

## News and Views

### National Service Committee for Scientific Research

THE Central Register Advisory Council of the Ministry of Labour has appointed the following Committee for Scientific Research : A. V. Hill (chairman) ; C. G. Darwin (mathematics) ; E. V. Appleton (physics) ; J. C. Philip (chemistry) ; R. V. Southwell (engineering sciences) ; E. B. Bailey (geology) ; V. H. Blackman (botany) ; D. M. S. Watson (zoology) ; A. V. Hill (physiology) ; W. W. C. Topley (pathology) ; F. C. Bartlett (psychology) ; Director of Scientific Research, Admiralty ; Director of Scientific Research, War Office ; Director of Scientific Research, Air Ministry ; Department of Scientific and Industrial Research ; Medical Research Council ; Agricultural Research Council. Ten sub-committees for the consideration of the several subjects have been co-opted.

### Broadcasting by Telephone

THE Postmaster-General announced in the House of Commons on March 30, that the Post Office is to proceed immediately with the introduction of a system of distributing broadcasting programmes over the line telephone network. This service will be additional to that of the existing relay companies, the licences of which will also be extended for a further period of ten years to December 31, 1949. The new telephone broadcasting service will be operated on the so-called 'wired wireless' or carrier-current system, which is already in use to some extent in Great Britain and other countries for ordinary line telephony ; a radio frequency carrier current, with the appropriate programme modulation, will be transmitted over the telephone lines, and a complete wireless receiving set will be used at the subscriber's end of the line. Three or four alternative broadcast programmes will be provided, the selection to be carried out by adjusting the receiver, and it will be possible to use the telephone simultaneously with the reception of a broadcast programme. The new service will be restricted at first to telephone subscribers, and the question of its extension to non-subscribers will be deferred pending experience of its working. From the point of view of national defence, the new service will have the advantage over the existing broadcasting system of reduced liability to interruption or interference ; it is not intended, however, that any restriction shall be placed upon the wireless broadcasting programme service at the present time. The existing relay companies transmit merely the audio frequency currents over a special line network to loud-speakers on the subscribers' premises, and the service is usually limited to a choice between two programmes provided from the relay exchange. The new licences issued to these companies will require that these exchanges shall be connected to a B.B.C. station by wire, and that in time of emergency they shall transmit any special announcements ordered by the local A.R.P. or police authorities.

### H.M. Aircraft-Carrier *Ark Royal*

THE annual session of the Institution of Naval Architects, was held in the Royal Society of Arts during March 29-31. Lord Stonehaven, the president of the Institution, reviewed the events of the last year in his opening address. Sir Stanley Goodall, Director of Naval Construction for the Admiralty, then read an interesting paper describing H.M.S. *Ark Royal*, the first ship to be designed exclusively as an aircraft carrier. As it is not the function of this type of ship to fight a gun duel, its armament consists mainly of aeroplanes. The ship carries a few guns capable of both high angle and low angle fire. She has a heavily armoured deck, side-armour adequate against medium guns, and improved underwater protection. 103,000 horse-power on three shafts gave her a speed in trials of 31½ knots and special attention had been given to rapid manoeuvring. The auxiliary machinery is both electric and hydraulic. Special aircraft fittings include two catapults at the fore end of the flying deck, arresting wires at the after end for aircraft landing on it, hydraulically operated wind screens which fold down flat when necessary and three two-story lifts which take aircraft with their wings folded. Electric welding was used extensively in her construction, and this lessened her weight by 500 tons. In the discussion which followed the paper Sir George Preece, engineer-in-chief to the Navy, said that owing to the necessity for rapid manoeuvring it was found necessary to have two engineers of the watch, one for general control and one for direct supervision. The large rudder immediately abaft the centre propeller was invaluable when turning at rest. In the last cruise, 1,400 aircraft landings on deck had been made without a scratch. 'Landing on' had proved safer than driving a car on an English road.

### Emergency Medical Arrangements for War-Time

PREPARATIONS for dealing with casualties in the event of war are now well advanced. The Ministry of Health has issued circulars to local and other authorities under the Air-Raid Precautions Act, 1937, indicating the organization of emergency ambulance services, and of first-aid posts (Circulars 1787 and 1789. H.M. Stationery Office. 2d. and 3d. net, respectively). An emergency Hospitals Scheme for London has also been prepared. This scheme is based on the affiliation of certain casualty hospitals in the more vulnerable areas to others in outer areas. In London this affiliation is arranged in ten sectors radiating from the centre. Each of these sectors contains voluntary and municipal hospitals of widely differing types, including the great teaching hospitals, local authority institutions, mental hospitals, specialized hospitals, cottage hospitals, and others. It is proposed that the casualty hospitals near the centre of each sector should be used so far as possible for immediate treatment only, and that the injured