

Mediterranean, and the general archaeological situation, pointed in the direction of Crete as a strategic strong point; while Petrie's discoveries in Egypt in the later 'nineties demonstrated the existence as a menace to that kingdom in the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties of some strong maritime confederacy to the north. As was soon to be shown, Evans's confidence and perseverance were justified. In 1900, at Knossos, he discovered the first traces of the Palace and the earliest evidence upon which he was to rear the structure of Minoan civilization, and, in conjunction with material brought by other archaeologists, British, American, Greek, French, German, not only from Crete, but also from the mainland and Asia Minor, to reconstruct the whole of the forgotten bronze age culture of the Mediterranean.

From 1900 until 1908, Evans was engaged in the excavation of this site at Knossos, and year by year at meetings of the British Association, the Society of Antiquarians in London and elsewhere, as well as in the publications of the British School at Athens or the Hellenic Society, he reported on his discoveries. So far as was possible, preservation and reconstruction followed exploration, and in 1925 the site, which he had purchased, and the Palace, were handed over on a trust to the British School of Archaeology at Athens as a museum and for purposes of archaeological research.

At the close of his excavations, Evans had completed the tale of the whole bronze age, so far as revealed on the site at Knossos, covering a period of two thousand years or more and extending from neolithic times down to the final destruction of the Palace at the dawn of the iron age. It is true the one site did not always tell the story in full, but what was lacking was found on other sites of the island, Palækastros, Gournia, Messara, and so forth. Evans's achievement did not rest there, and it is largely due to his genius in interpretation and cultural analysis that we now know the relations of Crete with Egypt and North Africa, with the mainland and islands of Greece, with their Helladic culture, and Asia Minor, and can accept as well founded his reasoned conclusions as to the origins and the influences which built up this great prehistoric civilization.

The work of final analysis and exposition of the evidence from Knossos was long and arduous, and will in itself explain the fact that from 1900 onward, apart from contributions to the periodicals of learned societies, Evans's writings, though all important, were not great in bulk. Of these the most important or considerable are his "Tree and Pillar Cult" (1901) and his "Scripta Minoa" (1909). His account of the excavations as a whole was given to the world in four large volumes under the title "The Palace of Minos", of which the first appeared in 1922 and the fourth in 1935. The completion of the last volume was celebrated at the close of 1934 by Evans's friends and admirers, who presented to him a portrait bust (see NATURE, Dec. 22, 1934, p. 962).

Enough has already been said to make it unnecessary to attempt any further estimate of the value of Arthur Evans's contribution to archaeological research.

He added a whole chapter, and that one of the most important and crucial, to the history of civilization. From the year 1900 his work became fundamental in determining the course of all future research, not only in the Mediterranean area, but also in the whole region which has been the arena of development of modern civilization. It is perhaps not the least striking evidence of his force of character and strength of intellect that when he made his first discovery at Knossos, he had attained his fiftieth year, and at a time when most who have not already reached the highest attainment can scarcely hope to achieve eminence in a new field, he added to a reputation already established by an achievement second to none in modern archaeological investigation.

Arthur Evans naturally and deservedly was the recipient of many honours. In 1911 he was knighted. He was a D.Litt. of Oxford, hon. LL.D. of Edinburgh and Dublin, and hon. Ph.D. of Berlin, a fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford, and fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London, of which he was president 1914-19. In 1916 he was president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, an office which he accepted with extreme reluctance, owing to what he felt to be the claim of national duty during the War. So long ago as 1901 he was elected to the Royal Society, which gave him its premier award, the Copley Medal, in 1936. He was awarded the Royal Gold Medal of the Institute of British Architects, the Petrie Medal for archaeology, and was Frazer Lecturer in 1930. The more important Continental societies and academies which include archaeology within their scope had recognized his work by honorary membership.

By the death of Sir Arthur Evans on July 11, only three days after celebrating his ninetieth birthday, following so closely on the death of Sir James Frazer, archaeological and anthropological studies have lost two outstanding figures of international stature.

BOTH in the range of his learning and accomplishments, and in his positive contributions to knowledge, Sir Arthur Evans was an outstanding figure among nearly three generations of archaeologists. He owed much to intimacy with his distinguished father, Sir John Evans, whom in some respects he closely resembled; much to the historian Edward Freeman, who encouraged him at Oxford; much to a year's study at Göttingen, to which he would refer with affection and gratitude.

