

the greatest remaining wood reservoir in the world, they produce a great assortment of non-timber and food products. The Organisation is the only existing body that can influence Governments to develop sound policies for their utilization, thus avoiding a repetition of the wasteful exploitation that has so often occurred in the past. To this end a world forest policy is urged, such as has already been considered by the Interim Commission. Besides the direct value of the timber, good forest management has far-reaching beneficial effects. Afforestation can reclaim swampy land, prevent soil erosion, and, provided grazing is controlled, may be an asset in the raising of livestock; in fact, over large areas afforestation is a pre-requisite to better agriculture and improved rural living standards.

Up to the present, there has been no world-wide organisation of fisheries, and the collection of information regarding world production and markets and the setting up of statistical surveys are pressing demands on the Food and Agriculture Organisation. Normally more than ninety per cent of the world's fish is caught in the North Atlantic and North Pacific Oceans, but, during the War, fishing grounds have been developed by South American countries and could probably be extended elsewhere. Freshwater fish, too, might be a valuable asset in districts where livestock industries cannot easily be developed and the diet is likely to be deficient in protein. Conservation measures are of importance in the old fisheries, and in view of the varied nature of the problems in the different areas, it is suggested that international action should be established on a regional basis.

Marketing affects all commodities, and the economic adjustment of international markets is perhaps the most crucial problem that confronts the Food and Agriculture Organisation. The under-developed countries need advice and help on the technical side of modern marketing, whereas simplification in methods of distribution is the prior call in the more advanced countries. Measures for international co-operation on matters of food infestation, standardization of grades, nomenclature, etc., will need working out, and machinery designed to deal with shortages and

surpluses. The improvements in methods of processing and storage developed during the War should prove of particular benefit in the latter case.

In all these fields statistics form an essential background, and there is urgent need for the continuation and extension of international records relating to agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food consumption. Uniformity in definition of terms, together with the use of comparable techniques for the collection of data, are urged, and the formation of a central statistical unit servicing all the activities of the new Organisation is suggested.

The need for a central library, or possibly of several regional libraries, is evident, and it is hoped that the agricultural library of the International Institute of Agriculture will be available as a nucleus for the Food and Agriculture Organisation.

The documents and resolutions appended to the report are impressive evidence of the work of Commission B. They comprise a set of rules of procedure, a set of permanent and temporary financial regulations, and a budget for the first two financial years. On this Commission's recommendation, the Conference decided to continue the temporary seat of the Organisation at Washington, and to establish the permanent seat at that of the United Nations, assuming that this would also be the seat of the Economic and Social Council.

In signing the constitution of the Food and Agriculture Organisation, governments have undertaken to make periodic reports to the director-general on progress achieved in the fields of nutrition, agriculture, forestry, fisheries and rural welfare. These will provide the information from which further advice and recommendations can be given—in fact, the Organisation will be useful to the extent which it is used. In the words of the chairman, "The first of the new permanent United Nations agencies is now launched. . . . The Conference hopes that it will likewise be first in energy and in usefulness, so that it may make the maximum contribution possible to healthier and more abundant life, and to a peace built on day-by-day, practical co-operation among the peoples of the world."

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NEWS and VIEWS

Prof. R. T. Leiper, C.M.G., F.R.S.

THE title of *imparis* professor of helminthology has been conferred by the University of London upon Prof. R. T. Leiper, who is retiring from the William Johnson Courtauld chair of helminthology. When he went to the London School of Tropical Medicine (which later amalgamated with the London School of Hygiene) Leiper set himself to organise the courses of instruction in helminthology which have been so valuable to medical men taking postgraduate courses and to others who have been able to attend them. Leiper was also director of the Institute of Agricultural Parasitology at Winches Farm, St. Albans. To his inspiration and wise guidance we are largely indebted for the series of researches done at this Institute upon the nematodes which do so much harm to valuable crops and also upon the nematodes and other helminths which attack farm animals. Winches Farm, now well known wherever parasitology is studied, is also the home of the Imperial Bureau

of Agricultural Parasitology, the services of which to research workers and to others can scarcely be under-estimated. Leiper also founded and edited the *Journal of Helminthology*, which was, until it became necessary, during the recent War, to discontinue it, one of the very few British journals devoted entirely to parasitology. Prof. Leiper's own researches take us back some forty years, when he began to publish the long series of papers in which his work is recorded. Outstanding among these papers is the record of his work on the life-histories of the human blood-flukes, *Schistosoma hæmatobium* and *S. mansoni*. When Japanese workers worked out the life-history of *Schistosoma japonicum*, which causes human schistosomiasis in Japan and adjacent areas, Leiper set to work in Egypt and demonstrated that *S. hæmatobium* and *S. mansoni* are different species, which employ as their intermediate hosts different species of snails. He thus laid the biological foundation of our present extensive know-

ledge of the biology and control of the forms of schistosomiasis caused by these two species of *Schistosoma*. Throughout his tenure of the Courtauld chair of helminthology, Prof. Leiper's advice and help were continually sought and generously given. He was a member of many committees and advisory bodies and exercised, as an adviser to these and to the Agricultural Research Council and other Government organisations, a widespread influence.

