

collection of books of general interest. Wherever possible there should be a separate reading room, and in institutions doing advanced work small rooms should be provided for individual study and research. To secure full value from the library service, the library should be under the supervision of someone who has had a measure of special training and experience in library work. Alternative methods of recruitment to this end are discussed in the report. It is further recommended that properly qualified librarians employed in technical institutions should always be regarded as equal in status to members of the teaching staff and be paid on the Burnham Technical Scale—graduate or non-graduate—according to qualifications. An annual allocation for the provision of books, periodicals and binding of 3s. per student for the first 2,000 students and 2s. per student for each subsequent student is recommended.

Uniformity of Mycological Terms

THE Plant Pathology Committee of the British Mycological Society has addressed a circular letter to organizations in the British Isles which use the scientific names of fungi causing plant diseases. It is suggested that an agreement to use the names from a standard list of plant pathogens would be of great convenience, and would strengthen attempts to secure international uniformity. The proposed standard names are those included in the "List of Common Names of British Plant Diseases" (published for the Plant Pathology Committee of the British Mycological Society by the Cambridge University Press, 1934). Mycological nomenclature is greatly in need of any authoritative lead such as the one now proposed. It would, in fact, be very gratifying if the present modest suggestions should not only find immediate acceptance, but would also be extended later. A universally acceptable standard of naming for all fungi is urgently needed. The British Mycological Society has, moreover, always maintained a proper balance between all the branches of its study. It should, therefore, be accorded the full support of all mycologists of Great Britain. The Society has accepted its Committee's suggestions on nomenclature for all papers on pathogenic fungi, which will be published in its volumes of *Transactions*. Provision has been made for any desirable criticisms to be advanced against the actual list of names, and it is proposed to issue periodical revisions. Further particulars of the scheme may be obtained from the Secretary of the Plant Pathology Committee, Dr. G. C. Ainsworth, Experimental and Research Station, Cheshunt, Herts.

Horticulture of the Amaryllidaceæ

"HERBERTIA", the fifth year-book of the American Amaryllis Society (From the Editor, Mira Flores, Orlando, Florida, U.S.A., 1938) maintains a proper balance between needs of the grower, the scientific worker and the teacher, and attains a human interest in addition. The present volume is dedicated to Ernst H. Krelage (Holland), about whom an

interesting autobiography appears. Classification of the Amaryllidaceæ is somewhat difficult, but a series of papers by Dr. H. P. Traub and J. C. Th. Uphof clarifies some obscurities and makes possible a tentative revision of the genus *Amaryllis*. Cytological studies have also been used by Walter S. Flory to re-establish the genus *Habranthus*. Experiments by W. M. James upon vernalizing seed of *Leucocoryne Ixioides* indicate the possibility of much faster production of flowering-size plants. I. W. Heaton reviews the possibilities of growing hybrid amaryllids with culture solutions instead of compost, and preliminary experiments suggest a useful and extremely economic method of culture. The section on harvesting, storage and forcing contains two mutually complementary papers by Dr. John Grainger (England), who describes the scientific principles underlying the production of early bloom, and by Prof. E. van Slogteren (Holland), who considers the practices for early forcing. "Herbertia" has also the usual descriptions of regional activities and garden culture. It is comprehensive, and succinct yet adequate. The policy of Dr. Hamilton P. Traub, its editor, presents the requisite blend of new and established knowledge which is essential for progress in modern horticulture.

A Doctors' Peace Manifesto

THE Balkan Medical Union (Athens, Belgrade, Bucarest and Istanbul) has addressed an appeal to medical men of all nations to take active measures to awaken public opinion on the horrors of war, and the terrible sufferings it inflicts upon the civil population of open towns. The Union believes that "only enlightened international opinion can make plain the imminence of the danger, and the uselessness, even for the victor, of war-time atrocities. The immutable truth that hate breeds only hate, and atrocity breeds vengeance, must be impressed on everyone". The Balkan Medical Union, founded in 1931, is essentially a scientific organization; but it also aims at bringing together the intellectuals of different countries so that they may know one another, and come to a mutual respect and understanding, whereby the misunderstandings that engender hate and disastrous struggles between nations may be dispelled.

The League of Nations

A REVISED edition of the "Aims, Methods and Activities of the League of Nations", which first appeared in 1935, has now been published (Geneva: League of Nations; London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1938. 2s.). Like the first edition it consists of four parts, the first including a historical account of international organization followed by a description of the nature, aims and methods of the League. The second part attempts to describe and assess impartially the achievements of the League, and although eminently readable and not overburdened with detail, gives a good comprehensive account of its work, which at the same time indicates some of the causes of its success and failure. The chief criticism that can be advanced of this section,

which occupies the greater part of the book, is that in attempting to be comprehensive it fails to evaluate sufficiently—the highly significant work of the League in the field of nutrition, for example, receives the barest mention. The work of the Permanent Court of International Justice and of the International Labour Organisation are dealt with in the third part; the final section of the book containing the text of the Covenant and extracts from the Statute of the Permanent Court and from the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation.