But Evans's peculiar gifts were his own. His eyesight, though not seriously hampering him in field work, gave him a microscopic insight into the finest craftsmanship of gems and coins, enabling him to detect many minute signatures of ancient artists, and so to demonstrate the attribution of similar designs to the same hand. His remarkable flair for objects that interested him had already brought him treasures in other fields of exploration—Illyria and Sicily in particular—before he embarked in middle life on the Cretan adventures which made him known to a wider public.

His strong devotion to freedom and political

justice brought him into close relations with men of many nationalities and creeds, and gave him access to regions and communities which had been visited by few. His interest in the Southern Slavs and in the Cretans began while they were still dominated by the Turks, and he had the satisfaction of witnessing their liberation; it was indeed appropriate that the Yugoslav State and its Academy should be represented at his memorial service in Oxford. His genius for friendship, and for attracting devoted help from all classes made easy the conduct of archaeological

excavation on a very large scale, with the large private means which were as generously lavished on the Boy Scout Movement and other social services, as on his expeditions and collections.

Evans's beautiful home at Youlbury became a place of pilgrimage for colleagues from many lands, and a centre of wise counsel and unstinted help, especially to the younger workers. Few men so thoroughly enjoyed a full and strenuous life, or did more to enable others to do the same.

J. L. MYRES.

## NEWS AND VIEWS

### Reconstruction in Great Britain

IN a statement made in the House of Lords on July 17, Lord Reith, Minister of Works and Buildings, announced the publication of an interim report of the Uthwatt Committee, and stated that the Government is to take immediate steps to implement many of the recommendations. The Government is, of course, already committed to the principle of planning in redeveloping the country, but it is reassuring to learn that the Committee's recommendation that any action taken now to secure the orderly planning of areas which include substantially devastated sites must be planned as a whole, is to be accepted; and also that the further recommendation to have such areas defined is to be implemented as soon as the necessary legislation can be effected. The Committee has also recommended the setting up of a central authority to control building development by licence. On this point Lord Reith was not inclined to go so far; the Government view is that emergency powers over building are already stringent, and they have been reinforced by the control of payments made under the War Damage Act; further safeguards can be given by strengthening the Planning Acts.

The urgency of the problems of reconstruction appears to be now fully appreciated. Lord Reith stated that the Government agrees that all necessary preliminary steps for a national plan should be taken as soon as possible in order to ensure that local development shall be in harmony with national requirements. While Mr. Greenwood, Minister without Portfolio, is still to undertake the general study of post-war problems, Lord Reith is to have special responsibility for long-term planning policy in town and country in the sphere of physical reconstruction. To co-ordinate this work of forward planning with current administration, a Council of Ministers, consisting of the Secretary of State for Scotland, the Minister of Health, and Lord Reith (chairman), has been appointed. This Council of Ministers may prove to be the beginnings of the Central Planning Authority urged by the Uthwatt Committee, and indeed Lord Reith himself said he regarded it as having been established in embryo.

### Russian Foreign Policy

THREE further Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs are of particular interest in view of recent events. Miss Barbara Ward's "Russian Foreign Policy" (No. 34), while not dealing with events beyond the Finnish war, is of interest as an attempt to interpret Russian foreign policy free from ideological preconceptions, on the assumption that neither her problems nor her approach to them are in the last analysis very different from those of her neighbours. Miss Ward traces the foreign policy of the U.S.S.R. from the first year of its existence and its preoccupation with keeping its lands intact and its frontiers inviolate, through the failure of world revolution and the period of concentration upon economic contacts and peaceful diplomatic relations with the outside world, to Russia's entry into the European system of collective security. Obstacles to closer co-operation with the West and the influence of the Anti-Comintern Front are discussed as well as the events leading to the isolation of Russia, the Non-Aggression Pact with Germany and the Finnish war, and the underlying principle in Russian policy—security—is stressed.

### Italian Foreign Policy

IN a further pamphlet (No. 48) Miss Ward attempts to place in their proper perspective the answers to such questions regarding Italian foreign policy as why Italy waited nine months before declaring war, and why she entered the war against old allies on the side of a hereditary enemy. Miss Ward indicates the consistency of Italy's policy, and states that the failures of her arms and diplomacy to-day were already predictable when she started her career as a great power some seventy years ago. Her reduction to colonial status as a dependency of the German Reich was always inherent in her policy of seeking aggrandizement without the military strength to secure it single-handed. Italy's humiliation will only be banished in a society in which great powers are no longer measured in colonial empire and military strength; in a fully organized European society of nations, Italy could play a leading part.