

RECENT water shortages in various parts of Great Britain lend significance to the paper by Mr. E. G. Bilham on weather and water supplies, in which it is suggested that although the primary source of our water supplies is rainfall, loss of rainfall by evaporation and by seepage is of major importance, and that it is only possible to study this loss by comparing accurate values of rainfall with similar values of runoff. So far, this has only been attempted in the case of the Vyrnwy catchment area. Studies of factors affecting the corrosion of water mains and services are given in a paper by Dr. W. H. J. Vernon and Dr. F. Wormwell, the first portion of which deals with methods of protection of the interior of the pipes, a suggested possibility being treatment of the water conveyed with a view to the elimination of corrosion, and a second method being the application of protective coatings. External corrosion by soil and other causes is also dealt with, together with methods of protection in this instance also.

Fifth Annual Exhibition of Kinematography

THE fifth Annual Exhibition of Kinematography arranged by the Royal Photographic Society was held in the Society's house at 35 Russell Square on November 13-27. The Exhibition included examples of the latest types of kinematographic apparatus, a series of interesting exhibits arranged by technical firms within the industry, together with a comprehensive display of still pictures from recent productions. It was opened by Colonel J. T. C. Moore-Brabazon. In his address, Colonel Moore-Brabazon stressed the importance of kinematography in education, research and in the preservation of records, and paid tribute to the progress which has been made, particularly on the mechanical side and in the general design of apparatus. An interesting series of lectures and demonstrations was arranged to run throughout the course of the Exhibition, on technical subjects connected with kinematography, standard and sub-standard.

It is true to say that this Exhibition succeeded in demonstrating how close is the relationship between the Royal Photographic Society and the kinematograph industry, and how many and great would be the advantages to both of a closer association. In the past a limit has been placed upon the activities of the Royal Photographic Society by the size of the premises at 35 Russell Square. New premises have, however, recently been acquired in which, after reconstruction, there will be three lecture halls, a library, museum, a council room, meeting rooms and a members' lounge, and under these conditions the way will be made easy for further developments. The expense entailed in connexion with the acquisition and reconstruction of the new premises is, of course, very great, and an appeal for funds has lately been launched by the Society. It is hoped that the response will be adequate; science and industry have profited greatly by the advances made in photography, and the premier photographic society in the world deserves well of the community.

The Newcomen Society

AT the annual general meeting of the Newcomen Society, held at the Institution of Civil Engineers on November 17, Engineer Captain E. C. Smith was elected president for 1937-38. In the report of the Council, it was stated that there has been an increase in membership during the year of 149, the total membership now standing at 576, more than half the members residing in the United States. The 300 signed copies of the "Collected Papers of Rhys Jenkins" have nearly all been sold, and Extra Publication No. 4, "John Smeaton's Diary of his Journey to the Low Countries 1755", is in the Press. The financial position of the Society is very satisfactory. After the conclusion of the business a paper was read by Captain F. B. Ellison on "The History of the Hay Railway, 1810-1864". This line, more than 25 miles long, was one of the longest of the pre-steam railways. It was built mainly for the conveyance of coal to a district north of Hereford, hitherto served by pack horses. Its terminus was on the Usk at Brecon, to which a canal had recently been made. First surveyed in 1810, the proposal for a railway, or rather tramway laid with iron rails, met with immediate support, among the contributors to the funds being the Earls of Oxford and Ashburnham, the Duke of Beaufort and Viscount Hereford, who was the chairman of the company. An Act of Parliament for the line was obtained in 1811, and tenders were soon afterwards accepted for 2,800 tons of "Cheltenham tram road plates of strong bodied pig iron to be 50 lbs. per plate" and for 20,000 stone blocks weighing 168 lb. each for sleepers. There were several bridges on the line and one tunnel 600 yards long, this being constructed by a miner of Newnham, Gloucestershire. The tramway continued to serve the district until the formation of the Hereford, Hay and Brecon Railway, which bought up the line, sold the tram plates and used the stone sleepers in its bridges; but recently some of the material has been found in good preservation, and many old documents and plans have been brought to light. These are now being preserved in Hereford Museum.

University College, London: Extension of Buildings

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, London, by the official opening of a further portion of the Foster Court buildings, has reached another milestone in its development. A previous stage of the Foster Court scheme was marked by the opening of the new Department of Zoology by the Chancellor of the University, the Earl of Athlone, in 1933. The chairman of the University Court, Lord Macmillan, opened on December 1, the sections of the general scheme which have recently been completed. These comprise primarily the housing of the Faculty of Laws, the Department of Geography, the Junior Laboratory of the Department of Physics, the Cast Gallery of the Department of Archaeology, and a library centre for the Foster Court departments. By the terms of the endowment of the Yates-Goldsmid chair of geology and physical geography, the work in physical geography is undertaken in the Department