

Graham Kerr Memorial

A COMMITTEE has been formed to promote a fund for a memorial to the late Sir John Graham Kerr, who occupied the regius chair of zoology in the University of Glasgow from 1902 until 1935. Lord Boyd Orr, chancellor of the University, has agreed to preside over the committee composed of the following friends and colleagues: Viscountess Davidson, Dr. Muriel Robertson, Sister Monica Taylor, Dr. G. S. Carter, Dr. H. B. Cott, Sir James Gray, Dr. Edward Hindle, Dr. R. A. Staig and Prof. C. M. Yonge. The form of the memorial will depend on the amount collected; but it is hoped that it will provide for the erection of a plaque and the endowment of an annual prize in zoology. Contributions should be sent as soon as possible to the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, Miss A. E. Miller, Department of Zoology, The University, Glasgow, W.2.

Sir William Siemens Exhibition

A SMALL exhibition presenting the life and work of Sir William Siemens was opened at the Science Museum, South Kensington, on March 10. Prepared in collaboration with Siemens Edison Swan, Ltd., it is based upon exhibits collected together for display at the Central Hall, Westminster, on the occasion of the Siemens Bros. Centenary Lecture on March 5. Charles William Siemens was an outstanding figure in the industrial development of the nineteenth century, combining scientific insight and technical ability with an unusual degree of commercial acumen. He was an acknowledged pioneer of the electrical industry, both on the telegraph and supply sides; and his application of his regenerative furnace to metallurgy made him a leader also of the steel-manufacturing industry. The exhibition traces his career and achievements in a chronological sequence. The early years, up to his election to the Royal Society, are represented by exhibits relating to his inventions during that period, and to the beginnings of his work with submarine cables. His later work is represented by exhibits dealing with the practice of steel manufacture and with the development of the electrical industry, including his work on the self-excited generator.

Directory of Societies for Natural History and Cognate Studies

THE Council of the British Association for the Advancement of Science has decided, at the invitation and with the financial assistance of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, to undertake the publication of a new edition of the "Directory of Natural History Societies", which was first published in 1948 by the Amateur Entomologists' Society. The "Directory" will cover archaeological, astronomical, biological, botanical, geographical, geological, meteorological and zoological societies—both national and local amateur bodies—and any other cognate societies which the Advisory Committee may feel should be included. More than three thousand questionnaires have so far been distributed, and it is hoped that any clubs or societies coming within the above terms of reference that have not yet received one will write to the editor, Dr. Averil Lysaght, c/o Bird Room, British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, London, S.W.7.

Scientific and Technical Man-power in Britain

MR. H. NICHOLLS, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Works, replied on behalf of the Lord

President of the Council to questions in the House of Commons on February 25 on the sections on research and development in the annual report for 1956-57 of the Advisory Council for Scientific Policy. He said that the Government is playing its part by approving the expansion programme for universities and technical colleges. It is for industry to take full advantage of the skill made available for civil research by the limitation of the defence programme. The Advisory Council is now studying in greater detail the methods of financing research at universities, including the provision of supporting staff. There is no sign at all of serious redundancy. Professional scientific and engineering institutions have offered to co-operate with the Committee on Scientific Man-power in carrying out an annual review of their membership, and in addition it has now been decided to undertake, towards the end of 1958, a further survey of the number of scientists and engineers in Great Britain, similar in scope to that made in 1955. He did not think there is anything to substantiate the suggestion that industry does not keep in close touch with new research in Britain and elsewhere.

Smoke Abatement

MR. H. NICHOLLS, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Works, replying on behalf of the Lord President of the Council to a question in the House of Commons on March 4 regarding research on the measurement and reduction of smoke from industrial chimneys, said that the Fuel Research Station of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research had developed two types of instrument to simplify the measurement of smoke. One is intended to show a stoker in the boiler house, and the other a smoke inspector outside, when smoke darker than the legal limit is being produced. The Research Station has also developed smoke-eliminating devices for industrial hand-fired boilers, adoption of which would offer a saving of more than 1 million tons of coal a year.

Emergency Supplies of Water

IN moving the second reading of the Water Bill in the House of Lords on February 27, the Minister without Portfolio, Lord Mancroft, said that the measure, which was designed to give permanent powers for maintaining public water supplies in serious droughts, would enable us to dispense with Defence Regulation 50A, under which orders had been made allowing water undertakings to draw water from emergency sources, and Defence Regulation 56, which had been used to relax restrictions and obligations resting on water undertakings. In the past few years a dozen or more water undertakings have been amalgamated and other discussions are proceeding. Although there are still nearly 1,000 such undertakings, he did not agree that nationalization is the best way to make them efficient; nearly 700 are actively considering amalgamation or re-grouping, and more than £240 million had been spent since the War on water supplies in Britain. Lord Mancroft said that the Bill broadly followed the lines of the Water Supplies (Emergency Shortage Orders) Act of 1934, Clause 1 allowing the Minister of Housing and Local Government or the Secretary of State for Scotland, if either is satisfied that a shortage of water supplies exists or is threatened because of an exceptional drought, to make orders authorizing undertakings to draw water from a source not normally used and to vary restrictions or obligations resting on the undertakings as to the amount of water that may be