

possibilities of setting up an educational clearing-house for Europe and the need for establishing an international body for information and coordination concerning inventions and discoveries.

Professor Timmermans, who is Minister of Public Instruction in the Belgian Government and who has been a vice-president of the association, was elected president.

### THE BRITISH STANDARDS INSTITUTION

At the annual general meeting of the British Standards Institution, which was held on July 20, according to the account in *The Times*, London, Sir Percy Ashley, the chairman, reviewed the present position of the institution and the work of the past year. In the course of his address he said that the 8,000 or so members of the committees of the institution who gave their time voluntarily, often traveling far without reimbursement of expenses, would feel gratified that the Government had recognized the institution as the sole organization for the issue of standards having a national application and that it had decided to increase substantially the grant-in-aid which, during the coming year, would be approximately £12,500 or nearly double the former grant.

He stated that there were in current use about 1,500 British standards, and during the year under review 230 new and revised standards or amendments had been issued. Complete sets of British standards were available for inspection at British diplomatic and trade commissioner offices in 16 centers in the British Commonwealth, two in the United States, six in South America, six in Europe, one in Egypt and one in Persia. The collaboration with standardizing bodies, overseas, in so far as conditions now permit, continues to develop steadily. Copies of overseas standards are available in the library of the institution.

Sir Percy pointed out that the institution could look back upon a year of continued progress and increased usefulness. He said:

I believe that those industries which have been long and closely associated with the development of the institution recognize fully the advantage of having a single, independent, national standards organization. But those others which are only now beginning to consider the opportune-ness of the time for a standardization program covering types and sizes, trade terms, definitions and performance standards, may feel that the preparation and promulgation of standards is a matter of purely domestic concern, and should therefore be carried out solely by their individual trade associations.

There has also been some tendency for Government departments to do standardization work in their own ways and on their own lines. I believe that both those courses are wrong in principle, and that the best results for any industry, and certainly for the industry of the nation as a whole, will be obtained only if all this work is carried on within a national organization such as the British

Standards Institution, which can coordinate and guide all such action to a common end.

During the past year the income and expenditure had increased by about 20 per cent., and amounted to some £53,000. The sales of British standards had gone up 57 per cent. The number of contributing members had increased by 15 per cent.

### A RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON CLIMATOLOGY

A RESEARCH committee on climatology has recently been established in the Section of Meteorology of the American Geophysical Union by C. W. Thornthwaite, the president of the section. It is intended to be a working committee whose main aim is the fostering of active research in climatology and the exchange of ideas among climatologists. It considers its sphere of interest to lie mainly in (1) physical climatology, (2) microclimatology, (3) statistical climatology, (4) applied climatology and (5) climatological instruments. The committee will encourage climatological research of high quality in order to increase the existing body of knowledge in climatology and will endeavor to cooperate with workers in neighboring fields who are confronted with problems of climatological interpretation. Among these fields of application of climatic research are geography, synoptic meteorology, agriculture and biology, medicine and public health and various phases of engineering.

The scope of the committee, therefore, is conceived on a very broad basis, and while the actual work will shift in emphasis from time to time from one to another of these fields, it is not the intention of the committee to limit the activities of its members at any time. The membership of the committee is to be expanded gradually as the work develops. The committee now consists of the following members: Phil E. Church, Alfonso Contreras Arias, Woodrow C. Jacobs, Helmut E. Landsberg, *chairman*, John B. Leighly, Albert E. Parr, F. W. Reichelderfer, A. K. Showalter, Robert G. Stone, C. W. Thornthwaite and H. G. Wilm.

It is hoped that the committee may serve as a clearing-house for information on research in climatology actually in progress. One of its first objectives is, therefore, to find out what research is now under way. The committee hopes to obtain the names of persons and institutions now engaged in such research, and information on the character of the active projects. The committee intends to foster an active interchange of ideas through establishment of connections with these research workers. Machinery is being set up to prepare bibliographies on various phases of climatology. As the need arises subcommittees will be formed to deal with various special fields.

H. D. HARRADON,  
*Secretary, Section of Meteorology,  
American Geophysical Union*