

English books. Noteworthy among the latter are "The Mirror of Alchimy, Composed by the thrice-famous and learned Fryer, Roger Bachon", London, 1597; the rare "Secrets Reveal'd: or, An open entrance to the Shut-Palace of the King: Containing The greatest Treasure in Chymistry, Never yet so plainly Discovered", 1669; Plat, "The Jewel House of Art and Nature", 1653; and many other rare works. Translations into English include Geber, "The Works of Geber, the most famous Arabian prince and philosopher", 1678; Beguin, "Tyrocinium Chymicum", 1669; Paracelsus, "The Chymical Transmutation of Metals", 1657; Glauber, "The Golden Ass Well Managed", 1670; Gesner, "The newe Iewell of Health", 1576; Le Febure, "A compleat Body of Chymistry", 1670; the 1677 and 1686 translations of Lemery, "A Course of Chymistry" and "New Curiosities in Art and Nature", 1711, by the same author.

Of large folios from the Chaston Chapman collection there are good copies of the works of Agricola, Cardanus, Josephus, Lucretius, Manget, Paracelsus, Pettus, Petronius, Sennert, van Helmont, and others. There are some two hundred works by German and Dutch seventeenth-century authors. Becher and Stahl, the two founders of the phlogiston theory, are well represented. There are also certain editions of the strange work "De Secretis", composed by Alexis of Piedmont, a contrite revelation to the world of the secret remedies that might have saved a patient's life. Special attention was also paid by Mr. Chaston Chapman to Black, Boerhaave, Boyle, Newton, and Priestley, and there is an interesting series of old and modern books on brewing and fermentation, commencing with "A Perfitte platforme of a Hoppe Garden", 1578. A whole case is devoted to the Royal Society, with the first, second, and fourth editions of Sprat's history of the Society. With the single exception of Lord Brotherton's books, this carefully selected library is the most valuable collection of rare books that the University has ever received.

Bledisloe Medal for Native Agriculture

IN the recently issued report of the Rhodesia-Nyasaland Royal Commission (see NATURE, May 20, p. 829) stress is laid by members of the Commission in the expression of their individual views regarding certain matters, on the importance of the development of the native for the future of all three territories alike. In this development, agriculture and native husbandry are assigned the foremost place, more especially in the two protectorates, of which the future prosperity can only be based upon agriculture. In the memorandum appended by the chairman, Lord Bledisloe, and Mr. P. A. Cooper, it is said that "Education is a crying need of the African, but its foundation should, in his case, be knowledge of the land and its proper treatment on the one hand and of the basic principles of nutrition and hygiene on the other. These lessons are even more vital to his true welfare than reading and arithmetic, and should

take precedence of them." They go on to point out that they are inclined to the view that both land and labour are at present wasted, adding a caution against dogmatic pronouncement that large areas of territory are permanently unsuited to human occupation or economic utilization. In order to encourage the development of the native as agriculturist, Lord Bledisloe has now instituted a silver medal for presentation annually in appropriate numbers to the chiefs of the various tribes of Southern Rhodesia who have done most to induce their tribesmen to adopt improved methods of husbandry. The medal bears on its obverse the figure of a native Afrikaner bull with the inscription "Southern Rhodesia Mutungamiri Umtungameli", the Bantu and Sindabele terms for leader or guide. The reverse bears an ear of maize and the inscription "The Bledisloe Medal for the Advancement of Native Husbandry".

Treasure at Delphi

A DISCOVERY, which would seem to be remarkable even in the annals of Mediterranean archæology for the quantity of objects of gold brought to light, is reported from Delphi, where excavations have been in progress under Prof. Delacotte on behalf of the French School of Archæology at Athens during the past two years. A dispatch from the correspondent of *The Times* in the issue of May 10 states that in the course of raising and relaying the pavement of the Sacred Way from the eastern side of the Sanctuary in the direction of the Temple of Apollo in a search for inscriptions, a cavity has been found in the centre of the Stoa of the Athenians, in which was a mass of objects, covered with dust and ashes, and including a large number of gold articles. Of these the most important is the gold overlay of a chryselephantine statue, of which the ivory has been carbonized. The robe, diadem, ear-rings, bracelets, curls, heads and flowers, which formed the decorations of the robe, and the girdle, all in gold, have been recovered. A bronze statuette holding a receptacle for the burning of aromatic woods, which is complete and of remarkable workmanship, is dated at 500 B.C. In addition, there is a quantity of material in clay, copper and bronze. Expert opinion at present is that the finds show evidence of Oriental influence, possibly originating from the Greek cities of Asia Minor. A further discovery is a second cavity, found in working in a northerly direction from the Sacred Way, which was full of bronze and copper objects, all much encrusted, but otherwise in good preservation. Here also Eastern influence is discerned.

