

The work of the Overseas Food Corporation was outlined by Mr. N. R. Fuggles-Couchman, who remarked that a great deal of publicity has been given to the difficulties met with in connexion with the groundnut scheme, but very little to the very successful sorghum-growing activities centred in the north-east State of Australia, Queensland. He pointed out that it is intended to sow groundnuts in Africa in rotation with other crops such as sunflowers, sorghum and so on, and possibly soya beans. Oil-palm cultivation on a large scale has not been undertaken because of the long period (about seven years) before any return can be expected. It is hoped in the not too distant future to provide an annual oil production of about 57,000 tons, which is still only a little more than a tenth of the estimated deficiency of fats. In Queensland 480,000 acres of land have been purchased since March 1948, and it is proposed to grow sorghum, sunflowers and soya beans and other crops for export to Britain. Pigs and store-cattle are being fattened on sorghum to provide extra bacon and meat. It is also proposed to export sorghum direct to the United Kingdom, where it can be used for fattening stock on the spot.

During the afternoon of the meeting, various commodities were discussed as follows: meat, Dr. John Hammond; fruit, Dr. R. G. Tompkins; cereals, Dr. Albert Green; dairy products, Dr. E. C. Capstick; fats, Dr. C. H. Clarke; bacon, Dr. E. C. Callow; and sugar, Mr. Phillip Lyle. It is impossible to discuss the remarks of these speakers in any detail, but reference may be made to one or two items of interest. Dr. Hammond, for example, pointed out that Great Britain is more dependent now (fifty-five per cent) on overseas meat than before the War, and that the home production of pigs contributes virtually no pork, since all the carcasses are converted into bacon. Dr. Green said that Australian wheats are surprisingly low in protein, and that the protein value of Canadian wheat depends upon whether it comes from the west or east coast. The former contains one per cent less protein, and if, for example, Britain obtained all its Canadian wheat from the west instead of the east, it would cost the public 45,000 tons of protein in a year.

As Dr. Callow pointed out, the Commonwealth supplies of bacon last year represent only about eighteen

per cent of the total requirements, and if it is assumed that the present bacon ration in Britain remains at 5 oz. for a year, the Commonwealth contribution, if it does not increase, will represent only ten per cent of the requirements. The difference can only be made up by increased home production or further imports from outside the Commonwealth. Dr. Tompkins said that fruit consumption in Great Britain has fallen from 92 lb. per head before the War to 76 lb. now, of which half is home grown. Dr. Capstick thought that the Dominions had done a wonderful job during the War in helping with the varying demands in Britain for dairy products. He said that the present market is more or less saturated for the type of cheese now being supplied, and that Commonwealth cheese makers might consider shipping varieties other than Cheddar. Another point of interest which he made is that sixty thousand tons annually of pre-war butter in Britain came from countries which are now behind the 'iron curtain', and that this has to be made up from other sources.

The meeting was reminded by Dr. C. H. Clarke that there is a world shortage of oils and fats. Although the *per capita* availability of fat for edible purposes is about equal to pre-war, there is a considerable shortage of soap. Greater use of detergents would not free more fat for food because only low-grade fats are used for soap making. Whale oil at the moment can only be used for food purposes. Hydrogenation provides us with a means of obtaining an enormous variety of fats and oils. Mr. Phillip Lyle said that increased production of sugar in the West Indies comes, not from planting more extensive areas, but by more intensive and improved methods of cultivation of areas already planted. He said that, although the food yeast factory is a good idea, it is difficult to persuade West Indians to eat its product. Some of this is being sent to Great Britain and is sold to manufacturers. The cause of the rise in prices is that there is not sufficient demand for the product to keep the factories working full time.

Dr. W. K. Slater (chairman) wound up an admirably conducted meeting by stressing the difficulties that will arise in feeding the British population as increased home demands are made for various food-stuffs in the countries producing them, and which at present have an exportable surplus that is sent to the United Kingdom.

## NEWS and VIEWS

### North Staffordshire University College: First Appointments

THE following full-time professors have been appointed in the new North Staffordshire University College which is to be opened in August at Keele, near Newcastle-under-Lyme: Mr. W. B. Gallie, senior lecturer in philosophy, University College, Swansea (*philosophy*); Mr. A. E. Teale, lecturer in philosophy, University of Manchester (*political and moral philosophy*); Mr. I. N. Sneddon, lecturer in natural philosophy, University of Glasgow (*mathematics*); Dr. H. D. Springall, senior lecturer, University of Manchester (*chemistry*); Mr. J. W. Blake, senior lecturer in history, Queen's University, Belfast (*history*); Mr. J. J. Lawlor, lecturer in English in Brasenose and Trinity Colleges, Oxford (*English*); Mr. W. W. Chambers, lecturer in German, University of Leeds (*modern languages*); Mr. S. E.

Finer, tutor and research fellow, Balliol College, Oxford (*political institutions*); Mr. S. H. Beaver, reader in economic geography, London School of Economics (*geography*); Mr. B. R. Williams, lecturer in economics, Queen's University, Belfast (*economics*); Dr. V. A. Vick, senior lecturer in physics, University of Manchester (*physics*); Dr. A. R. Gemmill, lecturer in botany, University of Manchester (*biology*); Mr. W. Stewart, lecturer in education, University College, Hull (*education*).

### Inland Water Survey Committee

THE Minister of Health, Mr. Aneurin Bevan, and the Secretary of State for Scotland, Mr. Arthur Woodburn, have reconstituted the Inland Water Survey Committee, with membership as follows: Major-General G. Cheetham (*chairman*), Mr. R. H. Cuthbertson, Mr. A. A. Fulton, Mr. W. H. Haile, Mr. M. G.