

encourage experiments in reindeer-breeding in suitable areas in Scotland and/or elsewhere in the United Kingdom and overseas, and to engage in any appropriate activity ancillary thereto. The immediate concern of the Council is to take advantage of an offer of twenty-five first-class breeding and draught animals from Scandinavia, which would be transported to the British Isles and cared for by trained herders for a minimum of three years, without cost to Great Britain. The offer was made in response to the interest shown, especially by Scots, in the economic possibilities of domesticated reindeer. The honorary secretary to the Council is Dr. E. J. Lindgren, Annesley House, 1a Union Road, Cambridge. Purely from the biological point of view, and as an experiment, the generous offer of twenty-five reindeer made to the Council is of considerable interest, provided that a suitable area can be found where the animals would have an opportunity of flourishing without disturbing seriously the native fauna, and that adequate measures to prevent their escape over the countryside are taken.

#### Russian Periodicals: Translated Contents Lists

SINCE September 1947, the use of Western European languages in periodicals has ceased in the U.S.S.R. Prior to that time the lists of contents in many periodicals were translated into English, French and German, while some of the periodicals, such as the *Journal of Physics*, were published entirely in Western European languages. In attempts to make known the contents of Russian periodicals, many organisations have been translating contents lists for their own internal use. Recently, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research started a scheme for collecting these lists and publishing them at monthly intervals under the title of "Translated Contents Lists of Russian Periodicals". The first issue appeared in June 1949. The original typescripts are used to make rota-print plates photographically, and it may be partly due to this that the booklet appears to be more up to date than two similar publications appearing in the United States. About a hundred Russian scientific and technical periodicals are available for export to Great Britain, and the publication of the Department covers some seventy of these in all fields, including agriculture and medicine. Copies of the "Translated Contents Lists of Russian Periodicals" are circulated free of charge to all co-operating organisations and, so far as the supply will permit, to other research organisations. If the demand becomes much greater, it may be necessary to charge for copies. A list of the periodicals not at present covered by the scheme is available, and anyone interested in helping to make this publication complete is invited to write to the Secretary, D.S.I.R. (Intelligence 1), Dorland House, 14-16 Regent Street, London, S.W.1.

#### Centre for Studies and Documentation in Palaeontology, Paris

THE Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris has set up a Centre for Studies and Documentation in Palaeontology to provide, in the form of microfilm, photography or letter, information and bibliographical or systematic references on the following subjects: (1) General information about the different sciences of the earth; for example, details about the location of extensive collections of geological or stratigraphical terms, etc. (2) Bibliographical information on the

different sciences (mineralogy, petrography, tectonics, geophysics, applied geology, regional geology, stratigraphy, general palaeontology, biological questions of interest to the palaeontologist). (3) References and figured slips dealing with animal and plant systematics in general (bibliographies, lists of types, lists of genera and higher groups, systematic groupings). In addition to palaeontological study, collections of the Centre can be consulted on the spot. Information on the above subjects is obtained by regular analysis of some 2,500 journals. Special studies can also be made, on request, for the period prior to 1940 or on any particular subject. The Centre also undertakes summaries of various articles, translations of articles published in Russian or Polish, and the preparation of figures of type-specimens in old collections. These documents are listed as they are completed in a small three-monthly bulletin. The use of the Centre is open to all, and in addition members (annual subscription of 300 fr.) receive the bulletin free of charge and can obtain reproductions at special rates. All inquiries should be addressed to: Prof. Roger, Centre d'Études et de Documentation Paléontologiques, 3 Place Valhubert, Paris 5. Payments should be made to Syndicat de Documentation Géologique et Paléontologique, 61 Rue de Buffon, Paris 5.

#### Transfer of Medical Books in the United States

THE New York Public Library has recently given twenty thousand medical volumes to the New York Academy of Medicine, these books being in the main the original collection accumulated by the Public Library during the nineteenth century when Dr. John Shaw Billings, earlier noted for his association with the Army Medical Library, was connected with it. This gift to the Academy of Medicine represents the fulfilment of an agreement entered into in 1910 between the Academy and the Public Library, whereby the former took over the medical part of the latter's library service. Since that time the Academy has served freely the needs of all in New York who have desired to consult medical literature, and it caters at present for about forty thousand readers a year. Of the twenty thousand volumes it has received, the Academy has decided to retain some eight thousand, adding them to its present collection of 260,000, and to give the remaining twelve thousand to the Southwestern Medical College in Dallas, Texas. This latter is a new College, founded in 1943, and is in the process of building up its library. Most of the larger medical libraries of the United States are located east of the Mississippi River, and it is highly commendable that the New York Academy of Medicine has made this contribution to the growth of a medical collection in the newer areas of the West.

#### Gresham's School Natural History Society 3/6

THE twenty-seventh report of Gresham's School Natural History Society once more shows the virility of these societies in our public schools. The report contains a list of the meetings and visits arranged by the astronomy, botany, entomology, meteorology and ornithology sections as well as a record of common and rarer plant, animal and other observations made during the year. The editor points with pride to two fine photographs of the American pectoral sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*). This rare immigrant was first observed by one of the members of the Society in September 1948, and the photographs afterwards taken were the first to be obtained of this bird in the