

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE BRITISH COMMITTEE FOR SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH

SOME points in the report of the British Privy Council committee for scientific and industrial research are summarized in the *Electrical World* as follows:

Funds Available.—The Imperial Trust for the Encouragement of Scientific and Industrial Research holds £1,000,000 that Parliament has voted for research purposes. Manufacturers' associations, the London County Council and some governmental departments have also contributed funds for specific purposes.

Personal Grants to Research Workers.—Thirty-six awards in the nature of maintenance grants were made to individuals, of which twenty-four went to students being trained in the methods of research, ten to independent research workers and two to research assistants. Grants will also be made for apparatus and materials.

Industrial Versus Pure Science Research.—During the past year the committee has devoted its chief effort to the organization of industrial research rather than to the prosecution of work in pure science; first, because it felt the paramount importance of arousing the interest of manufacturers and, second, because of the influence of the war. It emphasizes the hope that the absence of references to pure science should not be taken as indicating a lack of appreciation of its importance.

Trade Research Associations.—Many trade associations have lately come into existence, some of which include research among their objects. The committee has helped in their organization and has assisted and cooperated in their research activities.

Research in the Universities.—Hearty cooperation of the principal universities, technical schools and trade schools in England has been secured, and their resources have been coordinated for the important problems on hand. A closer connection is being established between these institutions and the industries which rely upon results of research in the manufacture of their products.

Technical Societies.—The committee is co-

operating with the electrical, mechanical and mining engineers' institutions and other professional societies, in some cases subsidizing the researches originated by the institutions and extending their scope.

Information Collected and Published.—In cooperation with technical societies and institutions of learning the committee has collected and published available information and is continuing this useful work, which will greatly simplify that of future investigators. It is also preparing memoranda on various fields for research, with an analysis of the problems involved and the proposed program for research.

Assistance to Individual Manufacturers.—An arrangement has been made with the Royal Society by which it will assist the committee in selecting the institution or research workers best fitted for a particular investigation. If the investigation progresses satisfactorily, the manufacturer is invited to contribute part or all of the expense in exchange for the exclusive use of the results over a given period. Another proposed way is to attach an investigator to the works laboratory and share expense with the manufacturer.

GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF THE PLATINUM INDUSTRY

THE Council of National Defense has issued the following statement:

Through Ordinance Requisition No. 510 from the Secretary of War, the government has taken over control of the production, refining, distribution and use of crude and refined platinum for the period of the war. The control will be exercised through the chemical division of the War Industries Board. The chemical division sent out to the industry requests for inventories of the existing stock of crude and refined platinum and platinum-iridium alloys as of March 1, 1918.

The letter stated that it was not the intention of the government to take over and handle directly the present stock of platinum but to permit its shipment by the producers or dealers subject to certain conditions. Upon the fixing by the Secretary of War of a reasonable price for crude, refined and alloyed platinum,

notice will be given and blanks issued governing delivery and distribution.

The letter sent out by the chemical division includes the following directions to producers:

1. That producers, refiners and dealers in platinum continue to dispose of their product for government purposes, and for that only, as directed by the chemical division.

2. That producers, refiners and dealers in platinum who are also consumers use platinum for government purposes, and for that only, as directed by the chemical division.

3. That all obligations arising out of transactions in the production or delivery of crude, alloyed or refined platinum released as above, including all claims for shortage, poor quality, damage or loss in transit, be borne by the producer or seller, as the case may be, in accordance with existing trade practices.

Distribution may be made by consent of this board through agencies under existing arrangements, provided that there results no increase over the existing price to the user.

The undersigned, on separate application in each case, will consider permitting the delivery of a limited amount of platinum for essential commercial purposes not for government account.

Proper blanks upon which application for release of shipment should be made will be furnished on application.

The following list indicates, in general, the order of preference which will be followed in releasing platinum for shipment: First, military needs of the United States government; second, military needs of allied governments; third, essential commercial purposes.

PHOTOGRAPHERS FOR THE SIGNAL CORPS

ONE thousand men trained in photographic work are needed by the Signal Corps immediately for instruction at the new school for aerial photography just opened at Rochester, N. Y., preparatory to going overseas.

This ground force for America's aerial photography requires three types of men:

1. Laboratory and dark room experts, especially fast news photographers, familiar with developing, printing, enlarging, retouching, finishing and panchromatic photography, who can take a plate from the airmen and hand it over ten minutes later a finished enlargement to the staff officers. These men will work in

motor lorries as close to the front and to the staff as possible.

2. Men able to keep the whole delicate equipment in good condition, such as camera and optical construction and repairmen, lens experts, cabinetmakers, instrument makers, etc.

3. Men to fit the finished prints into their proper places in the photographic reproduction of the German front, to work out the information disclosed, and to keep the whole map a living hour-to-hour story of what the Germans are doing. This includes men familiar with map compilation, map-reading and interpretation, topographical science and drafting, and requires keen analytical powers.

The primary training at Rochester will cover four weeks, and will be standardized along the highly specialized developments brought out in the war. At its close the successful graduates will be sent on for a month of advanced training, after which they will be organized into units and sent overseas.

The best men, however, will be given still further training for commission as photographic intelligence officers first at one of the schools and then in actual flights at the flying fields.

Many men not physically fit for line service are eligible for this so-called limited military service, as defective vision corrected by glasses and other minor physical disabilities are waived. The proportion of officers and non-commissioned officers to privates will be higher here than usual, so that the opportunity for advancement is good.

Men not registered for the draft and who possess the necessary qualifications should write to the Air Division, Personnel Department, 136 K Street, N.E., Washington, D. C., for information as to enlistment, accompanying their letter with evidence of their qualifications.

Men registered for the draft in the states of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Maryland, who desire to be voluntarily inducted for this service, should apply to their local board and submit evidence of their qualifications. At present