

The primary business of the meeting was to establish the International Institute and to set up a number of special commissions on various technical subjects. The following subjects have been included, the names of the respective chairmen being given in brackets: gas welding (M. C. G. Keel, director of the Swiss Acetylene Society); electric arc welding (Prof. H. E. Jaeger); resistance welding (chairman to be nominated by the U.S. National Resistance Welding Association); documentation (M. A. Leroy, director of the French Institute of Welding); testing and measurement (M. P. Goldschmidt); preparation of a welding dictionary (chairman to be nominated by the Belgian Institute of Welding); hygiene and safety (Mr. A. Härlin, secretary of the Swedish Welding Committee); weldability (Prof. Jaeger); residual stresses (Dr. F. A. Fox, assistant director of the British Welding Research Association); mechanical stress relieving (Prof. W. Soete, technical adviser to the Belgian Institute of Welding and lecturer at the University of Ghent); brittle fracture (Mr. Scheil, of the A. O. Smith Corporation, Milwaukee)

On June 8 and 9, two sessions were devoted to the reading of technical papers, and works visits were arranged on the following day.

It is intended to hold a similar expanded meeting of the Governing Council annually, and an invitation from the Netherlands to meet there in 1949 has been accepted. An invitation from the British delegation to hold the first World Welding Congress in Great Britain in the British Festival year, 1951, was also accepted.

TOXICITY OF D.D.T.

THE insecticide most in the public mind to-day is that known as D.D.T., concerning the efficacy of which rather extravagant claims have been put forward. Nevertheless, its discovery has already proved an event of major importance in view of its cheapness, adaptability and wide range of application. There remain, however, many aspects needing detailed study. One of these is the toxicity of D.D.T. to man and animals, both in the tropics and in temperate regions.

This subject has been investigated by Surgeon-Lieut. F. M. G. Stammers and Lieut.-Commander F. G. Sarel Whitfield, senior entomologist to the Medical Director General of the Navy. A brief summary of the investigations appeared in *Nature*, 157, 658 (1946); the full account has been published in the *Bulletin of Entomological Research* (38, 1; 1947). In the course of the investigations fifteen men, attached to the Royal Naval School of Tropical Hygiene in Colombo, were adopted as subjects for inquiry. They had been exposed for many months to heavy and continuous daily contact with a 5 per cent solution of D.D.T. in kerosene. Their work consisted of spraying ships and shore establishments against infestation by various insects. Of the men employed, one was a Tamil and the remainder Cinghalese. The results of a detailed medical investigation of these men, together with their general demeanour and labour output, indicated that they had received no ill-effects. In England the toxicity of a continuous-phase aerosol of D.D.T. to man and animals was investigated by means of trials at the Royal Naval Hospital, Plymouth, and at the Chemical Defence Experimental Station, Porton.

In so far as human beings were concerned the results were entirely negative. Also, there were no symptoms of D.D.T. poisoning in rats and rabbits as the result of 28-days exposure to continuous D.D.T. aerosol. Messrs. Stammers and Whitfield devote most of their paper to a critical review of the literature on the subject under investigation. As the result of this study and of their own investigations, it seems that D.D.T. is harmless to man and animals when used as an insecticide. It is, nevertheless, possible by unskilled formulation, by the use of unsuitable solvents and by misapplication to incur risk of life. The chance of cumulative effects from the storage of D.D.T. in the milk and tissues of sheep and cattle needs further investigation.

INSTITUTE OF PHYSICS ANNUAL REPORT

AT the annual general meeting of the Institute of Physics held on May 20, the following were elected to take office on October 1: *President*, Dr. F. C. Toy; *Vice-President*, Dr. E. T. Allibone; *Honorary Treasurer*, Mr. E. R. Davies; *Honorary Secretary*, Dr. B. P. Dudding; *New Ordinary Members of the Board*, Mr. J. H. Awbery and Mr. E. W. H. Selwyn. Dr. G. B. M. Sutherland has been appointed by the Faraday Society as its new representative on the Board.

The twenty-eighth annual report of the Board covering the work of 1947 was presented to the meeting. The report shows that the membership, now at about 3,250, continues to grow at the rate of a little more than ten per cent per annum. The Institute has seven branches, five in Britain and one each in Australia and India, and six subject groups, comprising electronics, industrial radiology, X-ray analysis, industrial spectroscopy, electron microscopy, and stress analysis. The last was formed in March 1947. All the branches and groups have each held several meetings during the year, and the report lists these in detail. In July, the Institute co-operated with the H. H. Wills Physical Laboratory of the University of Bristol in conducting a summer school, at which the attendance was 133, on "Cohesive Forces in Metals and the Mechanical Properties of Solids"; and, in September, with the Physical Society and in collaboration with the Institution of Electrical Engineers, it organised celebrations, including a special exhibition at the Science Museum, to mark the jubilee of the discovery of the electron.

The report shows that the Board has been active in matters concerning the education and training of physicists. The preparation of a report on developments in technological education has been undertaken (and has since been published); and to help in publicizing the newly established National Certificates in Applied Physics, the Institute has produced an illustrated booklet entitled "Experimental Science—A Career for the Practical Boy or Girl". The Australian branch, also, has in preparation a report on "Physics in Australia" and a booklet on "Physics as a Career". In addition to individual inquiries from members concerning professional matters, the Institute has, either through the Joint Council of Professional Scientists and other bodies on which the Institute is represented, or directly, dealt with difficulties in connexion with the re-organisation of the Scientific Civil Service, the collection of up-to-date