Hospitals in War Time

THE Minister of Health has issued to all hospital authorities and voluntary hospitals a memorandum explaining the main lines on which a scheme for a war-time hospital organization is being worked out for England and Wales (Emergency Medical Services Memorandum 2. H.M. Stationery Office. 6d. net). The basis of the emergency scheme is the division of hospitals into different classes according to the use which it is intended that they should serve, and almost all hospitals are included in some way. Room is to be made for the reception of casualties in one wing or block of most of the mental hospitals in the country, and a few mental hospitals are to be cleared of their ordinary patients. It is proposed to link up casualty hospitals to each other in the more vulnerable areas and to selected hospitals farther away. In order to increase the hospital accommodation, all hospitals would be asked to discharge all patients for whom institutional treatment is not essential, which it is estimated would probably free from 30 to 50 per cent of the existing hospital beds, and additional beds would be introduced into selected hospitals and institutions. Proposals for the organization of the medical and nursing staffs are also outlined.

Physical and Mental Welfare

THE Physical and Mental Welfare Society of New Zealand, Onehunga, N.Z., suggests that the centenary of New Zealand might be celebrated by the foundation of a memorial, and that this might take the form of an endowed scheme whereby the 'masses' might be kept in touch with scientific truths and views bearing upon the physical and mental welfare of the race. New Zealand was recognized as an independent Colony in 1841. Bearing on this subject, the Health Organisation of the League of Nations has issued reports on physical education and on nutrition (*Bull. Health Organisation*, 7, No. 4, 1938. Allen and Unwin, Museum Street, W.C.1. 2s. 6d.). The first report suggests a programme of laboratory research upon the effects of physical exercise, and on the relation between intellectual and physical development. The other report deals with principles to be observed in the study of diets and of the nutrition of a population, particularly as regards nutrition in the tropics.

Disposal of Offal

IN the Benjamin Ward Richardson Lecture recently delivered at the Royal Sanitary Institute, Mr. John Austin dealt with the hygienic treatment

and disposal of offal and by-products in abattoirs. He said that two most important considerations govern the treatment of animal offal, namely, (1) the hygienic disposal of animal waste matter, and (2) its economic utilization. Suitable premises are needed to which all raw material can be brought from the slaughter-hall with the minimum amount of handling; they should be well lighted and ventilated and provided with an abundant supply of steam and hot and cold water. Mr. Austin then considered by-product work under the headings of blood, hides and skins, tripe, casings, edible fat and inedible offal, all of which require immediate treatment owing to the rapidity of decomposition after slaughter.

British Chemical Industry

A SURVEY of the achievements of British chemical industry in the last twenty-five years was given by Sir Gilbert T. Morgan in three Cantor Lectures to the Royal Society of Arts which have just been published. The field covered included inorganic chemicals, gases, nitrogen products, pigments, electro-chemistry, metals, the utilization of coal, explosives, dyes, fermentation, plastics and drugs, and the lectures give a valuable survey of modern processes and the progress made in the period considered.

Centro Volpi Di Elettrologia

THE second number of this journal (English edition) mentions that amongst the first of its activities will be a convention for the development of 'experimentations' in view of industrial autarchy. In order to develop research work, which is the basis of industrial emancipation, Italian industrialists and the most competent scientific workers and technicians of the country will meet in Venice during October 26–28. They will examine the many sides of the problem of the improvement of existing laboratories, the creation of new ones and the co-operative work between them. The centre extends its welcome to all those who wish to attend the conventions. In the field of international relations the Centre is endeavouring to establish collaboration.

Safeguarding of Unpublished Research

SUCH attempts as were made by individuals or institutions to remove important papers to places of greater safety during the September crisis merely served to emphasize the impossibility of handling at short notice the quantity of material involved. The Research Co-ordination Committee accordingly decided to continue its investigation of the possibilities of micro-film technique. In view of recent international developments, the steps taken by the Research Co-ordination Committee to facilitate the reproduction and storage of documents are particularly timely. The process was described in NATURE of March 11, p. 393. Briefly, it consists in photographing documents of any kind, such as charts, pages of books, loose sheets, maps, etc., on to standard 35 mm. cine-film. Documents up to 17 in. × 24 in. can be dealt with (or larger ones in two or