

hall (*Physiol. Rev.*, 25, 182; 1945) has reviewed the inorganic industrial risks and says that uranium salts are very toxic and may cause chronic nephritis and degeneration of the liver. Gustafson, Koletsky and Free (*Arch. Intern. Med.*, 74, 416; 1944) reported severe tubular necrosis of the kidneys in dogs to which uranyl nitrate had been given intravenously, but sodium citrate, given either by the mouth or intravenously, protected the kidney against uranium poisoning. This was confirmed by other American workers. The reason why sodium citrate should protect the kidney in this way is apparently not known.

### Bureau of Current Affairs

THE functions of the new Bureau of Current Affairs which has recently been set up by the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust has been outlined in the first of a series of information leaflets which the Bureau proposes to issue. The leaflet contains a brief summary of the policy of the Bureau and a prospectus of the activities which, gradually, it intends to develop. Although the Bureau does not seek to establish discussion groups, it proposes to act as a 'provisioning' body for those that already exist and those new ones which will be developed by various educational and social organisations. Of the services which the Bureau will offer there will be, first, a discussion-brief in pamphlet form called *Current Affairs*. This will be issued fortnightly and will be similar in size, style and purpose to the Army Bureau of Current Affairs bulletins so long familiar to the Services. The bulk of the twenty-page pamphlet will contain a popular exposition of some selected theme by an accepted authority; the preamble will be a 'layout for discussion' built up in the editorial office. The bulletin will, moreover, be illustrated in a variety of ways—with line-drawings, for example, which the group-leader could reproduce on his black-board, or with pictorial devices to illuminate some obscure point in the text. The second publication to be launched in the Bureau's immediate programme is a pictorial one called *Map Review*. This, too, will be published once a fortnight and will be produced in poster size and in colour. Its front side will embody in maps, pictures and diagrams the more significant events in current affairs for the particular fortnight, while its reverse side will carry full-scale maps delineating the major political, social and economic problems of our time. Displayed on the walls of any canteen, library or club, these map-reviews will provide a graphic summary of topical issues. The Bureau will also develop other pictorial media. *Current Affairs* and *Map Review* will probably first appear this month.

The war-time promotion of discussion groups has shown the necessity to give group leaders some basic training in the art of chairmanship. In the Services, particularly, many thousands of men and women, in short courses, have been taught the rudiments of discussion group leadership. These concentrated courses produced impressive results, and the Bureau proposes to organise courses on similar lines; a leaflet about them will appear in due course. Besides reference facilities at its London headquarters, the Bureau proposes to have a team of resident advisers to give callers guidance and direction in problems likely to harass the amateur leader of a discussion group. Travelling advisers will carry out similar functions throughout the country. The management of the Bureau's affairs has been initially assigned by

the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust to a provisional committee made up partly from the Trustees and partly from people of standing in British education. The chairman is Mr. P. R. Morris, vice-chancellor of the University of Bristol, and the members include Mr. E. Salter Davies, Sir George Dyson, Lord Elgin, Mrs. Walter Elliott, Mr. W. O. Lester Smith, Mrs. Barbara Wootton, Sir Robert Wood and Mr. J. Wilkie. The director of the Bureau is Mr. W. E. Williams, who created the Army Bureau of Current Affairs in 1941 and remained its only director until 1946. Anyone interested in this significant new experiment in adult education may obtain further particulars from the Director at 117 Piccadilly, London, W.1.

### Road Research Board

THE Lord President of the Council announced in the House of Commons on April 1 that the Road Research Board of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research has been re-constituted under the chairmanship of Sir Frank Smith, and that the terms of reference of the Board have been extended to enable it to deal more specifically with problems of road safety and traffic flow as well as with problems of road construction and maintenance. The change is to meet the relevant recommendations of the report of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Prevention of Road Accidents (the Alness Committee). The constitution of the Board is as follows: Sir Frank Smith (*chairman*), former secretary of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research; Major H. E. Aldington, chief engineer (roads), Ministry of Transport; Prof. J. D. Bernal, professor of physics at Birkbeck College, University of London; Mr. J. L. Beckett, city surveyor, Leicester; Mr. R. V. Birch, on the board of several road transport companies; Mr. E. J. Buckton, consulting engineer of Rendel, Palmer and Tritton, consulting chartered civil engineers; Sir George Burt, engineer and contractor, John Mowlem and Co. Ltd., chairman of the Building Research Board, D.S.I.R.; Prof. J. H. Jones, professor of economics, University of Leeds; Mr. E. J. Powell, county surveyor, Glamorgan; Mr. J. Davidson Pratt, director and secretary, Association of British Chemical Manufacturers, chairman of the Road Tar Research Committee, D.S.I.R.; Mr. J. H. M. Richards, borough engineer, Hornsey; Mr. E. C. Ruffe, of Morris Commercial Cars Ltd.; Sir Alker Tripp, assistant commissioner of the Metropolitan Police; Col. T. U. Wilson, county surveyor, Lanarkshire. Assessors have also been appointed to the Board to represent the Ministry of Transport and other Government departments concerned with the work of the Board. The Board is charged with recommending a programme of research, advising on its execution and reporting each year on the work done. The Department of Scientific and Industrial Research will be responsible for conducting the researches.

