

when he said that, "while industry should have a reasonable degree of freedom in promoting its products to doctors, we shall expect a very substantial reduction in the amount of promotion expenditure, particularly that which is taken into account in assessing a firm's costs and profits under the revised price regulation scheme". This dark statement of intent drew some murmurs from the medical journals, doubtless contemplating their advertising revenues.

Yet another factor in the present very complex situation is the 1968 Health Services and Public Health Act, section 59 of which stipulates that the pharmaceutical duties of the NHS should be "services of the Crown", thereby enabling the Government to make or use any prescribed patented medicine for these services regardless of the patentee's rights. The annual report describes section 59 as "hasty, unnecessary, and badly argued", a "discouraging experience" coming as it did in the midst of negotiations for a new Voluntary Price Regulation Scheme. As if this were not trouble enough, Hong Kong enacted legislation last year enabling the government to override patentee's rights, and Nigeria has now followed suit. The annual report expresses some anxiety for the future of British drug exports if such legislation turns out to be infectious.

Away from the tangled skein of international commerce, the annual report has some solid scientific progress to describe. Collaboration between a British laboratory and a Swiss company has led to the marketing of preparations containing a new antibacterial trimethoprim and sulphamethoxazole, a relative of sulphonamide. The mixture looks promising for the treatment of chronic bronchitis. Another innovation in the eastern Atlantic is measles vaccine, which should practically eliminate this childhood infection.

ZOOLOGY

Strange Sounds in Kensington

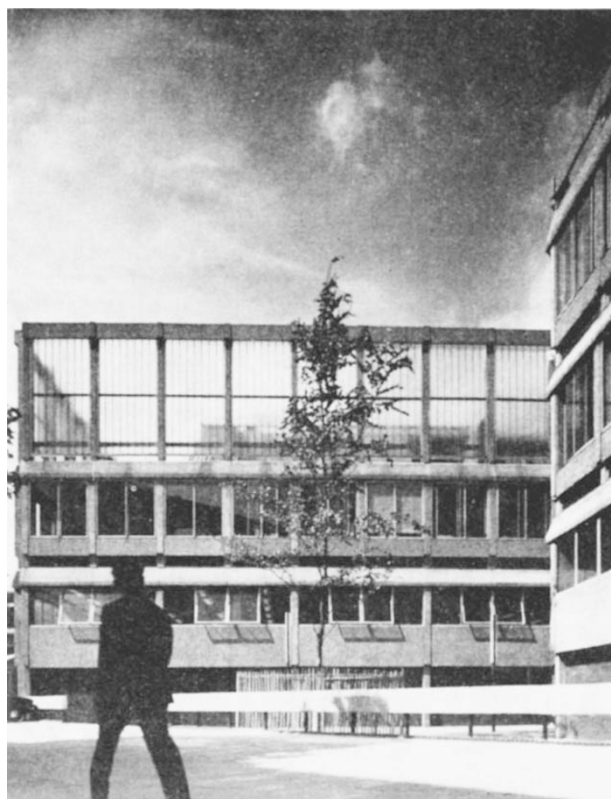
ASSISTED by off-stage noises which included a belching elephant seal, a giant toad in mating cry, a song duet between a blackbird and a robin, and the song of a wren played at slow speed, the British Library of Wildlife Sounds (BLOWS) was opened recently by Mr David Attenborough, who is himself a recordist of some repute. BLOWS has developed, with the assistance of Mr Jeffery Boswall of the BBC Natural History Unit and Mr Patrick Sellar, as an offshoot of the British Institute of Recorded Sound, which was set up in 1955 to do for recorded sound what the British Museum library does for books and the National Film Archive for films. The library is in Exhibition Road, London, and aims to be the national reference collection of wildlife sounds of all descriptions—not just birds. Used in conjunction with other biological reference collections, BLOWS should have an important part to play in research into animal behaviour, taxonomy and evolution, and those people who listen to bird songs for aesthetic reasons only will not be forgotten either. The library's target is 10,000 recordings (disk or tape) of 2,500 species of animal in five years, and Mr Attenborough appealed for copies of commercial gramophone records, particularly disks out of print, and for copies of properly documented tape recordings of any animal sound made by either professional or amateur tape recordists. The collection already has most of the

BBC collection of natural history recordings and the BBC has also presented the complete collection of original recordings made by Ludwig Koch. Disks and tapes are welcome from any source, but the library is particularly keen to receive tape recordings made in Britain and western Europe, and it is assuming responsibility for wildlife sounds made in the Antarctic now that it has been presented with a large collection, made by Dr Lancelot Tickell on South Georgia.

As is the case with the national collection of sound recordings, BLOWS will not lend or allow the copying of commercial or BBC disks of wildlife sounds, but tapes will normally be available for loan, and any item can be heard in the institute's premises.

ARCHITECTURE

One Building Up



PART of the large new extension to the Borough Polytechnic in London showing some of the laboratories. On the right is a corner of the Division of Metal Science. The new buildings, formally opened on July 9 by the Duke of Edinburgh and designed by Norman and Dawbarn, provide a further 145,000 square feet of accommodation for the polytechnic which—with the College of Heating, Ventilating, Refrigeration and Fan Engineering, the Brixton School of Building and the City of Westminster College—is destined to become the Polytechnic of the South Bank. The new extension completely rehuses the departments of electrical and electronic engineering, metal science, social studies and humanities; it provides space for the expansion of several other departments; and it also houses the dining halls for