

NATIONAL PARKS IN BRITAIN

THE eighth annual report of the National Parks Commission*, which includes confirmation of the Designation Order for the Brecon Beacons National Park, brought the number of National Parks established to ten, covering an area of 5,250 square miles. With the confirmation of the Commission's orders designating areas in the Gower Peninsula and in Lleyn and the Quantock Hills the first areas of outstanding natural beauty designated under Section 87 of the Act have been established, but the Minister's decision on the Surrey Hills area is awaited. Formal proposals for the designation of other areas on the Dorset coast and its hinterland, in Cornwall and Cannock Chase and on the Northumberland coast have been made to the local authorities concerned. The Commission also reports that though there has been no general relaxation of the restriction on capital expenditure, the Minister has enabled Park planning authorities to proceed with some tree planting and construction on car parks. Some quiet progress is reported in other matters also, such as the provision of cheap holiday accommodation for visitors with young families, anti-litter campaigns and caravan sites; but it is clear that, although in some areas progress has been made in the removal of misunderstandings and unreasonable criticism of the handling by the Park committees of applications for the supply of electricity, the Commission is still not entirely happy about the administrative arrangements resulting from the Minister's failure to insist on the provisions of the Act. There is also still room in all Park areas for the publicity activities which the Park Planning Board have been extending.

New rights of way were dedicated along some ten miles of the Pennine Way, leaving some 5½ miles outstanding, but progress in making footpath agreements for the approved Cornwall North and South Coast Paths remains slow. With the acquisition of some nine new miles along the Pembrokeshire Coast Path, 25 miles remain to be completed, and some 44 miles of new rights of way are still required

* Eighth Report of the National Parks Commission for the Year ending 30th September, 1957. Pp. iv + 66 + 8 plates. (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1958.) 5s. 6d. net.

for the Offa's Dyke route. Increasing attention is being given to publicity by the Commission itself, both for the Country Code and in attempts to make the National Parks more widely known and create public awareness of what is being done under the National Parks Act. Evidence was given to the Royal Commission on Common Land in which the National Parks Commission recommended that any body or person empowered to sanction change of use of commons, or to extinguish common rights, or to draw up schemes of management for commons, should, before any action were decided, receive representations from the local planning authority and, where National Parks or areas of outstanding natural beauty were concerned, from the National Parks Commission. The hope was expressed that common land would be given over to rotational cropping only where it was clearly in the national interest to do so, and that in forestry schemes landscape values would be protected so far as possible by the consultations already indicated. Management schemes designed to enhance the beauty of the landscape and preserve to the public the recreational use of the land were favoured, and the National Parks Commission stated that it would strongly oppose, save in cases of the most exceptional national importance, the use of common land for mineral extraction. An approach was again made, but without success, to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for provision in the Finance Bill, or in a separate Bill, for the reimbursement from the National Land Fund of expenditure on National Parks.

The outstanding feature of the Commission's report this year is once again that of development, and especially those represented by the proposals for a nuclear power station at Trawsfynydd. The Tryweryn Valley Water Scheme (in which the Liverpool Corporation withdrew entirely the Conway part of its scheme against which statutory and amenity bodies had petitioned) and developments at Milford Haven are going ahead, but the Commission affirms the view that large-scale industry should only be sited in National Parks in cases of over-riding and inescapable national necessity and in the absence of alternative sites elsewhere.

RECRUITMENT OF TEACHERS

SIR EDWARD BOYLE, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education, replying for the Government in a debate on February 14, on the recruitment and training of teachers, said that he did not think that unemployment among teachers in the nineteen-sixties was to be feared. The cornerstone of the Government's educational policy was that the first priority should be a reduction in the size of classes, and although Sir Edward did not discuss other objectives such as compulsory part-time day release and raising the school-leaving age to sixteen still required for full implementation of the 1944 Act, he pointed out that decision on the timing of these objectives would be governed by, *inter alia*, the supply of teachers. The debate was a little too early for him to give the full picture, but over the seven years that ended in 1956 the increase in the

number of teachers in maintained schools was about 6,500, but this now seemed to have dropped to just over 5,000. About 900 more training teachers should be going into the schools in 1958 than in 1957 and a further 700 in 1959. Recruits to teaching without professional training remained fairly steady at 700 a year, but there was a marked increase in graduates taking up first appointments in schools—from about 1,800 in the year ended March 31, 1956, to about 2,600 the following year. There had, however, been marked decline in the number of married women returning to teaching, from 2,300 in 1951-55, to just over 1,000 in 1956. Nearly 600 more teachers retired in 1957 than in 1956 and it seemed also that more women teachers resigned than in previous years. On this net annual increase of 5,000, if the present ratio of 21.5 pupils per full-time

teacher was maintained in senior classes, the average size of junior classes could only fall to a little more than 31 by 1962. Major changes in policy, however, must await adequate information and consultation.

