

has plans to send a 39-in. reflector telescope to the New Zealand site. The University of Pennsylvania has entered into an informal working relationship with the General Electric Company. The General Electric Space Sciences Laboratory plans to collaborate with Pennsylvania and Canterbury at the Mount John Observatory on research into the atmosphere and surface features of other planets. Besides helping with the reconditioning of the 18-in. refractor telescope, the Company has provided a digitized photometer.

The original agreement between Pennsylvania and Canterbury has been renewed for a 10-year period dating from April 29, 1965, and will be renewable for subsequent 10-year periods. Pennsylvania will support a full-time astronomer at the facility to make observations and train students. He will be the astronomer in charge. Canterbury will provide two people for technical support. Students from both universities will train at the Mount John Observatory. At least one assistantship will be made available annually for a Canterbury graduate enrolled in Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Pennsylvania has made arrangements to send two graduate students to the observatory during the 1965-66 academic year, one in September and one in January. A technician and a weather observer are already on duty at the site.

Benjamin Gompertz, F.R.S. (1779-1865)

JULY 14, 1965, marked the centenary of the death of the distinguished mathematician Benjamin Gompertz, who became one of the leading actuaries of his day, being the first actuary of the Alliance Assurance Company from its foundation in 1824 on the initiative of Nathan M. Rothschild and Sir Moses Montefiore, until his retirement in 1847. Gompertz married the sister of Sir Moses in 1810. Although Gompertz retired a year before the formation of the Institute of Actuaries, he was made an honorary member in recognition of his distinguished work in the actuarial field, and particularly his papers on life contingencies which were submitted to the Royal Society in 1820 and 1825. The Council of the Institute of Actuaries, to commemorate the centenary of his death, is to publish a commemorative article in its *Journal* (91, Part II, available after September 1965) and has hung a photographic reproduction of a portrait of Gompertz at Staple Inn Hall.

The American Philosophical Society

Year Book 1964 of the American Philosophical Society as usual includes lists of officers and committees, members, lectures, meetings, biographical memoirs and, in the report of the Committee on Publications, a list of publications during the year (Pp. 760. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1965). Besides the Charter and Laws of the Society, the *Year Book* includes Dr. E. G. Conklin's brief history of the Society, and reports from the Committees on the library and on research. From the Pension Fund the latter Committee approved 292 grants totalling 273,600 dollars during the year; from the Johnson Fund, 56 grants amounting to 53,900 dollars; and from the Daland Fund for Research in Clinical Medicine, four fellowships, three of 8,000 dollars and one of 7,000 dollars. Two grants, one of 1,000 dollars and one of 900 dollars, were made from the Michaux Fund. Lists of recipients of grants and notes on the investigations in progress are included in the Committee's report.

Museums Journal

THE *Museums Journal* for June (65, No. 1; 1965) includes an informative article on the Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1964, so far as it concerns local authority museums. All previous Acts on museums are repealed, and Mr. John Edwards summarizes the Act in non-legal language. Although local authority museums

now have the power to charge for admission, it is doubtful whether many will avail themselves of this clause in the Act. Mr. E. L. Seyd gives a full and illustrated description of the Cannon Aquarium and Vivarium at the Manchester Museum. This has been provided in a typical exhibition gallery, and apart from its educational function has been much appreciated by the general public. Mr. Kenneth Hudson, in an article on "The Taming of Industrial Archaeology", feels that we must recognize that many individuals are "historical defectives", in the same way as we recognize colour-blindness. It is the present task of those interested to sell the ideas of the preservation of early industrial monuments and activities to the public. The issue also includes the annual report of the Council of the Museums Association for the year ended March 31, 1965.

The National Lending Library

THE National Lending Library for Science and Technology, which is trying to make its collection of recent conference proceedings as comprehensive as possible, has issued an *Index of Conference Proceedings Received* during 1964, together with a few received earlier (Pp. lv+60. Walton, Boston Spa: National Lending Library for Science and Technology, 1965). The *Index* is in two parts: the first part lists the title of the conference proceedings, giving place and date of conference, as well as conference number; the second lists subjects alphabetically by key words taken from the titles of the conference proceedings. Some 1,400 conferences are listed, and it is proposed to publish further indexes quarterly.

Fire Research Literature

THE Joint Fire Research Organization of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research and Fire Offices' Committee has issued a list of recent reports, etc., published during 1959-August 1964 (Pp. 16. London: Department of Scientific and Industrial Research and Fire Offices' Committee Joint Fire Research Organization, 1964). The list covers, first, Stationery Office Publications, obtainable direct from H.M.S.O., and, secondly, other publications, obtainable free of charge from the Director, Joint Fire Research Organization, Boreham Wood, Hertfordshire. The latter are classified under: occurrence of fire; fire hazards; initiation and development of combustion; fire resistance; fire-fighting; and general, including works of reference.

Biological Characterization of Human Tumours

DURING May 27-29 a symposium was held on "The Biological Characterization of Human Tumours" under the auspices of the European Committee for Human Tumour Investigations, which was formed in 1961 in London during a meeting at the Chester Beatty Research Institute (see *Brit. Med. J.*, i, 1752; 1961; and *Nature*, 189, 627; 1961). Most of the contributions will be published in the new *European Journal of Cancer*, including those dealing with the main problems of "Long Term Cultures of Organized Human Tumours" (Prof. Etienne Wolff), "Enzymology of Human Tumours" (Dr. G. E. Boxer), "Histochemistry and Tumour Characterization" (Dr. R. J. G. Willighagen), "Evidence of Immunologic Reaction to Autochthonous Cancer in Man" (Dr. C. M. Southam), and "Viruses and Human Tumours" (Dr. R. J. C. Harris). In addition, a number of short papers on various aspects were presented, and the common difficulties arising out of work with human samples were thoroughly debated. A subsequent meeting of the European Committee discussed the formation and extension of study groups and working plans for the future.

C.S.I.R.O. Publications

THE Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, Australia, has issued a list of publications