

NEWS AND VIEWS

British Association: Science and World Order

FURTHER information is now available concerning the conference on "Science and World Order" to be held under the auspices of the British Association (Division for Social and International Relations of Science) during September 26-28, at the Royal Institution (see p. 331 of this issue).

The First Session, under the chairmanship of Sir Richard Gregory, president of the British Association, will deal with "Science in Government". It will deal with the use of scientific men and scientific methods within departments of Government, and with the development of Government research. Prof. A. V. Hill will describe the use which has been made of scientific workers, and the way in which co-operation and collaboration has been secured in Britain and between Britain and the United States. Prof. J. D. Bernal will deal with the shape of scientific organization within Government service, and its possible future development. A French representative will be asked to deal with the organization of science in France before the War. It is hoped that the Chinese representative will deal with the development and encouragement of scientific organization behind the lines and under stress of war in China, and that a Russian representative will outline the important part which science has played in the development of the U.S.S.R.

The Second Session, under the chairmanship of the United States Ambassador, Mr. Winant, will deal with "Science and Human Needs". Sir John Orr will be dealing with food in terms of the advance in the science of nutrition, of the work which has been done in the form of surveys of food requirements of various countries, of the inadequacies, and of the means, which science offers, of raising the standard of nutrition throughout the world. Sir Harold Hartley, speaking on "Power", will discuss the development of the natural resources of the world to secure the maximum benefit. An American representative will probably deal with the harnessing of power to the new amenities of life.

The Third Session, under the chairmanship of the Russian Ambassador, Mr. Maisky, is concerned with "Science and World Planning". An American representative will deal with large-scale projects, such as the Tennessee Valley development, illustrate the plan behind it, and the future of such development. Prof. Sargent Florence will discuss the redistribution of the population, which has been made possible by electrification, but which, without planning, may equally lead to even greater concentration in conurbations. Other speakers will relate similar examples to the general need for large-scale planning in terms of world reorganization.

The Fourth Session, under the chairmanship of Dr. Benes, President of the Czechoslovak Republic, will deal with "Science and Technological Advance". It will

be concerned with the new processes, new materials, and new production techniques, which have been made possible by science and have been accelerated by war, and which, under planning, can mean the release of abundance, and without planning, will mean economic chaos.

The Fifth Session, under the chairmanship of the Chinese Ambassador, Dr. Wellington Koo, will deal with "Science and Post-War Relief". Representative speakers will concern themselves with: (1) the risks of epidemic diseases through war exhaustion, and the measures to counter them; (2) the risks of famine and the distribution of surpluses which are now being accumulated throughout the world; (3) 'scorched earth' problems of soil-rehabilitation. Others will deal with the development of backward and neglected areas.

The Sixth Session, under the chairmanship of Mr. H. G. Wells, will deal with "Science and the World Mind". The major problem is how to make the peoples and nations comprehend the meaning of scientific development and the ways in which these can be used for human betterment and social security. At the end of the conference, the president, Sir Richard Gregory, will put forward a new Charter of Scientific Fellowship.

University of Birmingham: Chair of Zoology

THE appointment of Prof. L. T. Hogben, F.R.S., to the chair of zoology in the University of Birmingham, represents a serious loss to the University of Aberdeen where, in the course of a short but fruitful tenure of the regius chair of natural history, he had built up one of the most attractive and active departments in Great Britain. Both at Aberdeen and Cape Town, Prof. Hogben adapted the policy of his department to fit in with local biological interests and exploited to the fullest extent the natural resources of the neighbourhood. At Birmingham he will find ample scope for similar activity, and his greater proximity to London will enable him to attend meetings from which his absence has, too long, been felt.

Among academic zoologists Prof. Hogben is distinguished for his well-known analysis of the pigimentary effector systems of vertebrates, particularly those of the amphibia; he has also made very important contributions to genetics. In both these fields he has had numerous students in Great Britain and elsewhere. In much wider fields Prof. Hogben is known as the author of "Mathematics for the Million" and "Science for the Citizen". Both of these books show not only a very remarkable width of vision but also a profound belief in the intelligence of the average man. At Birmingham, Prof. Hogben will find a fertile field, well tilled by his predecessor, Prof. H. Munro Fox, F.R.S. (NATURE, June 28, p. 800), and of the abundance of the crop he will reap there can be no doubt.