### Veterinary Education in Great Britain

IT was stated in the House of Commons on April 1 that the Government welcomes, in principle, the recommendations made by the Loveday Committee on Veterinary Education in Great Britain and by the Chancellor Committee on Veterinary Practice by Unregistered Persons, and it is intended as soon as practicable to introduce legislation to authorize a university to confer degrees which shall entitle the holders to registration with the Royal College of

Veterinary Surgeons as veterinary surgeons. The Council of the College will also be reconstituted. The Loveday Committee also recommended greatly improved veterinary educational facilities, involving considerable capital expenditure and additional annual expenditure. The Government will be prepared to provide substantially increased financial assistance to veterinary education.

### Gift to University of Birmingham

Sir Fitzroy and Lady Anstruther Gough Calthorpe have again shown their practical interest in the University of Birmingham by presenting seven acres of land opposite the northern end of the University Avenue, a position which makes it particularly valuable as a site for the vice-chancellor's house and other amenities which have long been felt to be desirable. It may be recalled that the University stands on land given by the Calthorpe family in 1900, and since then the family has presented sixty-one acres. When the lay-out of the proposed new buildings was being considered recently, it became evident that the existing land, extensive though it be, is not altogether adequate to meet all demands likely to be made upon it. The new gift is therefore specially welcome.

### School on Education for Family Life

THE British Social Hygiene Council, in collaboration with the Association for Education in Citizenship, and the Marriage Guidance Council, is organising a week-end school, the first of its kind to be held in Britain, to take place in Morley College, 61 Westminster Bridge Road, London, S.E.1. It is designed primarily to meet the needs of teachers and youth leaders; parents, social workers and others interested will be welcome. The following have promised to speak: Mr. Cyril Bibby, Dr. McAlister Brew, Mrs. E. Hubback, Dr. Housden, Dr. David Mace, Mrs. Mace, Mr. R. Weatherall and Dr. Taylor (governor of Holloway Prison). The fee will be 10s. inclusive. Application for tickets should be made to the British Social Hygiene Council, Tavistock House North, Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1, from which further details can be obtained.

### Institution of Electrical Engineers: Scholarships for 1946

THE Council of the Institution of Electrical Engineers will this year consider the award of the following scholarships, subject to the regulations laid down by the Ministry of Labour and National Service regarding the candidates' ages at the commencement of their courses.

*Research Scholarships*: Ferranti Scholarship (£250 a year for two years), Oliver Lodge Scholarship (£250 for one year), Swan Memorial Scholarship (£120 for one year), C. P. Sparks War Thanksgiving Fund (not exceeding £100 a year).

*Student Scholarships*: Duddell Scholarship (£150 a year for three years), William Beedie Esson Scholarship (£120 a year for two years), Silvanus Thompson Scholarship (£100 a year, plus tuition fees, for two years), Salomons Scholarship (£100 for one year), David Hughes Scholarship (£100 for one year), Thorrowgood Scholarship (£25 a year for two years). The closing date for receiving applications is April 15 for student scholarships and June 1 for research scholarships.

### Announcements

PROF. H. MUNRO FOX, chairman of the British National Committee for Biology, is on a tour of Europe in order to discuss with colleagues on the Continent co-operation in biological science and particularly the future of the International Union for Biology. After five days in Holland he will proceed to Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, France and Belgium in that order, where he will visit the national academy of each country and exchange views with the members. It is hoped that he will also have an opportunity of discussing the needs for scientific instruments and equipment in the laboratories abroad which have suffered from Nazi occupation.

MR. C. M. WHITTAKER, a director of Courtaulds Ltd. and author of "Dyeing with Coal Tar Dyestuffs", has been elected president of the Society of Dyers and Colourists.

PROF. ALFRED PHILIPPSON, the doyen of German geographers, who returned to Bonn from internment in Theresin last August, has been given the honorary degree of D.Sc. by the University of Bonn.

A SPECIAL meeting of the Royal Anthropological Institute will be held on April 16 in honour of the visit to London of members of the permanent council of the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences. The Huxley Memorial Lecture (postponed from 1941) will be delivered by Prof. Henri Breuil, who will speak on "La Découverte de l'Antiquité de l'Homme et quelques unes de ses evidences".

A JOINT meeting of the Royal Meteorological Society and the Physical Society will be held at the Royal Institution, Albemarle Street, London, W.1, on April 8, beginning at 2.15, for a conference on "Meteorological Factors in Radio Wave Propagation". Nine papers on theoretical and practical aspects of the subject are to be read and discussed.

A GENERAL discussion on "Transformer Oil", arranged by the Institute of Petroleum, will be held at the Institution of Electrical Engineers on April 9, beginning at 3 p.m., under the chairmanship of Mr. E. A. Evans, of Messrs. C. C. Wakefield and Co., Ltd., vice-president of the Institute. Both the petroleum industry and the electrical industry will be represented, so that matters of common interest may be discussed.

A GENERAL discussion on "Dielectrics" has been arranged by the Faraday Society and will be held in the Department of Physics of the University of Bristol during April 24-26. Workers from the United States, France and Holland are to take part in the meeting.

PROF. F. J. COLE writes: "In my review published in *Nature* of March 2, p. 246, of Dr. G. Leboucq's handbook on Vesalius, I concluded from the wording of the imprint that it was a propaganda publication of the Belgian Government. The publishers now inform me that the series which includes the work in question is a private undertaking, and has no connexion whatever with the Government. If I may correct another error in this review, the date 1538 in the first paragraph should be 1533."