

University of Oxford, and was elected a Fellow of Jesus College in 1954. He is the author of a number of papers dealing with various problems of African geography, and no doubt will be able to maintain his connexion with Africa when he takes up his new post.

#### University of Poona : New Building for Chemistry

THE opening of the new building of the Chemistry Department of the University of Poona by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on August 1 marks the first stage in the development of the University in the old Government House at Ganeshkhind, Poona-7. The University has built this department at a cost of Rs. 4 lakhs, and though it is still incomplete, the Government of India has agreed to pay two-thirds of the cost to complete the building by addition of the lecture halls. The Ranade Industrial and Economic Institute has been shifted to one wing of the new building. Through the gift of Rs. 3 lakhs from the Government of India, the laboratory is equipped with up-to-date apparatus and equipment for research and the training of postgraduate students in X-ray diffraction, magnetochemistry, ultrasonics, dielectric work, electrochemistry, absorption and fluorescence spectra, optical dispersion, microchemistry, chromatography, chemistry of sugars and gul, enzymes, and chemical instrumentation. There are well-equipped workshops and ample stores. The Government of India has awarded one national research fellowship of Rs. 400 a month and three senior fellowships of Rs. 200 a month. Six University research fellowships and two Shembekar scholarships have been awarded for Ph.D. students. During the past five years six students in the Department have obtained the degree of Ph.D. and twelve that of M.Sc. by research. Ninety students gained their M.Sc. by examinations in different branches of chemistry. More than fifty research papers have been published both in India and abroad. Five students are carrying out postgraduate research for their D.Sc., twenty-five (including six women) for their Ph.D. and five for M.Sc. (by research). There are at present 104 students in the postgraduate classes, twelve of whom are women.

#### Belgian Youth Federation for the Study and Protection of Nature

A BELGIAN YOUTH FEDERATION for the Study and Protection of Nature, a section of l'Entente Nationale pour la Protection de Nature, has recently been founded in Brussels. This organization, which will receive both material and moral assistance from l'Entente Nationale, will be run entirely by young Belgians between the ages of twelve and twenty-eight. The new Federation is also under the patronage of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, which, since its foundation in 1948, has had its headquarters in Brussels. The aim of the Federation is to affiliate all youth societies throughout Belgium which share the same objectives, and thus Belgium will be able to send a more fully representative delegation to the camp which is being held in Austria this month when a federation on a larger scale, the International Youth Federation for the Study and Protection of Nature, will be founded under the auspices of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. The new international organization is a direct development of the International

Youth Camps for the Study and Protection of Nature, to which the Union has each year given its sponsorship and its financial support, sometimes with the aid of Unesco. At present, thirteen European countries are participating.

#### Commercial Irradiation of Diamonds

THE United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority has decided to accept requests for the irradiation of diamonds for commercial purposes, so far as other demands on the available irradiation facilities permit. In the past, the Authority has only consented to irradiate small quantities of diamonds for fundamental research purposes. Charges for this new service will be fixed by arrangement. The general phenomenon of irradiation-induced colour changes in gems was first discovered more than fifty years ago when effects of this kind due to radiations from naturally radioactive substances were first observed. Radiations from particle-accelerating machines, nuclear reactors and artificial radioactive isotopes may now be used to induce these effects. Diamonds irradiated inside a nuclear reactor are coloured green, and subsequent heat treatment may change the colour to brown; on the other hand, the action of radiation from particle-accelerating machines may induce a blue or blue-green colour. Diamonds irradiated in a nuclear reactor become temporarily radioactive, but this radioactivity decays to insignificance within a few days. Inquiries should be addressed to the Technical Irradiation Group, Isotope Division, A.E.R.E., Harwell.

#### Employment of Chemists in Great Britain

AN analysis given in the *Journal of the Royal Institute of Chemistry* of the 8,555 entries in the 1954 edition of the Register of the Royal Institute of Chemistry, which were sufficiently complete for the purpose, indicates that the proportion of chemists employed by industrial firms has fallen to 58 per cent compared with 60.3 per cent in 1948. Government departments and nationalized industries, excluding the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research and the research associations, employed 13.8 per cent in 1948 and 13.2 per cent in 1954, the new intake being mainly to the Atomic Energy Authority: the percentage in the nationalized industries has increased from 3.6 in 1952 to 3.9 in 1954, and in the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research and the research associations from 4.6 to 5.1. The percentage engaged as public analysts and in consulting work rose from 3.5 in 1948 to 4.4 in 1952 and is now 3.5. The most notable increase since 1952 is in the percentage of technical college teachers—from 4.2 to 5.8 per cent—but the proportion in universities shows little change, and that in schools continued to decrease and is now 3.5 per cent. Entries for those resident outside Great Britain and Ireland were disregarded.

#### Oil Consumption in Britain during 1954 and 1955

THE Petroleum Information Bureau has published a booklet on the "U.K. Petroleum Industry Statistics relating to Consumption and Refinery Production, 1954 and 1955" (pp. 9; from the Bureau, London; 1956) which shows that in 1955 a record was set up in oil consumption in Britain. The total inland consumption of petroleum products (exclusive of bunkering ships engaged on foreign trade) was 23,237,144 tons compared with 21,044,243 tons in 1954, an