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harmful to the environment since by digestion they are "stabilised". The basic advantages of anaerobic digestion are enormous. Besides producing methane gas from animal wastes, microbes are also produced in a digester and these are an excellent supplement for animal and fish food. The microbes residue also has an improved fertilizer value compared to the original material and so can be used on the land.

Apart from huge deposits of sewage and animal slurry Britain has vast resources of coal — not just on land, but also under the North Sea. New technologies for mining and utilising this valuable resource are

being developed. Similarly, with offshore oil and gas, the fields of the future are likely to be in deeper waters and the technologists' ingenuity will be stretched to the limit.

Research into existing and new energy technologies is important if we are to have a secure energy future in the eighties and beyond and this calls for closer international co-operation, not just in R and D but also in the economic and social fields.

The environment and the quality of life generally will be important considerations in the decade ahead,

and Britain will continue to work with her friends towards safeguarding these vital elements of a worthwhile life.

And how heartwarming it is to be amongst friends in a country with which Britain has cordial and friendly ties, built up over many years. I feel sure that those ties will be further strengthened and cemented later this year when The Queen is due to pay a state visit to Switzerland. I know that both my parents are greatly looking forward to this visit and if today is anything to go by I cannot help feeling that they will be enormously touched by the warmth of your hospitality.

## FOR THE GARDENER

### **MECONOPSIS** (Himalayan Poppy)

Hardy herbaceous annuals, biennials and perennials.

They like any good garden soil, but are happiest in light gritty soils in a sunny position. This is with the exception of the species *baileyi* which prefers a shady, moist position.

The annuals and biennials are propagated by seed sown in March, whilst perennials are increased by either seeding or division of roots.

All species benefit from feeds of liquid manures during the flowering season. In some cases it can be as long as 3 years before flowering rhythm is established.

#### Species:

*M. cambrica* (Welsh Poppy): only really perennial variety. The single type seed profusely and can overcrowd other plants. The double kind does not seed nearly so much. Generally a good border and rock plant.

*M. aculeata*: Has bright green leaves with silvery hairs and blue flowers.

*Baileyi*: A more recent introduction from Tibet. Has beautiful Cambridge Blue flowers with golden stamens in the centre.

There are other species available and the range varies in growing heights from 2 ft. to 5 ft. Colourings range through light blue to purple.



Illustration by H. J. Thomson