

with Prof. Th. Dobzhansky and Prof. S. L. Washburn. The first day was devoted to population genetics; and then followed a consideration of man's origin and evolution from the morphological point of view. The next subject was the genetical analysis of racial traits, such as blood groups and other normal and pathological human characters. The concept of race and racial types was next considered, and then the question of individual constitution and the correlation of the morphological type of the individual with physiological and psychological characters. The last day was devoted to a general summing-up and a consideration of the possibilities of future research. One suggested proposal made earlier in the symposium by Prof. S. L. Washburn was the institution of a science of experimental anthropology, based upon the study of lower primates. As an example of what might be achieved, he instanced the effect of the ablation of muscles in preventing the development of major external features of the skull. The main purpose of this symposium was to bring together anthropologists and geneticists, and this it achieved most happily. The effect of this 'cross-pollination' remains to be seen; but it may well represent a notable landmark in the science of anthropology.

Planning and Production Costs in Great Britain

In a brochure issued by Political and Economic Planning (16 Queen Anne's Gate, London, S.W.1) entitled "Economic Policy: a Discussion of Planning Techniques", it is pointed out that for many years government after government in Great Britain has been playing an increasing part in economic affairs. The first post-war government found ready to hand a machine of control left over from the War. There were great post-war demands for capital and consumer goods, limited resources of equipment, labour and materials to meet the demands, and the consequent danger of severe inflation; the mechanism of world trade had been thrown off its balance, and it was necessary to change over from war to peace production. All these problems demanded policies not fundamentally different from those of war. Controls were therefore preserved; but, as conditions improved, they were gradually relaxed and in part abandoned. The main tasks of planning are now in connexion with costs. If overseas markets are to be held, costs must be reduced; if internal stability is to be maintained, they must be reduced without deflation. The volume of industrial production has not risen quite enough to cover both the increased consumption and increased capital expenditure of the past five years—in other words, production costs are too high. The crucial problem is how to get the two sides of the equation to balance. It is a problem involving more than monetary policy; it is also a psychological problem and one of organisation.

Atmospheric Pollution and Smoke Abatement

THE National Smoke Abatement Society, which was founded in 1929, 'comes of age' this year, and its Spring Number (No. 73; 1950) is set out to direct attention to the achievements in twenty-one years. After a modest growth in ten years, the Society expanded rapidly during the period of the Second World War. The Spring Number contains interesting articles on current fuel practice in Great Britain and in the United States; probably the most interesting are those dealing with the influence of atmospheric pollution on public health. Thus the medical officer of Burnley, Lancs, compares blood

tests on women in Burnley showing 75 per cent of red blood corpuscles with corresponding tests in Denmark where 100 per cent was found, and the difference is ascribed to the variation of atmospheric pollution. Such observations tend to give the impression that smoke is a nuisance which is undesirable but possibly to be tolerated. The contents of this Spring Number contains evidence that the results can be much graver, leading to numbers of fatal results. In 1948, in Donora, a small industrial town of fourteen thousand inhabitants in Pennsylvania, there was an attack of smoke and fog such as to cause the death of twenty people within twenty-four hours. Investigation on a national scale put the cause down to a combination of circumstances (partly topographical as the town lies in a valley which is long and narrow); the weather was still, cold and anticyclonic; and local industry was concerned with heavy steel work with the consequent production of sulphurous products of combustion. These conditions recall similar experiences in 1930 at Liège in the Meuse Valley. The same results are conceivable in Great Britain under extreme conditions, and the only prevention would be the avoidance of atmospheric pollution.

Primates at the British Museum (Natural History)

A GUIDE to the fossil remains of man in the Department of Geology of the British Museum (Natural History) was written by the late Sir Arthur Smith Woodward and appeared in 1915. Although it reached a third edition in 1932, it has been out of print for some years. In the meantime, new discoveries in Africa, Asia and Europe had so enlarged the picture of man's early evolution that a fresh approach was essential, and the preparation of a new guide was undertaken by Prof. W. E. Le Gros Clark. This was published a year ago; but the demand has been so heavy that a second edition has been prepared. In this, after sketching the background of the principles of classification and evolution, Prof. Le Gros Clark treats the history of the group of primates, both living and fossil, in such detail as will enable the student to appreciate the evolutionary aspects of the origin of man. The implements and culture of early man, however, which played such an important part in his subsequent development, are dealt with in a separate guide, "Man the Tool-Maker", by Dr. K. P. Oakley. Copies of the guides may be obtained from the Museum, price 2s. 6d. each.

Anniversaries of Famous Chemists

A NUMBER of the *Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* (78, No. 1; 1950) is devoted to short biographies of chemists and summaries of their work in twenty-seven cases in which the centenary or polycentenary of the date of birth or death falls in the year 1950. These biographies have been prepared by Prof. E. H. Huntress. Among them are outstanding personalities such as Brühl, Gay-Lussac, Dumas, Wöhler and Hess; such names as D. Bernoulli, Heavyside and K. F. Braun are also included, although they were not chemists. References to periodical literature containing portraits and photographs are given. Of the individuals treated, nineteen are 100-year anniversaries, five are 150-year memorials, while the remaining three represent celebrations of 250, 300 and 400 years, respectively. The notices are detailed enough to be useful and interesting, references being given for the outstanding contributions of the persons concerned.