and Norway. The inquiries on unemployment among intellectual workers are being pursued and the establishment of an advisory committee including representatives of the national bureaux and international organizations concerned has been authorized. The Institute has also collected most of the bilateral intellectual agreements in a volume which will shortly be published. The International Committee on Intellectual Rights has been concerned with preparations for the revision of the Berne Convention and for the Universal Conference on authors' rights, and a meeting of experts is being held to formulate final proposals for two conferences at Brussels on these subjects. The Advisory Committee of Intellectual Workers of the International Labour Office, however, pronounced in favour of keeping the question of the moral rights of salaried artists in the applied arts on its agenda.

The S.S. *Orcades*; the Latest Orient Liner

LAST month the Orient liner *Orcades* started on her maiden voyage. According to an article in the *Electrical Review* of August 27, it is claimed that she is the first British ship on the Suez route to have a public sitting-room supplied with conditioned air. Conditioned air is supplied to the public rooms and to several of the cabins. It is not sufficient for comfort to have only ventilation and correct temperature; the humidity must also be controlled within fairly narrow limits. In the tropics, the atmosphere is frequently uncomfortably damp. To reduce the temperature without extracting moisture from the air raises the relative humidity and may make the conditions more uncomfortable. When the climate is colder, air after warming sometimes becomes unpleasantly dry. Hence although air conditioning as it is managed at present is expensive, it may add greatly to the comfort and well-being of the passengers. The new vessel—an eight decker—has been built by

Vickers Armstrong for cruises and for service on routes between England and Australia. Its gross tonnage is 23,445 and it will accommodate 463 first-class and 605 tourist passengers and a crew of 466. Steam is provided by six oil-fired Babcock and Wilcox boilers. Pipes conduct it to two sets of 1,715 revs. per min. Parsons turbines. These drive the propellers at 112 r.p.m. by means of mechanical gearing. Two systems of intercommunication telephones are installed. The Marconi International Communication Co. has installed an all-wave radio installation, including a direction finder, and an 'echometer' depth sounder, together with a broadcast system of loud speakers throughout the vessel. Time is given by means of 82 synchronous clocks. A portable sound picture equipment by the Western Electric Co. is one of the many forms of entertainment provided.

The Problem of Dates of Publication

THE study of natural history has branched into many side-lines; but it is strange to think how far off the direct line of acquisition of nature knowledge the need for accuracy has led. For the convenience of naturalists the world over, animals and plants bear specific names, and the proper name where several have been given is determined conventionally by priority of christening. But so difficult is it in some cases to determine priority that an extensive literature has developed around these knotty problems, and so insistent is the demand for accuracy that a Society for the Bibliography of Natural History has been formed. The first part of its *Journal* is a catalogue of papers concerning the dates of publication of natural history books, arranged in alphabetical order of the authors of the books, and this ought to be of great service to systematists. Sometimes it is difficult to see exactly how the alphabetical order has been determined; "Ent. Soc. Lond." appears under "London", "Ent. Soc. N. S. Wales" under "Ent."; "Royal Phys. Soc. Edinburgh" appears under "Proc.", while the Wernerian Society of the same city appears under "Edinburgh". Doubtless there are sound reasons for this grouping, but they are not obvious, and they are not set out in the very brief introductory notes. The Society maintains a card index of papers concerned with the dates of publication of natural history books, and copies of such papers will be welcomed by the Secretary at 41 Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7.

Empire Grants Committee for Museums

THE final report to the Carnegie Corporation of New York on the activities of the Empire Grants Committee appears in the *Museums Journal* of May. It is a stimulating document. On April 1, 1934, the Committee was set up to administer a fund of 54,000 dollars granted by the Carnegie Corporation of New York for Colonial Museums, with an addition of 9,000 dollars for expenses, £12,550 in all. All museums in the British Colonies, and in Newfoundland and Southern Rhodesia were invited to submit applica-

tions for grants; forty applications were received and twenty-five grants were made. They ranged from £60 to Kandy Museum and Bermuda Historical Museum to £1,000 for Nairobi, Cyprus, Barbados, Singapore, Zanzibar, Jamaica. Various strict regulations had to be made as to the conditions upon which grants could be made; but the Committee is satisfied that the effect of grants has been in nearly every instance most stimulating to the local museum movement. At Bulawayo and Salisbury, the museums have been elevated to the dignity of national museums; in Cyprus, Barbados and Antigua more attractive premises and added Government recognition have been gained; but in most cases grants have been given for cases and equipment, so that museum interiors have been brightened and organized on modern lines. The success of the experiment leads the Committee to suggest that there are good reasons for continuing so promising a first effort.

Time Measurement

THE history and development of time measurement have already been described in a Science Museum Handbook ("Time Measurement", Part 1). The second part of the handbook which has recently been issued (London: H.M. Stationery Office. 2s. net) contains a detailed description of the objects in "The Time Measurement Collection at the Science Museum, South Kensington". The exhibits, ranging from the ancient Egyptian shadow clocks and water clocks to modern electric time-keepers, include sundials, mechanical clocks, watches and chronometers, escapement models and chronographs, as well as various auxiliary devices such as striking mechanisms, time recorders and time switches. Introductory remarks to each chapter explain the system of classification adopted, and outline the general principles involved in the respective groups of instruments. Many of the exhibits at the Science Museum are shown in continuous operation, while others can be operated by visitors—a facility that appears to receive perpetual appreciation. In addition, several of the more delicate watch mechanisms are illustrated by large-scale models. It may be noted that Harrison's four marine timekeepers (the fourth, completed in 1759, being the chronometer which won for Harrison the British Government prize of £20,000) are now represented in the Museum only by photographs, the originals themselves, long associated with the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, having been transferred to the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich. This handbook with its numerous illustrations provides an admirable introduction to a study of the Time Measurement Collection, and it will also serve as a useful handbook of reference for other occasions.

Meteorology in India

THE Meteorological Department of the Government of India has for several years had to contend with serious financial obstacles in the shape of reduced grants, when the increasing requirements of aviation have demanded increased departmental activity. The