

information and experience and publicity); and economic regulation. Of the first, the broadsheet notes, besides presentation of a united front to other organizations, including government departments, the value of trade associations as a source of expert advice; of the second, that much valuable work is done in the fields of safety and health; and of the third, that not more than 15–20 per cent are concerned in any way with prices.

#### Taxonomy and Origins of Cultivated Bananas

A FURTHER useful and interesting contribution to our knowledge of these topics has been made by N. W. Simmonds and K. Shepherd (*J. Linn. Soc., Botany*, 55, No. 359, 302; 1955). Two wild species, *Musa acuminata* Colla and *M. balbisiana* Colla, are considered to be the sources from which virtually all the edible bananas have originated. Earlier investigations had led to the view that there were edible diploid and triploid forms of *M. acuminata*, of diploid and triploid forms of interspecific hybrid origin, and of triploid forms of *M. balbisiana*. Simmonds and Shepherd now point out, however, that this view of banana taxonomy presents difficulties, in that no edible diploid forms of *M. balbisiana* are known, and that, although mechanisms for the production of vigorous tetraploid bananas are well known from cytogenetic experiments, only one such banana is known to occur naturally. They have now used a taxonomic scoring method for classifying the edible bananas and to provide evidence on their evolution. Edible diploid forms of *Musa acuminata* are thought to be the primary source of the whole group to which another species, *M. balbisiana*, has contributed by hybridization. Thus there exist diploid and triploid edible forms of *M. acuminata* and diploid, triploid and tetraploid hybrid types of genetic constitutions that vary according to their histories. There is a faint possibility that a third wild species has contributed to the origins of a small group of triploid hybrid types. Triploidy was probably established under human selection for vigour and fruit size; tetraploidy is inexplicably rare. The centre of origin of the group is Indo-Malaya, and Malaya is probably the primary centre. The two Linnæan species, *M. paradisiaca* and *M. sapientum*, refer to identifiable edible varieties which are both shown here to be of hybrid origin. The names, therefore, may be rejected from the nomenclature of the wild bananas.

#### Poultry Housing

POULTRY keeping in England and Wales has undergone great changes since the last edition of Bulletin No. 56 "Poultry Housing" was published by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in 1935. Interest in intensive and specialized methods has much increased, and the type of housing and equipment required has been altered accordingly. A complete revision of the Bulletin has now been carried out, keeping in mind the needs of those following both the older and newer methods. The approach to the subject is essentially practical, and the Bulletin, which is now in its fifth edition (pp. 56+4 plates. London: H.M.S.O., 1955; 2s. 6d. net), contains a large number of excellent diagrams and photographs. Before describing the principles of design and construction, useful advice is given on layout, choice of building materials and the accommodation requirements of different classes of birds. Stress is laid on the importance of good ventilation, lighting and protection from extremes of weather, and practical

information given as to how these needs may best be met. The Bulletin should prove helpful to poultry keepers of all types in establishing an efficient unit at a minimum cost.

#### Scientific Film Review

As a result of a change in publication policy by the Scientific Film Association, the *Scientific Film Review* has been issued in a new format. The change is intended to create a journal which not only contains more film reviews than were previously published annually but which also provides a means of informing members and subscribers of the activities of the Association and of developments in the production and application of scientific and industrial films. The new journal will appear every second month. Three issues each year will contain film reviews and appraisals, articles on various aspects of scientific and industrial films, and other information of interest to all concerned with the application of film to scientific and industrial problems. The other three issues will generally be devoted to films on specific subjects. The first special issue of this kind will be published in June and will be devoted to films on chemistry. The present issue (2, No. 1; April 1956) contains articles on the film and work study, first steps in industrial film making and the use and abuse of film in medical illustration. There is also a classified list of medical films which have been notified during the past two years.

#### Health Education in the U.S.S.R.

IN September 1955 a group of fifteen medical men went to the Soviet Union to study preventive medicine. They made a journey covering some eight thousand miles from Leningrad to Moscow, Tashkent, Samarkand, Sochi, Stalingrad, back to Moscow and finally to Leningrad. Their experiences have been recorded by Dr. John Burton (*Health Education*, 14, No. 1; March 1956). In the U.S.S.R., the doctor considers the purpose of medicine not to be the alleviation of suffering but the raising of the standard of living; prevention takes precedence over cure. The health services are not divided into cure and prevention, as they are in Great Britain, with hospitals and general practice on one side and public health on the other. Their divisions are pædiatrics, adult medicine and environmental sanitation. Prevention and cure in these fields are carried on simultaneously in the same building, namely, the polyclinic. Every health worker—nurse, physician, sanitarian or surgeon—studies health education during his or her training.

#### Decisions on Zoological Names for Certain Birds

THE International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature has recently taken a series of decisions on the names for certain birds regarding which applications to the Commission were published in October 1952 in Part 1/3, Vol. 9, of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*. Among the decisions so taken, the following are of wide general interest: (1) suppression of the generic name *Colymbus* Linnæus, 1758, and acceptance of the generic name *Gavia* Forster, 1788, for the divers (loons) and of *Podiceps* Latham, 1787, for the grebes (Opinion 401); (2) validation of the generic name *Pyrhocorax* [Tunstall], 1771, for the croucher by the suppression of the name *Coracia* Brisson, 1760 (Opinion 404); (3) suppression of the specific name *ericetorum* Turton, 1807, and acceptance of the name *philomelos* Brehm, 1831, for