SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PEIPING

A REPORT of the National Academy of Peiping covering the years 1937–42 has been issued by the Kunming Office of the academy and is summarized in *Nature*. On the outbreak of the present war with Japan, Peiping was immediately taken over by the invader, and the academy, which at its foundation in 1929 consisted of nine separate research institutes with a staff of more than two hundred, succeeded in transferring part of the books and equipment of each of its institutes to the south; within a few months most of its work was resumed at Kunming, Yunnan, with a staff now consisting of 120 members. In addition to Chinese Government grants amounting to $620,000, grants are received from the Sino-American, Sino-British and Sino-French Foundation Funds. The Institute of Physics has been increasingly concerned with problems of industry and national defense. A laboratory for spectroscopy has been established to meet the needs of the new metallurgical industry, and the institute has also standardized more than a thousand radio transmitters with its own quartz oscillators. Its other efforts have been confined mainly to the development of applied optics and geophysical prospecting. The Institute of Radium consists of laboratories for chemistry and radioactivity, in which many Chinese minerals have been examined, and for x-rays, where the work has been mainly on crystal analysis and x-ray studies of alloys of tungsten and antimony.

In the Institute of Chemistry, work has been carried out on the extraction of dyes from local plants and their application to textiles, the preparation and small-scale manufacture of medicinals from local raw materials, the recovery of used engine oils, replacement of Diesel oil by vegetable oil and preparation of a substitute for petrol from molasses and sawdust, analysis of water supplies and extraction of potash from different types of ashes. The Institute of Materia Medica has concentrated on investigations of Chinese drugs, such as Chinese ephedra. The active principles have been isolated, and their properties and pharmacological action studied. Some materials, such as ephedrin and vitamin B_1, have been prepared on a commercial scale for clinical use. The Institute of Physiology has extended its investigations on the physiological effects of various Chinese drugs to investigations on the nutrition values of the foodstuffs used by inhabitants of the southwest of China, and the treatment of chicken cholera with sulfanilamide. The Institute of Zoology, besides work on the fauna of Yunnan, has made systematic studies of the principal fresh-water fauna of Yunnan, particularly the fishes of the inland lakes, their diseases and enemies. The Institute of Botany has commenced investigations on economic botany, in addition to those on agriculture and forestry already in progress, and a special survey of the plant life of northwest China has been planned and organized. The Institute of Geology is mainly occupied with the detailed mapping of mineral deposits.

THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

THE report of the acting principal of the University of London, Harold Claughton, on the work of the University of London during the year 1942–3, according to *The British Medical Journal*, mentions that several schools have decided that, provided certain essential repairs to their London buildings can be undertaken, they should return to London. Among these are King's College, which hopes to bring its remaining faculties back from Bristol, following the return, which has already taken place, of the medical students from Birmingham; the London School of Medicine for Women, which is bringing its preclinical students back from Exeter; the London Hospital Medical College, whose preclinical students are returning from Cambridge; the Middlesex Hospital Medical School, whose preclinical students have returned from Leeds; and the whole Medical School of University College Hospital, because the sector hospital in which teaching has so far been conducted is now put to other uses. Certain schools have suffered such heavy war damage that it is most unlikely that they will be able to return until after the war; among these is St. Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College.

The section of the report on teaching and research says that in the case of medicine, to meet the urgent demand for doctors for the armed forces, the time required to be spent on the full medical course (but not the course itself) has been shortened and additional examinations have been held.

At the London Hospital Medical College Professor A. W. M. Ellis has resigned from the chair of medicine on his appointment as Regius professor of medicine at the University of Oxford. At the Middlesex Hospital Medical School Dr. B. W. Windeyer has been appointed as the first occupant of the chair of radiology, which, though instituted in 1920, had never been filled. At University College Hospital Medical School Professor C. R. Harington has resigned from the chair of chemical pathology and his post as director of the Graham Research Laboratories on being appointed director of the National Institute of Medical Research. At the Royal Cancer Hospital Dr. G. A. R. Kon has been appointed to the chair of chemistry.