British Electrical and Allied Manufacturers' Association: Mr. Bruce H. Leeson, O.B.E.

MR. BRUCE H. LEESON, managing director of A. Reyrolle and Co., Ltd., has been appointed director of the British Electrical and Allied Manufacturers' Association as from October 1, in succession to Mr. V. Watlington. Mr. Leeson was responsible for the formation of the Technical and Research Department of Messrs. Reyrolle, with particular reference to the switchgear and protective gear upon which that firm specializes. He was intimately connected with the establishment of the first short-circuit testing station in Britain in 1929, and afterwards with the standardization of switchgear performance, and the formation of the Association of Short-Circuit Testing Authorities and the negotiations with the National Physical Laboratory, under the auspices of which it operates. Mr. Leeson has been actively interested in establishing anew the north-east coast of England as a development area for industry. Since their inception, he has taken a practical executive interest in three important local bodies: the Northern Industrial Group, which encourages industry and employment in the whole district; the North-East Development Association, which co-ordinates all efforts for the benefit of the area; and the North-East Engineering Bureau, which aims at progress in light and allied engineering.

British Iron and Steel Research Association: Dr. M. L. Becker

DR. M. L. BECKER, chief metallurgist to the Gear and Tool Divisions of Messrs. David Brown and Sons (Huddersfield), Ltd., has been appointed superintendent metallurgist to the British Iron and Steel Research Association. Previously he was on the staff of the National Physical Laboratory. Dr. Becker studied at the Universities of Sheffield and Manchester, and for a time was with the British Cast Iron Research Association. He has been closely associated with the iron and steel industry, having undertaken research on gaseous equilibria, alloys of iron, spring steels, materials for high-temperature service and many allied problems. Latterly his interests have been primarily in the use of steels and alloys in engineering, and in this connexion he has been concerned with the development of works processes of gas carburizing and of flame and induction hardening.

National Coal Board: Chief Mining Engineer

THE National Coal Board has appointed Prof. Douglas Hay to be chief mining engineer to the Board. Prof. Hay is president of the Institution of Mining Engineers and honorary professor of mining in the University of Sheffield. He is at present managing director of Barrow Barnsley Main Collieries, Ltd., and the Barnsley District Coking Company, Ltd., also technical director of the Wombwell Main Company, Ltd. He was H.M. Inspector of Mines for Durham

and North Staffs during 1920-22; and professor of mining in the University of Sheffield during 1922-25. He has been consulting engineer on ventilation of the Mersey Tunnel (1929-37) and Dartford Tunnel since 1937.

Roman Remains in Exeter 5/3

RESULTS of exceptional interest for the study of Roman Britain have been obtained by the Committee excavating on war-damaged sites in the city of Exeter. The work has been carried out under the direction of Lady Fox. According to a preliminary report (*The Times*, August 21) two houses of the period of the first occupation by the Romans of what is now Exeter were discovered in ground to the east of the Lower Market. They were built in a framework of wooden uprights, six inches in diameter, and driven deeply into the ground. These two structures stood one on either side of a narrow metalled roadway with a central channel to carry off surface water to the Exe. It was possible to construct a nearly complete plan of one of the houses, which showed that it had consisted of one large room, 36 ft. by 22 ft., an adjoining kitchen or work chamber and a narrow annex. The floor of the principal room was of clay, which had been kept sanded; the walls were probably of horizontal boarding or of wattle and daub. There was a fireplace of red tiles in the centre. In the annex were Samian and pre-Flavian pottery, which fix the date at *circa* A.D. 55-75, and mingled with these, fragments of coarse native ribbed ware which point to the persistence to this relatively late date of an early Iron Age ware—a somewhat remarkable survival. At about A.D. 80 these buildings were demolished to make an open space, thought to have been the court of the Forum. The importance of this part of the Committee's results will readily be appreciated since they will help very considerably to throw light on the little-known urban life at this early stage of the Roman occupation.

Archaeological Work in Southern Mexico 6/6

AFTER four months of field work near San Lorenzo, Veracruz State in southern Mexico, on the third of a group of important centres of the La Venta culture, a joint archaeological expedition of the National Geographic Society and the Smithsonian Institution, led by Dr. Matthew W. Stirling, has returned to Washington. The season's activities mark the conclusion of eight years of work by Dr. Stirling. The inquiries began in 1939 with the uncovering of a huge basalt sculpture in the form of a human head, near Tres Zapotes, a village in Veracruz State. The site proved to have been a ceremonial centre marked also by earthen mounds. One of the most important discoveries during the series of expeditions was made at Tres Zapotes in 1939—an inscribed stela bearing in Mayan characters the earliest recorded date, believed to be contemporary, so far brought to light in the western hemisphere. The date has been interpreted as 291 B.C. according to the Spinden correlation or 31 B.C., Thompson correlation. In the following year, Dr. Stirling and his associates began excavations at the site of La Venta, Tabasco, so rich in monuments and artefacts that it has given its name to the newly discovered culture. La Venta, unlike the other two ceremonial centres, was a place of burial for important personages among the La Venta people. The San Lorenzo site, worked in 1946, is the farthest inland of the three sites excavated. It lies about sixty miles from the Gulf of Mexico on the Rio