

launched by the Wildfowl Inquiry Committee at the end of 1948. Under the scheme, on payment of 5s. the subscriber is allotted a duck and given particulars of its species, the number of its ring, and date and place of ringing, and later sent any news of it that is received. In addition, for the next two years after paying the subscription, a summarized annual report of all interesting recoveries is forwarded. When the scheme was announced through the Press the result was overwhelming, hundreds of applications for ducks being received every day. As a result the stock of ducks available for adoption ran out and a waiting list of would-be adopters was formed. About 1,700 ducks have already been adopted by more than 1,000 owners. The report also describes the work of the permanent commission on migratory game birds, the international conference of mountain sportsmen and the international union for the protection of Nature. During the year two new member nations, Greece and Spain, joined the committee, bringing the present membership up to thirty-six countries. Copies of the report may be obtained from Miss P. Barclay-Smith, c/o Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London, S.W.7, price 2s.

Annual Report of the Textile Institute

THE annual report for 1949 of the Textile Institute, 16 St. Mary's Parsonage, Manchester 3, was presented at the recent annual meeting of the Institute, held at Leicester. Increased expenditure due to the rapid expansion of the Institute's work was partly met by increased membership subscriptions; but expenditure for the year again exceeded income, by £5,206. The total annual expenditure of the Institute is about £20,000, which is a minute fraction of one per cent of the amount spent by the textile industry, and it is suggested in the report that the income from industry might very well be considerably increased. A total of 777 new members were elected during the year, bringing the total membership on December 31, 1949, to 4,825. The inauguration of a South Wales and Monmouthshire Section of the Institute brought the number of sections and branches to fourteen. The Institute's *Journal* was issued during the year in two sections, separately bound, and its circulation rose to approximately 5,500 copies. Other publications by the Institute include "Fibre Science", "Jute", a further reprint of "Identification of Textile Materials" and the second issue of the Year Book. Entries in 1949 for both higher and ordinary certificates in textiles were the highest recorded, there being 205 candidates for the ordinary certificate and 93 for the higher, compared with 131 and 85 respectively in 1948. The successes gained in 1949 brought the number of ordinary national certificates awarded since the inception of the scheme in 1935 to 1,169, and of higher national certificates, 599. The increasing desire of students to attain the status of associateship of the Institute was shown by the growing number of entrants for the Institute's annual examination in general textile technology, for which there were 150 entrants, compared with the highest previous total of 114 in 1948. Applicants for associateship in 1949 numbered 218, of whom 75 were elected associates. Of 19 applications for fellowship, 17 were granted. The number of fellows in membership at the end of 1949 was 309, and of associates, 781. The first award of the new £1,000 scholarship was made to G. R. Haines, and the seventh award of the £750 scholarship (now to be offered annually) went to J. C. Hilton.

Noise and Sound Transmission

IN the summer of 1948 the Acoustics Group of the Physical Society held a symposium on noise and sound transmission, at which representatives from many countries attended. The proceedings of this symposium have recently been published in book form (pp. 200; London: Physical Society, 1949; 17s. 6d.; to fellows and members of the Acoustics Group, 10s. 6d.), and the forty-one contributions, though they vary considerably in size from a brief abstract in some cases to a lengthy detailed report in others, show that fundamentally the same problems are being tackled in different countries. The first half of the report deals with sound transmission. Leo Beranek, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who was the official representative of the Acoustical Society of America, presents a paper on sound transmission through partitions. He describes experiments that he and others are conducting and which are aimed at, first, the development of a new method of measurement of the transmission and absorption of sound by panels, and, second, the verification that the attenuation of sound by multiple structures can be accurately calculated from the density, flow resistance and dimensions of the components. There are several important contributions from members of the National Physical Laboratory and of the Building Research Station. Much practical information has been collected with regard to sound insulation of party walls between dwelling houses. The articles on domestic noise, noise in schools, ships and aboard aircraft are very interesting, and many readers will be at once attracted to the paper on sound insulation between flats in the hope of finding a solution of this most urgent problem. The latter half of the report, dealing with noise measurement, commences with a review of the problem by R. S. Dadson, of the National Physical Laboratory, and in several of the subsequent papers noise-meters and instruments for the measurement of loudness, vibration, electrical interference, complex sounds and machinery noise are discussed. The report concludes with a written communication from the United States National Bureau of Standards on the transmission of reverberant sound through single walls.

Low-Alloy Steel Standards for Spectrographic and Photometric Analysis

EIGHT standards, representative of the low-alloy steel range, are now available for routine and research spectrographic analysis. The increased use of spectrographic analysis during and since the Second World War led the British Iron and Steel Research Association's Methods of Analysis Committee, through its subcommittee on spectrographic analysis, to put high on its programme the provision of standards. Work on the subject began late in 1946, and recommended compositions for two series, low-alloy steel and residuals, were drawn up. The manufacture, physical preparation and preliminary analyses of the low-alloy series has been undertaken under the supervision of the Bureau of Analysed Samples, Ltd. The eight standards are available in the form of half-inch diameter rod and are intended to cover a range of up to 5 per cent of the more usual alloying elements in steel, the iron content of each standard being approximately 94½ per cent. Analytical standardization has been carried out on behalf of the Methods of Analysis Committee by twelve co-operating