attended by almost all children of school age in the community, regardless of social or economic status, sex or vocational aim. On all levels schools vary greatly in size, from one-room rural schools to large urban schools enrolling several thousand students. Improvement of the school district organization in sparsely populated regions has resulted in a continued decrease in the number of small high-schools.

All States provide public schools and permit students between the ages of 6 and 20 years to attend. Most States have enacted compulsory attendance laws for certain age-groups. The compulsory attendance ages range from 6 to 18 years, but a majority of the States require attendance between the ages of 7 and 17 years. Of the total population of persons between 6 and 17 years old in October 1957, 96·5 per cent were enrolled in school. At that time 93 per cent of all school-age children, generally defined as those between 5 and 17 years old, inclusive, were enrolled. In elementary and secondary schools the proportion of boys and girls was about the same but in higher-education institutions men made up about two-thirds of the student body and women one-third.

School enrolments increased for the thirteenth consecutive year. In 1957–58, 43,135,000 persons, or about one out of every four in the population, were attending public or private schools and colleges; an increase of more than 4 per cent over 1956–57.

The latest available data indicate that about one-half of the high-school graduates now go to college, about 42 per cent full time and 8 per cent part time. Attendance of students at institutions of higher education is altogether voluntary. Assuming that they meet admission requirements, students are free to choose the type of institution they attend—public or private, liberal arts or technical, 2-year or 4-year, and to pursue any curriculum or prepare for any profession to the extent of their abilities. A student in an institution may of his own volition drop out altogether or transfer to another institution. In the autumn of 1957, colleges and universities enrolled more than 3 million students, an increase of 4 per cent over the autumn 1956 enrolment, and a 43 per cent increase over the 1952 autumn enrolment. The number of freshmen entering college in the autumn of 1957 represented slightly more than 30 per cent of persons in the country who were 17 years of age in 1956. About 58 per cent of the students enrolled were in public institutions. Enrolment in public institutions is increasing more rapidly than in private. About 800,000 of the students attending full time lived in dormitories provided by the institutions.

The degree-granting colleges conferred a total of 411,000 degrees in 1957–58, 8·3 per cent more than in 1956–57. Of the total conferred, 82·8 per cent were bachelor's, 15·1 were master's and 2·1 were doctor's degrees. The average cost of a year in college was between 1,500 and 2,000 dollars, and the median award in scholarship aid was less than 300 dollars.

In 1957–58 between 30 and 35 million adults participated in adult education programmes sponsored by industry, labour unions, the Armed Services, farm organizations, and other groups. In carrying out their programme, these groups had the co-operation of public libraries, public school systems, higher institutions, television systems and Government agencies.

Extensive research is carried on by public and private agencies such as colleges and universities, State departments of education, and various philanthropic groups. Their research is directed toward solving some of the problems facing education; for example, it includes further investigation of the learning process and the character and extent of individual differences. State departments and local school systems direct their research primarily to solving local problems, and colleges and universities direct theirs to broader problems in education.

THE PHYSICAL SOCIETY, 1958—59

THE annual general meeting of the Physical Society was held on May 21 at the Royal Institution, London, and immediately following the meeting Mr. J. A. Ratcliffe delivered his presidential address entitled "Recent Trends in the Theory of the Ionosphere". The report of the council of the Society and the accounts and balance sheet for 1958 were adopted at the meeting and the composition of the new council to hold office for the session 1959–60 was announced.

The income of the Society during 1958 exceeded expenditure by £4,581 and was mainly due to the increase in price of the Society's publications when sold to the general public which the council authorized in 1957. Notwithstanding the rise in price, sales have increased. The membership rose from 2,069 to 2,136, but the increase was entirely in the student membership grade. The forty-second annual exhibition of scientific instruments and apparatus was held during March 24–27 in the two halls of the Royal Horticultural Society. The size of the exhibition and attendance were similar to those of the previous year. The sales of the exhibition handbook and the receipts from exhibitors resulted in a satisfactory surplus of £5,905, of which £4,000 was transferred to the exhibition contingency fund and the remainder to the general income and expenditure account.

The council's report refers briefly to the activities of the Society during the year and in particular to the conferences of two or three days duration which were held on various subjects in Cambridge, Durham, Malvern and Swansea. The attendances were usually between 200 and 250, of which approximately half on the average were members of the Society. A few research students and others were financially assisted to attend these conferences by means of a grant allotted to the Society by the Royal Society. The decision to recombine the two sections of the Society's *Proceedings* was put into effect during 1958 and the volume of work published (208 original articles, 74 research notes and 21 letters to the editor) was substantially the same as in 1957. Vol. 21 of the "Reports on Progress in Physics", which was published during the summer, contained nine articles, and these articles were also available for purchase separately.