Television and the Provinces

MR. C. O. STANLEY, chairman of the Television Development Committee of the Radio Manufacturers Association, spoke at Manchester on May 13 outlining the great progress recently made with television. He pointed out that it is necessary to have a universal service for the whole of Great Britain in order to enable manufacturers to develop the export industry. The first step is to extend television to the provinces. While the mentality produced by experimental tele-

vision remains, the public will not purchase sets. Even if only one provincial station were started, it would show that television has been accepted and would give a tremendous stimulus to the industry. The United States has studied the possibilities of television and by next September there will be twenty stations in operation. If good progress had been made in Great Britain in providing provincial stations and services, manufacturers in this country could have produced sets in such quantities that the initiative could have been taken in the South American countries, in South Africa and in other places. Unless the rate at which we are now moving is accelerated, the stations to be provided in these places will be American stations, and if this were so, the sets now being produced in Great Britain would not work when connected to them.

Changes in Bird Population

IN a civilized country, where social changes are rapid and often extensive, the wild population, whether of birds or other creatures, is undergoing constant readjustment. Much of the change passes unnoticed, and much, even if it be observed by local residents interested in natural history, goes unrecorded. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is doing good work in stimulating interest in the changing phases of bird population by offering the Medal of the Society and money prizes for the best paper on "Changes in the bird population of Britain during the present century, in a district or districts known to the writer, in regard to the increase or decrease of species named, what cause or causes can be assigned, and what (if any) effect has been observed". The causes which suggest themselves to the Society include—the universal use of the motor-car and the popularity of 'rambling', opening up hitherto secluded places; afforestation; road development; the disappearance of hedges; the invasion of the open country by factories; the replacement of open ditches by underground drains. There is also deliberate encouragement of birds to be reckoned with, by the creation of bird sanctuaries, the influence of the law's protection, and the altered outlook of the people towards the amenity of bird life generally. The competition should prove to be interesting and useful, although it is obvious that great care will have to be taken in sifting and adjudicating upon the causes alleged to be responsible for any change. The competition is referred to in the spring number (1939) of *Bird Notes and News*.

The National Physical Laboratory

THE report of the Laboratory for the year 1938 is a royal octavo pamphlet of 147 pages published by H.M. Stationery Office at 2s. 6d. The general report of the Executive Committee occupies 14 pages and is followed by reports of the superintendents of the separate Departments of Physics, Electricity, Radio, Metrology, Engineering, Metallurgy, Aerodynamics and Ship Propulsion, which enter into more detail, extending to 114 pages, and each concludes with a list of papers published by the Department

during the year. They seem remarkably free from obscure technical expressions and can in consequence be read with ease by the general public. The changes of staff have been more important than usual. Three directors have been in charge during the year and one superintendent has become director of research in another Government department, while industry and Government departments have absorbed other members of the staff. Lectures on the work of the Laboratory have again been given in large industrial centres (17), and as usual a large number of requests for scientific information on points arising in industrial work have been answered by the Laboratory without charge.

Utilizing Sunshine

DR. C. G. ABBOT, the secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, has published a description of recent devices he has used in converting sunshine into power (*Smithsonian Misc. Coll.*, 98, No. 5; March 30, 1939). In general, the sun's rays are focused by a cylindrical mirror on to an axial glass tube through which, for the distillation of water or the generation of steam, water flows, and for cooking purposes a black liquid of boiling point above 350° C. The mirror is now made of flexible sheet known as 'Aloa' and the axial tube is surrounded by a concentric vacuum tube. While coal is cheap, Dr. Abbot does not expect extensive use of such devices, but under favourable conditions small units up to five horse-power with an efficiency of conversion of solar to mechanical energy of the order of 15 per cent and a cost of a farthing per horse-power hour may be possible. At present the initial cost of the apparatus is high, but when thousands are required prices will fall.

Books on International Relations

A "SHORT List of Books on International Relations" recommended by the Education Committee of the League of Nations Union (15, Grosvenor Crescent, S.W.1) includes 141 titles arranged in two lists, the first consisting of books for boys and girls and the second of books for students and teachers. The latter is arranged in six sections dealing with the League of Nations, with education, with international relations, with special problems, with collective security and peaceful change and with colonies and raw materials, respectively. The majority of the books are of the descriptive type, but a number of constructive critical works are included, mostly from rather a Left Wing point of view. In addition, the list gives the titles of a number of songs and celebrations as well as of maps and periodicals, and forms on the whole a useful introduction to the study of international relations.

A Mosquito Invasion of South America

THE possibility of the introduction of a disease into a country at present free from it by air-transport of the infected insect-vector has long been recognized, for example, yellow fever by its infected mosquito-carrier. That this menace is real and not hypothetical