

aspects of the use of atomic energy. The station will be at Harwell airfield, near Didcot. Responsibility for research on atomic energy, which hitherto has rested on the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, is to be transferred to the Ministry of Supply, and the Tube Alloys Directorate which dealt with such matters is accordingly being transferred to the Ministry. The whole of the cost of research in this connexion will fall on the Government. In reply to a question asking whether this change of control means that the Government is more concerned with the weapon value of atomic energy than its production value, Mr. Attlee remarked that this was not so, and that the Ministry of Supply is engaged in civilian production as well as production for the Services.

On October 30, Mr. Attlee stated in the House of Commons that he is to visit President Truman in Washington "to discuss with him and the Prime Minister of Canada the problems to which the discovery of atomic energy have given rise"; Sir John Anderson, chairman of the Advisory Committee on Atomic Energy, is to accompany him in an advisory capacity.

French Association for the Advancement of Science

THE French Association for the Advancement of Science held a large and enthusiastic Congrès de la Victoire in Paris during October 20-26. This was the first assembly of its kind to be held since 1939, the usual annual meetings having been suspended during the period of the War. At the invitation of the Association, delegates were present from Great Britain, the United States, Canada, the U.S.S.R., Argentine, Switzerland, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Czechoslovakia and Rumania. About fifteen hundred members of the Association and the delegates were present at the opening meeting in the Great Hall of the Sorbonne on Saturday, October 20. The president of the Municipal Council of Paris opened the proceedings with a welcoming speech, which was followed by discourses delivered by Prof. Joliot-Curie and Prof. Justin-Besançon, president of the French Red Cross.

Prof. Henri Piéron, who had been elected president of the Association at the Liège meeting in 1939, delivered his presidential address after the chief delegates had paid tribute to the vitality of French science and its renewed vigour, in the addresses presented by them. The British Association delegation was headed by its president, Sir Richard Gregory, who read the address sent by the Association; the other delegates from Great Britain were Sir Thomas Holland and Dr. W. Campbell Smith, members of the Council of this Association, Sir Edward Appleton and Prof. E. N. da C. Andrade, with Lady Gregory representing the lady members. The inaugural meeting lasted from three to six o'clock in the afternoon.

The twenty-two sections met separately or jointly in six scientific institutions during the week, and with full programmes of papers. Sir Edward Appleton gave a lecture on the ionosphere on the afternoon of October 22 to a joint meeting of three sections, and he and Prof. Andrade afterwards made two short broadcasts at the request of the radio officer attached to the British Embassy. A reception was given on the evening of October 24 at the Hôtel de Ville and there was a banquet on October 25 at the Salons Vianey. At the general assembly on October 26, the president and other officers of the Association for

the ensuing year were elected and other official business transacted. On the same evening the British Ambassador and Lady Diana Duff Cooper gave a reception at their official residence to the foreign delegates and officers of the Association and other distinguished representatives of scientific societies in Paris.

Middle East Field Biology

THE presence of numerous amateur and professional zoologists among the British Forces in the Middle East countries during the War has resulted in a considerable amount of field biology being carried out in those countries, much of which is now being published. The anti-locust work of British units and frontier defence forces also aided. The Zoological Society of Egypt has issued numerous special bulletins to accommodate these original observations, mainly upon ornithology. Bull. 7 issued in 1945 contains Shamseddin Halfawi's "Notes on Birds from Western Saudi-Arabia". Bull. 6 contains bird notes from Lower Egypt (autumn, 1943), and from Amriya, Egypt (July-October 1942), and a list of migrants seen in Egypt, the western desert and Tripolitania, while special supplements to this bulletin were devoted to papers on Palestine and Syria, and to the migration of the white stork. Bull. 2 contains valuable notes on the birds of Suez, and Bull. 5 has notes on bird migration across the western desert and Libya. Especially interesting are the bird notes from the Daedalus lighthouse in the Red Sea, augmented by the British keeper at the lighthouse, as they supplement some of the earlier work of Meinertzhagen in the First World War.

The Army itself has published much through its Middle East Biological Scheme, organized from G.H.Q. to collect specimens for the British Museum, and with naturalists' clubs in Baghdad, Jerusalem, Damascus and Cairo publishing regular bulletins. Collecting expeditions have been organized through the scheme over periods of several days or weeks at Lake Tiberias, Lake Huleh, Mt. Cassius in Syria, etc., the Anti-Lebanons have been surveyed, and several expeditions have been made in the Euphrates valley, bringing up to date "The Survey of Iraq Fauna" published by the Bombay Natural History Society (1915-19), with the work on birds, mammals, insects and reptiles in Mesopotamia collected and studied by soldier naturalists in Mesopotamia during the First World War.

History and Philosophy of Science

PRIOR to 1939, the Departments of the History and Philosophy of Science and of the History of Medicine at University College, London, which were the only departments of their kind in Great Britain, provided either full-time or part-time postgraduate courses of one and two years. On an average the department accommodated 30-35 students. With the full return of University College to London this autumn, the Department has been reopened. It is hoped shortly to make an appointment to the post of professor and head of the Department, which is at present vacant; but, in the meantime, courses in the history of science are being provided by members of the pre-war staff. Although the session commenced on October 1, arrangements have been made whereby intending students will be able to commence the first year's course so late as January 1946 without loss of opportunity.