The International Institute of Bibliography.

ANNUAL MEETING AT COLOGNE.

THE annual meeting of the Brussels Institut International de Bibliographie was held at Cologne on Sept. 18 and 19, and by invitation of the Oberbürgermeister, Dr. Adenauer, the proceedings took place in the Petite Salle des Congrès of the 'Pressa' Exhibition. Delegates of a number of institutions in different parts of the world, interested in bibliography and bibliographical methods, were present. The Science Library, South Kensington, was represented by Dr. S. C. Bradford.

The proceedings were presided over by Prof. A. F. C. Pollard, of the Imperial College of Science, South Kensington. In his introductory address, Prof. Pollard, reviewing the organisation of the International Institute, suggested that a central daughter bibliographical society should be formed in each country in order that individuals and institutions interested in bibliography and bibliographical methods might become members of their national society, and instanced the recent formation in London of the British Society of International Bibliography (British Section of the Institut International de Bibliographie).

Prof. Pollard then proceeded to indicate the possible relation of these societies to the Institut International de Bibliographie for the purpose of securing international uniformity of bibliographical method and the application of the universal decimal classification which had been so highly developed by the Institut. He hoped that by such means the extensive but wasteful energy expended upon the innumerable bibliographies at present published upon almost every branch of learning, and in many instances utilising extraordinary and useless methods of subject matter reference, might be directed into the production of bibliographies usefully indexed upon the simple and universal system advocated by the Institut. In the field of science some of these bibliographies might replace the International Catalogue of Scientific Literature, the cessation of which was a great loss to science.

Prof. Pollard pointed out that the Optical Society of London was the first scientific society in England to adopt these methods for indexing its *Transactions*. If all scientific societies agreed to act in the same uniform manner, and these several indexes were collected and published as specific bibliographies by the central body or Institut International de Bibliographie, accurate and detailed references to scientific literature would be produced with maximum economy and minimum effort. Such an international organisation for scientific literature, if it ever came about, might be extended to all fields of intellectual activity, and a gigantic machine could be established to index the world's rapidly increasing mass of literature. This was not an impossibility, for it only required concerted action, financial support, and the use of the powerful bibliographical tools which had been offered to the

world by the Institut for the last twenty-three years.

The morning of the first day was occupied by the business of the Council, and in the afternoon the meeting of the Commission de la Classification Decimale was held. The function of this important commission or committee of the Institut is principally concerned with the periodical revision of the decimal classification, which by the aid of many collaborators in different parts of the world is ably conducted by M. Donker Duyvis, of Deventer. During the discussion upon the new edition of the Classification Decimale Universelle, now in course of preparation, it was stated that the Science Library was preparing an English index, the German Committee had decided upon a German translation of the work, and that in Czechoslovakia a translation had already been started.

On the following day the assembly, consisting of all members of the Institut and numerous delegates, convened to receive reports and hold discussions during which many interesting activities were brought to light. In particular, Dr. Huet, of Brussels, is producing by the help of collaborators an extensive bibliography of dentistry. Czechoslovakia gave evidence of the application of the international decimal classification in many directions. A remarkable feature of these deliberations was the unanimous tribute paid by a number of representatives of various municipal bodies to the great utility of the international classification for the efficient and rapid selection of any required detail from municipal archives, a very severe test of practical utility.

MM. Paul Otlet and H. La Fontaine, the original founders of the Institut International de Bibliographie in 1895, directed attention to the necessity of finding a suitable home for the Universal Bibliographical Repertory, consisting of 13,667,816 moveable index cards at present housed at the Palais Mondial at Brussels, which may shortly have to be removed. They hoped that it might be possible to find a suitable place for this enormous index in Geneva.

Dr. Uhlendahl, director of the German library at Leipzig, who also represented the Association of German Booksellers and the International Union of Librarians, pointed out, in his vote of thanks to the president, that the number of German librarians present was an indication of the interest taken in the methods of the Institut in Germany, and referred to the satisfactory progress made in various directions as shown by the reports received at the conference.

The Oberbürgermeister of Cologne invited the members of the conference to luncheon in the Rathaus, and those who were present will not readily forget his liberal hospitality or the comfortable accommodation he afforded the members of the conference in the 'Pressa' Exhibition.

S. C. BRADFORD.

Economics of Production.

DISCUSSING "Medieval Economic Theory in Modern Industrial Life," Prof. Mauritz Bonn, of Berlin, before Section F (Economic Science and Statistics) at the recent Glasgow meeting of the British Association, stated that the chief feature of medieval economic theory was probably the conception of production as a mere physical act of turning out goods. The money value side of it was of no importance. In strict accordance with this conception, distribution proper, outside physical transportation, was rather despised. Price was a kind of simple computation of different costs; costs being equivalent to

actual outlay and the necessary expenses of maintaining a status of living. The price was 'just' when the return to the producer covered these elements.

The scarcity of goods caused by the War in many countries brought the conception of physical production again to the forefront. Inflation enormously strengthened this conception. The less trustworthy the purchasing power of money, the more important was the possession of actual goods. The scramble for goods led to the theory that prices ought to pay, not for the actual cost of production of the goods sold, but for their cost of reproduction.