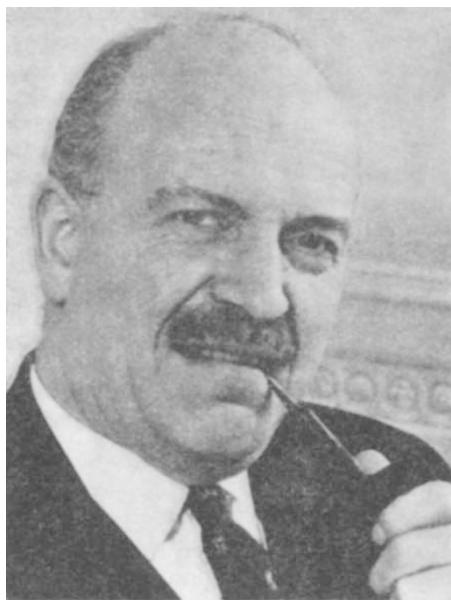


pastiche of nineteenth century Homeric translation, written by a boy of eleven.

These are, however, minor points. Perhaps the most serious difficulty that would arise if the syllabus came into wide service would be the shortage of teachers knowledgeable enough to take the course.

New Man for Porton

IN March 1968, Mr Gordon Neville Gadsby will take over as director of the Chemical Defence Experimental Establishment at Porton, near Salisbury. He will succeed Mr E. E. Haddon, who is retiring. Mr Gadsby, who is the present deputy chief scientist (Army), was an honours graduate in chemistry and a Cadbury Prize winner at Birmingham University and before the war was senior chemistry master at Waverley High School in Birmingham. After service in the Army and as a lecturer at the Royal Military College of Science, he moved into operational research. In 1960 he became director of operational science and research and, later, director of the Army Operational Research Establishment. In 1965 he became director of biological and chemical defence (Army).



Despite its fearsome image, the establishment at Porton is responsible for a great deal of useful work. Mr Gadsby is not yet ready to suggest any changes which he may favour when he becomes director, but makes it clear that he does not want to give the impression of being a new broom.

Improving Traffic Flow

TRAFFIC delays throughout Britain are estimated to cost £750 million a year. This figure is clearly one reason why the Road Research Laboratory is spending £0.5 million on a large scale experiment in traffic control by computer. The experiment, taking place in Glasgow, is described in a recent report from the laboratory.

A similar experiment carried out in West London was devised to solve a particular problem, but the Glasgow experiment is designed to test and compare

eight different systems of traffic control. The experiment started on May 10, and results so far are said to be encouraging. The experiment is controlled by a Marconi Myriad computer which has been used to link 80 traffic signals controlling a square mile in the centre of Glasgow. The systems under test do a variety of things, from minimizing the delay in networks controlled by fixed time signals to arranging for equal saturation on all branches of a crossroad. Each system is assessed by measuring the average journey time over standard routes with instrumented cars. Five of the systems under test have been tried previously, either in this country, Europe or the United States; the other three have been newly devised. As far as the RRL knows, this is the first time that a fully comparative experiment has been conducted. Traffic delays in central Glasgow, the RRL estimates, cost £2 million a year—if only 5 per cent of this can be saved, a reasonable estimate, the experiment would pay for itself in five years.

Following Parasites

THE Ministry of Overseas Development has made a grant of £45,000 to establish a new headquarters for what is called—somewhat alarmingly—the Blood Meals Service. This is a unit financed by the government to analyse the stomach contents of blood-sucking insects carrying malarial and other parasites. Smears of the stomach contents are sent from abroad, and their analysis provides clues to the feeding habits of vectors, and other information of importance to foreign workers and authorities such as the World Health Organization. Until now this has been done at the Lister Institute of Preventive Medicine, Elstree, but work has now begun on the new centre at Silwood Park, near Ascot, the field station of Imperial College, and it is hoped that the service will be able to move there early next year.

The Ministry's grant also covers the cost of the service for the next three years, and the new director of the unit, Mr Peter Boreham, is hoping to be able to carry out research on the pathogenesis of trypanosomiasis as well as operating and improving the service itself. The unit will be an important addition to the research teams at Silwood under the direction of Professor T. R. E. Southwood. The Blood Meals Service was founded in 1948 by Professor Bernard Weitz, who continued as director until this September, when he left to direct the National Institute for Research in Dairying at Shinfield, Berkshire.

European Forestry

FORESTRY cannot keep pace with the marked growth of industrial production. This is one of the important findings of a report called *Cost Studies in European Forestry*, published by the Royal College of Forestry in Stockholm.

Conditions in forests and forest industries are considered in detail for each country, and the results include the share of forestry in the gross national Product, total roundwood balances, external trade in forest products and wage development. Data for Sweden served as a standard for the work in other countries and analysis of material was carried out at the Royal College of Forestry in Sweden. For the purpose of the study, Austria, Finland, Norway and