Sir Edward Boyle affirmed that the Government was absolutely committed to the three-year training course announced last summer, and much planning was proceeding to secure the best results from this advance. He entirely agreed that the training colleges must be up to date in curriculum and discipline, and he thought that conditions were improving. The standard of many libraries was excellent and the regime much more flexible. On the technical side, after referring to the Willis Jackson report, Sir Edward said that recent figures for recruitment of technical teachers were encouraging: an increase of 1,000 appeared probable in 1956-57 and for 1957-58 a total increase of 1,400 was anticipated. After stressing the need for close co-operation with industry, Sir Edward said that in principle the Willis Jackson Committee's recommendations regarding pre-service courses in the three technical training colleges had been accepted and that Dr. Willis Jackson had accepted the chairmanship of a new standing committee on the supply and training of technical teachers which had just been established.

After dealing in some detail with the assessment training grants for former members of the Regular Armed Services, Sir Edward referred to the question of specialist teachers, particularly of mathematics and science. Although the 12,250 graduate teachers of mathematics and science in the schools was an increase of 1,750 over the past five years, this was insufficient to maintain the staffing standard in these subjects. The demand for such teachers was expected to increase by 40 per cent between now and 1962, but the actual increase was estimated at only 27 per cent. In the long term, the best hope of avoiding overcrowded classes in mathematics and science in sixth forms during the coming years lay in a large increase in mathematics and science graduates from the universities and in an increased attractiveness of teaching as a career. Sir Edward hoped that industrialists would remember that it was in their own interest that science and mathematics should be well taught in the schools. The training colleges could help in some measure and had been asked to bear in mind the importance of mathematics and science in planning their courses and selecting students for training, and in the past five years the number of training college students taking main courses in mathematics had doubled; in science the number had risen by 75 per cent.

THE LEVERHULME TRUST

THE first report of the Leverhulme Trust on the Leverhulme Research Awards (pp. 72. London: The Leverhulme Trust, 1957) gives a record of the research awards, 1933-47, covering 273 made under the general scheme at a total cost of £130,299. Up to and including 1957, 612 were made at a total cost of £276,548, of which 580 costing £255,787 belong to the general scheme. The record is arranged in three sections: arts and humanities; natural sciences (including mathematics and medicine); and social science. In each section awards are listed chronologically by year and alphabetically for each year, giving the subject of research and relevant publications. There is an index of names and list of abbreviations for periodicals. The record is preceded by a historical note by Sir Hector Hetherington describing the circumstances which led to the establishment of the scheme, reviewing briefly its working and development and noting some of the problems encountered. The scheme was conceived mainly to help senior academic workers to complete their research projects, but it has never been restricted to the universities: many awards have been made to members of the staffs of national museums and galleries for study at home and abroad, and the primary purpose of the scheme continues to be to offer opportunities for periods of study and research which are not provided or inadequately provided by the official systems.

In general, the method used is to make good to the recipient any loss of income incurred by taking a period of study-leave and to meet such special expenses of the programme as could not be covered by other resources. Normally, the award, which has from the beginning been of no fixed amount, consists of two parts: a personal grant to replace earnings foregone, and a grant towards the special expenses of the programme.

The primary test of eligibility for a personal grant is that some loss of earnings should be incurred in undertaking the programme, and in general the Trust requires that the awards should be made for a significant period of time—at least three months, with an upper limit of two years. It is not at all concerned to pay the expenses of delegates to conferences or to other national or international gatherings. Recently the Trustees, however, have approved four further smaller schemes. In 1953 two 'European' awards were offered to young postgraduate scholars to meet the cost of a year of study in one or more centres of learning in Continental Europe. Two further schemes were developed for two or three years postgraduate study in a British university for candidates nominated by universities and university colleges in Africa and the West Indies. Four awards a year are also offered to graduates of British universities who wish to work for one or two years in the West Indies or in Africa, while finally three awards are offered each year to enable young graduates of certain major art schools to have a year of continuous study abroad, one of these awards being in the field of industrial design.

These recent policies are still regarded as experimental, and while awards have been made in almost every field of study, the Advisory Committee's working rule that no one project could be supported to the extent of more than 15 per cent of the resources available in any year has excluded a few very expensive schemes. The main area of concentration has been in age-group 40-60, but the spread extends from 27 to 80, and Sir Hector refers to the notable advantage of the private trust that it may more readily employ some of its resources as venture-capital to support a promising but more than ordinarily hazardous programme. It is intended to issue further reports at five-yearly intervals.