

phosphorylase of the major component of starch, amylopectin. He has shown, moreover, that the Q-enzyme from potato converts the amylose to amylopectin, and he has devised an elegant method for the separation of the two components of starch. His more recent work has been on the photochemical degradation of carbohydrates, which has opened up what is practically a new field of investigation, the main features of which appear to be an indication of the reversal of the photosynthesis of starch. He has served as the English editor of the international publication "Advances in Carbohydrate Chemistry".

#### Royal Society of Medicine :

Sir Henry Dale, O.M., G.B.E., F.R.S.

THE Royal Society of Medicine elects its president annually, and he may be re-elected for a second year. The practice has been to offer the presidency in turn to a physician, a surgeon and a specialist. This year it has been the turn of the specialist, and Sir Henry Dale, the distinguished former director of the National Institute for Medical Research, and president during 1940-45 of the Royal Society, has been elected; this is the first time that a man whose chief claim to distinction has been in the field of pure science has been elected. The Royal Society of Medicine, like so many learned bodies, originated from meetings of a group of young men in London eager to discuss their work. It was founded in 1805, and its chief purpose has always been "the cultivation and promotion of physic and surgery, and all the branches of science connected with them". It received a Royal Charter in 1834. During its first century, the Society was mainly active in London, but in 1907 a number of medical societies joined forces with the Royal Medico-Chirurgical Society of London, as it was then called, to form the present well-established body, and a Supplemental Charter was given it. The Society now has some 9,000 fellows, of whom more than 1,200 are overseas; all nationalities are represented. The Society functions through twenty-four specialized sections, which hold some two hundred meetings between them every year. Members of the Society are justly proud of its library, which has a record of great activity. Apart from the provision of books, it has been able, through a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, to give substantial assistance in the restoration of medical libraries which had suffered through the War, by providing microfilm copies of journals now out of print.

#### Air Photography and Archaeology

THE importance of air photography for the archaeologist cannot be exaggerated. Not only does it permit accurate plotting of the visible monuments of an area to be made when detailed maps of the district are inaccurate or non-existent, but further it frequently indicates where ancient monuments now disappeared had once stood. Let us suppose a building, say, a Roman villa, once occupied an area of ground. Where the foundations had been dug the soil would have been disturbed, and, though perhaps nothing is visible now above ground, below the soil much brickwork, etc., would still occur. Corn or other crops on the field where the villa had been would grow somewhat differently as to height and density where the foundations lie, and would thus mark out as it were on a plan where they were. On the ground nothing can be seen; from the air the whole is clearly set out. Messrs. Kodak are to be congratulated on the exhibition of such photographs

which has been arranged at their premises in Regent Street, London, and is open to the public until July 21. An excellent explanatory pamphlet by Dr. J. K. St. Joseph, illustrated by a number of actual air photographs, has been issued. There are also maps showing where the various sites appearing in the exhibition occur. Such well-known localities as Stonehenge and Avebury have been included.

#### Biological Research Institute, Tihany

THE Director-General of Unesco, Dr. Julian Huxley, during his four-day visit to Hungary as guest of the Hungarian Government, spent June 13 at the Biological Research Institute at Tihany, Lake Balaton (see *Nature*, 158, 456; 1946). Dr. Huxley was interested in the success of the efforts, made immediately after the cessation of fighting and during the inflation, which have resulted in a Research Institute capable of publishing, each year since 1945, the *Archiva Biologica Hungarica*, containing some thirty-five papers in congress languages (mostly in English). He approved the idea which had here been followed of assembling in one Institute the greatest possible variety of biological disciplines, and showed himself keenly aware of the many advantages of such a system, especially in small countries. Dr. Huxley was interested to hear that several research workers were to go to the Institute for a period. Two places are reserved for invited Russian biologists; two English men of science are going for the summer and autumn and two Finnish biologists are also expected.

#### Exchange of War-time Periodicals with Germany

EFFORTS are still being made by the Foreign Office to make possible the exchange in bulk of periodicals issued during the Second World War by British learned societies, universities, and other institutions with those published by similar bodies in Germany. These efforts are more likely to be effective if information concerning the numbers of publications involved can be supplied. Interested librarians are accordingly asked to notify either the Director of the Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux, 52 Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1, or the Secretary of the Library Association, if they have not already done so: (a) of the total number of volumes or parts of periodicals issued during the War and held by them for exchange with German institutions, and (b) of the numbers which they should receive in return, indicating clearly whether it is known that these German publications are available for exchange purposes. The returns should be headed: "German exchange". It should be understood that the information asked for relates only to the war-time accumulation of periodicals for exchange. Future exchanges must be arranged by institutions in the two countries privately.

#### Benjamin Franklin as Printer and Publisher

VOL. 92, No. 2 of the *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* (1948) is devoted to studies of historical documents in the library of the Society at Philadelphia. Chief among these is a paper by W. E. Lingelbach on new source material regarding Benjamin Franklin's activities as printer and publisher both during the first half of his life and in his later years. Much of the material relates to his interests in Philadelphia during 1728-66, the most interesting being concerned with his printing activities in Passy. This latter includes a unique collection of more than