

Future of Chemical Publications

A DISCUSSION meeting on "The Future of Chemical Publications", organized by the Chemical Society, was held at the University of Nottingham during September 22-24. It was attended by about 190 people drawn equally from those concerned with practical chemistry and those engaged in administration or information work. About 18 months ago the Chemical Society appointed Dr. R. S. Cahn, who was then its editor, to conduct a survey of chemical publications that should be embodied in a report containing recommendations for action by the Chemical Society in the immediate and the not so immediate future; the report is to be submitted not later than Easter 1965 and it is the Chemical Society's hope to publish it. The objects of the discussion meeting were to place before interested British chemists some details of the present situation and the lines along which Dr. Cahn as director of publications research for the Chemical Society was thinking, as well as to solicit opinions and suggestions from the audience. Principal papers were read by Prof. J. S. Anderson (Oxford) on "The Scientific Urgency", Dr. R. S. Cahn on "The Future of Primary Publications", and Dr. F. A. Tate (assistant director and acting editor of the Chemical Abstracts Service, Columbus, Ohio) on "The Chemical Abstracts Service: Present and Future". Shorter papers were contributed by Dr. L. C. Cross (editor, the Chemical Society), Prof. W. G. Overend (honorary publications secretary, Society of Chemical Industry), Prof. J. D. Bernal (Birkbeck College, London), Mr. C. M. Hutt (Academic Press, Inc. (London), Ltd.), Dr. H. J. Rogers (chairman of the editorial board of the *Biochemical Journal*), Mr. J. H. Black (Library and Information Department, Shirley Institute, Manchester), Mr. Allen J. Sprow (National Science Foundation, Washington, D.C.), Dr. H. T. Hookway (Department of Scientific and Industrial Research), Dr. R. E. Fairbairn (Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd.), Dr. M. P. Barnett (Institute of Computer Science, London) and Dr. H. Coblans (Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux, London). A great deal of time was left for discussion from the floor, and many views were freely expressed about the needs of chemists and about the value of the suggestions put forward by the speakers. No firm conclusions were reached or sought at this meeting, but, as intended, most of those present were able to gain a deeper insight into chemical publications, while the officials of the Chemical Society gained much, ascertaining the views of chemists in regard to their varying activities.

International Support of Cancer Research

A CONFERENCE on "The International Support of Cancer Research" was held in Stockholm during September 7-9 under the auspices of the Union Internationale Contre le Cancer. The objectives of the conference were to survey present proposals for increased international co-operation in cancer research and related medicine and biology, to estimate research needs in the various regions of the world, and to make recommendations. Reports were received of the present and future requirements of cancer research in the various countries of the world. While present support of cancer research varies widely from country to country, it was concluded at the conference that an urgent need exists, additional to national support, for international support on a considerable scale, probably of the order of many millions of dollars annually. Special emphasis was placed on basic research, the extension of international investigations in epidemiology and demography, and programmes of scientific and technical training and exchange. The conference favoured the establishment of an International Cancer Research Agency, sponsored and financed by Governments, to which the Union Internationale Contre le Cancer would make its medical and scientific contribution in concert

with the World Health Organization and other organs where appropriate. The establishment was envisaged of an agency to act as recipient and manager of funds, with a Scientific Advisory Council appointed from a panel nominated by the Union. This agency would be responsible for the allocation of support on the basis of specific applications, and also from its own investigations of research requirements throughout the world. The conference considered it of special importance that such support would be accorded not only to projects transcending national boundaries, but also to intra-national projects in the case of countries not at present able to sustain these from their own resources.

International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature

NOTICE is hereby given of the possible use by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature of its plenary powers in connexion with the following cases, full details of which will be found in the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature* (21, Part 3; August 7, 1964): (1) Designation of a type-species for *Lingula* Bruguière [1797] (Brachiopoda). *Z.N.(S.)* 1598. (2) Validation of the generic name *Axopora* Milne Edwards and Haime, 1850 (Hydrozoa). *Z.N.(S.)* 1610. (3) Validation of a neotype for *Cancer setiferus* Linnaeus, 1767 (Crustacea, Decapoda). *Z.N.(S.)* 1617. (4) Designation of type-species for *Purpura* Bruguière, 1789, and *Muricanthus* Swainson, 1840; validation of *Ocenebra* Gray, 1847; validation of *Thaisidae* Suter, 1913 (Gastropoda). *Z.N.(S.)* 1621. (5) Suppression of *Certhia chrysolis* Latham, 1801 (Aves). *Z.N.(S.)* 1653. Any zoologist who wishes to comment on any of the foregoing cases should do so in writing to the Secretary, International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, c/o British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, London, S.W.7, before February 7, 1965.

Isidore of Seville

FROM the time when the Roman Empire was converted to Christianity, that is, from A.D. 400 until A.D. 1200, the surviving remains of classical learning and science were preserved in monasteries, where manuscripts were treasured, valued and written. Of the many writers of the period the most learned was Isidore of Seville or Isidoreus Hispalensis (570?-636). He was born either at Seville or Carthage and became Bishop of Seville, the premier Catholic See in Spain, in 599. The canons of the Councils at Seville in 618-19 and at Toledo in 633, during his episcopate, formed the basis of the constitutional law of Spain. Isidore was a voluminous writer and widely read in classical authors. He wrote an introduction to the Old and New Testaments, a defence of Christianity against the Jews, three books of *Sentences*, books on ecclesiastical offices and monastic rules, and a history of the Goths, Vandals and Suevi. The works of most interest to scientific historians are *Etymologiae* (edited by W. M. Lindsay, 1912) and *De Natura Rerum*. The former was an encyclopaedia of the then known sciences. In a recent monograph (*Isidore of Seville: The Medical Writings*. An English translation with an Introduction and Commentary, by William D. Sharpe. *Trans. Amer. Philos. Soc.*, Philadelphia (pp. 75), N.S., 54, Pt. 2, 1964), Dr. W. D. Sharpe has translated the medical writings in the *Etymologiae* into English, and has made a careful examination of Isidore's sources for his compilation (including late Latin medical literature) and of the work itself. He points out that this part of the encyclopaedia was written for amateurs of medicine rather than for professional physicians. Use was made of it by Bede, Alcuin, Rhabanus, Maurus and Vincent of Beauvais. In manuscript copies the *Etymologiae* enjoyed wide popularity during the Middle Ages, and was often reprinted during the first century after the invention of printing.