

After completing their courses these students would be ready for posts in Government or industrial research or for teaching posts, especially in the new technical colleges. Among the other students would be found some part-time ones specializing in their last (undergraduate) year. In addition, there would be research workers from Government or industrial establishments who would be attending courses or carrying out research, some full-time, some part-time.

It is believed that an institute planned on these lines would soon justify its existence by its usefulness: it would satisfy an urgent recognized need and therefore no very great difficulties are anticipated in financing it. It is difficult to estimate the size of such an institute at the time when higher education in Great Britain will have settled down to a steady state. It is, however, clear that there is a fairly definite size below which it would not be efficient, in so far as that it could not provide satisfactorily comprehensive courses. There is no doubt that there would be enough work, in each of the suggested directions, to occupy fully an organisation of the minimum size from the very beginning, and staff could be added and its scope extended in various directions in the light of experience. For example, there is a need for a British journal on the lines of the German *Zeitschrift für angewandte Mathematik und Mechanik* or the new American *Quarterly of Applied Mathematics*, and this institute would be the natural editorial centre.

¹ Sadler, D. H., and Todd, John, *Nature*, **157**, 571 (May 4, 1946).

² See, for example, Chapman, S., "University Training of Mathematicians", *Math. Gaz.*, **30**, 61 (1946).

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PRINCETON UNIVERSITY, 1746-1946

By PROF. HUGH S. TAYLOR, F.R.S.

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY in Princeton, New Jersey, one of the five older institutions for higher learning in the United States, is celebrating the two hundredth anniversary of the granting of the original charter from King George II of England to the College of New Jersey on October 22, 1746. In deciding, in spite of many difficulties now confronting all institutions of higher learning in America, to organise a celebration of the event, the University based its decision on the belief that, in the present critical condition of the world, a re-dedication to the ideals of freedom and of obligation to the nation and to the world which have for two centuries animated the life of the University could not be ignored. Princeton, therefore, proposed "to direct its Bicentennial Celebration to the end of applying, in consultation with scholars throughout the world, our common skills, knowledge, and wisdom to the reconsideration of the fundamental obligations of higher learning to human society, hoping thus to contribute to the advancement of the comity of all nations and to the building of a free and peaceful world".

The primary means of implementing this purpose was the organisation of a series of fifteen scholars' conferences extending throughout the academic year 1946-47. These conferences are restricted in size and limited to distinguished scholars from many

nations. They reduce to a minimum the presenting of formal papers, and develop to a maximum a free interchange of ideas among the members who meet as equals. Taken in their ensemble, they represent the first world congress of scholars of the post-war era.

The first six of these conferences have been completed. They form a progression from "The Future of Physical Science" through "The Chemistry and Physiology of Growth", "Engineering and Human Affairs", "The Evolution of Social Institutions in America", "The Development of International Society" to "The Humanistic Tradition in the Century Ahead", a progression from the physical and natural sciences through the social sciences to the values of humanism in the critical years ahead. Thirty-five foreign scholars representing fifteen other nations have joined with American scholars in three-day conferences on each of these six topics. In one conference eleven Nobel prize winners participated. The members of another conference were authors of more than a thousand books.

The remaining nine conferences of the second series, which will take place between the middle of November and May 1947, include two on the university—one on its relation to the public service, and one other relating to its world responsibilities. There will be one conference on the problems of mathematics, one on genetics, palaeontology and evolution, one on the Near East and one on the Far East. There will be two on the fine arts, one restricted to the field of research and scholarship in the arts, and the other pertaining rather to the social implications of the fine arts in relation to the planning of man's physical environment. The final conference of this series in May will deal with secondary school education in the United States. The presence of so many noted world scholars in Princeton to attend the conferences in the course of the year has permitted the securing of an unusually distinguished list of bicentennial lecturers. The series of lectures already begun will be continued throughout the year. Bicentennial concerts and exhibitions in the realm of art form a part of the programme, especially with reference to the conference on "Research and Scholarship in the Arts" to be held late in April 1947.

Two convocations have already been held in September and October, and two more are to be held in February and June. At the first, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who preached the inaugural Bicentennial Sermon, the first of a series of ten, received an honorary degree. At the second convocation, concluding the first series of conferences, twenty-three honorary degrees were conferred. Eight scholars from Britain, including Lord Lindsay of Berker, Sir Hector Hetherington, Sir Harold Hartley, Sir John Boyd Orr, Sir Henry Hallett Dale, Salvador de Madariaga, Michael Polanyi and Ernest Woodward, were among the recipients of these degrees. For the final ceremonies and the convocation on June 16, 1947, delegates from colleges, universities and learned societies of the world will be invited to attend.

The bicentennial publication programme contemplates the issuing of twelve or fifteen books on various subjects, largely those dealing with the history of the university. In addition to this there will be published for each of the fifteen conferences a thirty-six page pamphlet summarizing the conference and giving its programme and list of members. The further question of what books may emerge from these

conferences is one which is being studied conference by conference as the programme proceeds.

