

others. The English and French versions of the text are printed in parallel columns. The English translation is on the whole good; but there are, however, several peculiar phrases, mis spellings and too-literal translations.

Activities of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research

THE Department of Scientific and Industrial Research has issued a "Brief Guide to the Research Activities of the D.S.I.R. and the Research Associations", in which, following an alphabetical list of the research associations and research stations of the Department, research activities are listed by subject according to the Universal Decimal Classification, with an entry indicating the organization or station where the research in question is proceeding. An alphabetical index of the U.D.C. numbers used is supplied. This first attempt to group the activities of the Department according to the subjects concerned helps to fill in the picture of scientific research in Great Britain which was given in the "Notes on Current Scientific Researches" prepared for the Royal Society Empire Scientific Conference in 1948, and which will be supplemented later this year by a companion volume "Scientific Research in British Universities" now in preparation. Copies of the present publication are being made available on request to libraries, research organizations, university departments and industrial organizations (D.S.I.R., 5-11 Regent's Street, London, S.W.1).

Artificial Rock for Display Purposes

IN the July issue of the *Museums Journal*, Mr W. T. Stirling, of the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh, describes two methods of making artificial rocks. One of these is applicable to large exhibits and is built up in sections. After roughly arranging the specimens in position, a permanent wooden framework is constructed. This can be covered with tinned sheet iron of 0.005 gauge. When the structure has assumed the desired shape, which in all cases should be based on a photograph of a natural scene, the tin is covered with irregularly torn pieces of brown paper. These are soaked in hot water—for softened in this way they accommodate themselves readily to the required shape—and then fixed with a mixture of equal parts of flour-paste and thin glue. Smaller exhibits can be constructed in peat, and fine detail obtained easily with the use of a penknife. Loose fibres are singed with a gas flame and the charred surface brushed clean. At this point the two methods coincide, and the prepared rockwork receives a coating of thin plaster made by mixing one part of glue in five parts of boiling water and stirring in plaster of Paris until the mixture is of the consistency of cream. This is applied warm, and well brushed into the rockwork. It is advisable to apply a final coating of a thicker mixture of the above ingredients, or preferably of papier mâché. The rock should then be coloured, paying particular attention to detail.

Dunsink Observatory : Work during 1950

DR. H. A. BRÜCK, director of Dunsink Observatory, gives a short account of the work of the Observatory during 1950 in the June issue of the *Irish Astronomical Journal* (1, No. 6; 1951). The chief instrument, the solar installation, has been completed, and the large concave-grating spectrograph has been mounted in its double-walled box the internal temperature of

which will be controlled by a thermostat. New photoelectric photometers for the 12-in. refractor and the 15-in. reflector, involving the use of photomultiplier tubes, have been constructed. The reflector, with a photomultiplier photoelectric photometer, the output of which is recorded by an oscilloscope, has been used for precision measurement of the time of lunar occultations, and an occultation can be timed with an accuracy of a hundredth of a second by this method.

Royal Anthropological Institute : Annual Report

THE annual report of the Royal Anthropological Institute is more heartening than has been the case for some years. Finance is still the major worry; but this will ease when the Institute with certain other selected learned societies is housed in the new science centre to be built in London. On January 1 this year *Man* achieved its golden jubilee—a notable achievement for any learned journal. The Institute has decided to set up a blood-group centre as part of its work. Collation and synthesis can probably be best served by such an organization run in association with anthropologists. The library of the Institute has been largely transformed, thanks to a grant of 5,000 dollars from the Viking Fund. The fellowship of the Institute is mounting slowly; but, considering the services rendered, it is surprising that the number of Fellows is not greater.

Manchester Public Libraries : Annual Report for 1949-50

THE ninety-eighth annual report of the Manchester Public Libraries Committee for the year ended March 31, 1950 (pp. 40+4 plates; Manchester: Central Library, 1950), records a reduction in the combined issues of all departments, despite an increase in the use of the reference libraries. The reduction is most marked in the circulation of fiction; within the limits of the present book fund it has been impossible to replace many thousands of volumes withdrawn after very heavy use during and after the War years, and this is regarded as the basic factor in the reduction of total issues from 6,537,939 volumes to 6,124,747, thus interrupting the continuous increase of recent years. While issues in the Reference Library increased by some 3.5 per cent, issues in the Technical Library decreased by 5.5 per cent in spite of an increase of 6.5 per cent in the number of readers using the Library. The demand for more advanced technical books seems to follow supply; libraries which are able to maintain a good range of such works all report that good use is made of them. Stress is laid on the inadequacy of the seating accommodation in the General Reference Library, which is often monopolized by students, while the staff are fully occupied in the routine of providing books for readers and have little time to assist those unfamiliar with the Library or requiring expert assistance. Records of issues in the Technical Library show a transfer of interest from the sciences to the useful arts, and calls on the Technical Library's resources by local firms urgently needing special articles or books increased by 72 per cent.

Nottingham Research Discussions on Engineering Technology

A SERIES of research discussions on various branches of engineering technology, which is being arranged by the Departments of Civil and Mechanical Engineering of the University of Nottingham, will be held at