The informal discussions with the Institute of Physics which were begun in 1957 to consider the

closer co-operation between the Institute and the Society were continued. A mutually agreed document entitled "Memorandum to Members—Proposal to Amalgamate the Institute of Physics and the Physical Society" was circulated, together with an explanatory letter from the president. A joint amalgamation committee has been set up and is now engaged in more detailed discussions.

At the annual meeting, the president, Mr. J. A. Ratcliffe; the honorary secretaries, Dr. C. G. Wynne, Dr. H. H. Hopkins and Mr. A. G. Peacock; the honorary foreign secretary, Prof. E. N. da C. Andrade; and honorary treasurer, Dr. D. A. Wright, were re-elected to serve for 1959–60. The newly elected vice-presidents were: Prof. F. Llewellyn Jones and Dr. G. B. B. M. Sutherland, and the newly elected members of council: Mr. D. W. Fry, Dr. V. E. Cosslett, Prof. F. C. Frank, Prof. W. E. Burcham, Dr. R. L. F. Boyd, Dr. R. A. Smith and Prof. D. H. Wilkinson.

S. Weintroub

SCHOOL MEALS IN ASIA AND THE FAR EAST

Various Food and Agriculture Organization conferences, as well as regional nutrition meetings convened periodically in co-operation with the World Health Organization, have emphasized the importance of supplementary feeding as a means of improving the nutrition of vulnerable groups. The First Regional Nutrition Committee in South and East Asia, which met in Baguio, the Philippines, in 1948, recommended a type of meal which could be supplied to school-children in the region. This meal pattern emphasized the use of cheap, locally available foods that would provide the children with all essential nutrients.

The Fourth Regional Nutrition Committee of the two Organizations, which met in Tokyo in 1956, considered a number of important factors relating to school feeding programmes; it recommended that the Food and Agriculture Organization should convene a school feeding seminar for countries in South and East Asia, at which the future development of school-feeding along sound lines could be discussed by appropriate country representatives.

Much of the Food and Agriculture Organization's practical work in school-feeding has been done in co-operation with the United Nations Children's Fund, the Organization providing the technical guidance in organizing and developing programmes based initially on dried skim milk and other supplies made available by the Fund. This Fund has become increasingly interested in the long-term development of measures to improve the nutrition of children and has recently been authorized to increase the scope of assistance which it can provide. It was agreed, therefore, that the Fund should join the Organization in convening the seminar. Because malnutrition is often a serious problem among children of pre-school age, it was also agreed that consideration would be given to this important group of the population.

The seminar was designed to bring together, from the countries concerned, workers associated with various aspects of child-feeding programmes, in particular school-feeding programmes, for consideration of the problems met in developing them and of measures needed to improve and expand them on a sound nutritional and financial basis. The Government of Japan extended an invitation for the seminar to be held in Japan, and it was held in International House, Tokyo, during November 10–19, 1958. The seminar was attended by delegates from twelve countries in the region, as well as by representatives from the World Health Organization International Co-operation Administration, and Co-operative for American Remittances to Everywhere. A report on the seminar has now been issued (H.M.S.O., 2*s*. 6*d*.).

INDUSTRIAL HEALTH IN THE POTTERIES

During 1956–58, four members of the factory inspectorate carried out a survey of industrial health in the pottery industry in the Stoke-on-Trent area. The survey was undertaken with the advice of the Industrial Health Advisory Committee. This Committee was set up in 1955 by the Minister of Labour and National Service to advise him on measures to further the development of industrial health services in work-places covered by the Factories Acts.

On the advice of the Committee the Minister instituted two industrial health surveys, which were to be regarded as pilot surveys. The first was of all the factories in a particular area—the town of Halifax was chosen—and the report on that survey was published in 1958. The second was a survey of a specific industry—the pottery industry.

A number of considerations led to the choice of the pottery industry. Among them was the fact that it is geographically compact, and that, although over a number of years much has been done in the industry to eliminate or reduce the known health risk, it was considered that a survey of the pottery industry would have particular interest in giving an opportunity to assess both the success of the measures so far taken and the continuing needs.

Although a survey of this kind offers no basis for comparing conditions in the pottery industry with those of other industries, it is possible to draw some comparison between present conditions in the pottery industry and those of the past. General conditions in the industry to-day are markedly different from what they were. The industry has done a great deal, particularly in the years since the end of the Second World War, to improve working conditions and to reduce the health hazards connected with pottery manufacture.

The classic industrial disease of the pottery industry was lead poisoning, due in part to the lead glazes used. By the middle 1940's the use of low-solubility