A series of events has been arranged for February 22, 1947, which is Washington's birthday and, normally, Alumni Day in Princeton. The University on this occasion will honour especially distinguished scholars from among its own alumni at the convocation then planned. The June ceremonies will cover a period of about five days, beginning with the 'commencement' on June 13 and ending with the final convocation on June 17. The first three days of this period will be devoted to events of particular interest to the alumni. Plans are being made for a historical spectacle to be enacted in the Princeton stadium on June 15. The events of the programmes of June 16 and 17 will be of particular interest to the delegates, of whom it is expected there will be approximately eight hundred. During this June period there will take place the dedication of the new gymnasium, the laying of the corner-stone of the great new library, a formal dinner for distinguished guests and delegates at which the President of the United States and others will speak, and the awarding of honorary degrees at the final convocation.

What really distinguishes this particular programme from similar celebrations in the past is, in the first place, the fact that it is taking place in the period of an entire academic year. This permits the manifold activities to take place at a more leisurely tempo, in which each has its own place and right to existence without the competition of other concurrent events. In the second place, and far more important, it differs in that although at times of anniversaries such as this there is much justification for a historical point of view and for dwelling upon past achievements, the entire orientation of this programme is forward-looking. To be sure, we are not forgetting Princeton's long and honourable history, which will receive adequate attention in the course of the programme. We are, however, far more interested in the idea that, given proper orientation at this time, the efforts of the world of learning may prove as potent an instrument for good in a peaceful post-war world as they were potent for destruction during the period of the War.

JUBILEE OF THE BRITISH MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY

By G. C. AINSWORTH

THIS year, the British Mycological Society, which was founded at a meeting of the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union at Selby in 1896 for "the study of mycology in all its branches", has been celebrating its jubilee. At an ordinary meeting on April 12 a comprehensive series of exhibits was arranged in the British Museum (Natural History) to illustrate the development of mycology in Great Britain and the history of the Society. In September, a well-attended five-day foray, held at Whitby in conjunction with the Mycological Committee of the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union, marked the resumption of a series of annual autumn forays begun in 1897 which, though uninterrupted by the First World War, had to be discontinued in 1939. The climax of the celebrations was the fiftieth annual general meeting, followed by the presidential address and five paper-reading sessions

in the rooms of the Royal Institution, London, during October 23-25. This meeting, by the generous help of the British Council, was attended by mycologists from Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Greece, Palestine, Switzerland, Sweden, and the United States.

In reply to an expression of loyal greetings from the annual meeting, a message of appreciation was received from H.M. the King. Greetings were received from foreign mycological societies (including an illuminated address from the Society for the Advancement of Mycology in Denmark) and from British natural history societies, while numerous members unable to be present sent messages of good will. In addition, the president received a letter of good wishes from Mr. Herbert Morrison, Lord President of the Council.

After the officers of 1947 had been elected as follows: *president*, Prof. C. G. C. Chesters; *vice-president*, Dr. J. T. Duncan; *secretary*, Dr. G. C. Ainsworth; *foray secretary*, Mr. G. Smith; *treasurer*, Mr. W. Buddin; *editors*, Dr. B. Barnes and Mr. W. C. Moore; the following honorary members were elected: Dr. B. O. Dodge (New York Botanical Garden), Prof. R. Falk (Palestine), Prof. Ernst Gäumann (Zurich), Prof. Roger Heim (Paris Natural History Museum), and Mr. A. A. Pearson, who has been treasurer of the Society for twenty-eight years.

Thirty-seven new applications for membership were approved. The membership now stands at 430—the highest in the Society's history.

The president, Dr. J. Ramsbottom, in an address entitled "Mycology then and now", traced the beginnings of the Society and outlined the course of mycology, and particularly the study of the subject in Great Britain, during the past hundred and fifty years. With characteristic flashes of humour he surveyed the successive fashions in mycological research, suggested directions for future efforts, and welcomed the increasing recognition that was being accorded to the one-time 'Cinderella of botany'.

The papers read at the subsequent sessions were designed to illustrate the relation of mycology to allied subjects, and they are to be published in full, together with the presidential address, in a special volume of the Society's *Transactions*. At the first session, which was devoted to mycology and medicine, Dr. C. W. Emmons (U.S. Public Health Service) reviewed fungi as a cause of disease in man, and Dr. J. H. Birkinshaw (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine) gave an account of fungal metabolism with particular reference to the production of antibiotics active against organisms pathogenic to man. Dr. Emmons attributed the relative neglect of medical mycology in part to the great impetus given to bacteriology by Pasteur, Lister, and Koch, and to the fact that bacterial diseases of man are more common than those caused by fungi. He directed attention to the fact that although in the United States fungi were only held responsible for 0.03 per cent of the total deaths in 1942, this percentage was nearly twice that of the deaths attributed to paratyphoid fever, smallpox, cholera, and half a dozen other well-known diseases taken together. He pointed out that effective prophylactic or control measures are available to reduce the number of fatalities due to these better-known diseases, but to set against this, mycoses such as ringworm and other skin infections are not fatal diseases, although common and annoying. It is also possible that there are not