

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