

of the face, two of the chest, with precise records of the colour of skin, eyes, and hair. The statistical staff of the Prudential Insurance Company of America has undertaken to deal with the data collected, while the Smithsonian Institution will facilitate the publication of results.

Although the intentions of the British committee are more wide-reaching and aim at ascertaining the condition of all elements in the population, it is to be hoped that the observations taken in Britain and America will be capable of direct comparison—for, beyond doubt, the bulk of the population of the United States has a British ancestry.

PROF. CHARLES LATHAM.

BY the sudden death of Prof. Charles Latham on September 27, the University of Glasgow has lost an eminent member of its teaching staff in the department of applied science. In 1902 the late Dr. James S. Dixon, an eminent coalmaster of Glasgow, "recognising the want of a means of teaching the higher branches of the theory and practice of mining in the University, and the desire for acquiring such knowledge displayed by many young men connected with mining," gave the University 10,000*l.* for the foundation of a lectureship in the subject. In the various branches of engineering, and in naval architecture, curricula were already provided which prepared for the degree of B.Sc. in applied science. Mining was added as an alternative curriculum, and the new department was entrusted to Mr. Latham. He had been trained in the Wigan School of Mines, and had been assistant general manager of the Moss Hall Coal Co. For nine years (1893–1902) he was director of mining at University College, Nottingham. The first Dixon lecturer speedily made his department efficient, and his numerous courses of instruction attracted many pupils.

In 1907 Dr. Dixon supplemented his original endowment by 6500*l.*, and the University, with the consent of the Privy Council, transformed the lectureship into a chair. To this Mr. Latham was forthwith appointed, the electors including H.M. Inspectors of Mining and the presidents of the Scottish Mining Institute and the Coalmasters' Association. In the new chair Prof. Latham continued to devote himself to the advancement of his subject by teaching and research. He raised a considerable Equipment Fund, by means of generous contributions from the leaders of the Scottish mining industries, who had great confidence in his policy and character. Assisted by the fund, the University was enabled to equip the museum and laboratory of the department with valuable exhibits and apparatus, and Prof. Latham gave himself to the training of his pupils and assistants in the practical and experimental sides of their work, and in original investigations on mine-pumps, winding machinery, coal-cutting, inflammable gases, life-saving appliances, etc. His course was recognised by the Home Office as equivalent to two of the five years' practical training required under the Coal Mines Acts for the

qualification of mine manager. By arrangement with a number of the largest collieries in Scotland, his students were enabled, during the summer months of each year of the course, to acquire experience of mining practice. Many of them now occupy responsible positions in the industry, and in technical institutions throughout the country. Prof. Latham served on numerous advisory and other committees relating to mining, and published, in the Transactions of the Mining Institute and elsewhere, memoirs of importance on his researches in the above-mentioned subjects.

NOTES.

THE Minister of Reconstruction has appointed a committee to advise him as to the procedure which should be adopted for dealing with the position of the chemical trades after the war. The committee consists of the following members:—Sir Keith W. Price (chairman), Mr. J. Anderson, Mr. J. F. Brunner, Dr. C. Carpenter, Prof. J. G. Lawn, Sir William Pearce, Mr. K. B. Quinan, and the Right Hon. J. W. Wilson. Mr. G. C. Smallwood, Ministry of Munitions, will act as secretary to the committee. The officers of Government departments are appointed with the concurrence of their respective Ministers, and the other members of the committee have been appointed at the suggestion of a representative meeting of chemical manufacturers. Dr. Addison has requested the committee to conduct its deliberations with a view to the creation of some organisation which should be adequately representative of the trade as a whole, and by means of which the trade may be enabled hereafter to continue to develop its own resources and to enlist the closest co-operation of all those engaged in the chemical industry.

ON October 6 Prof. W. J. Pope addressed a meeting of teachers at Regent Street Polytechnic on the neglect of expert knowledge of scientific subjects by the British Government. Germany, he is reported by the *Times* to have said, prepared for war by the establishment of a huge chemical industry, which was built up round the coal-tar industry, and then by exporting a large proportion of the world's requirements of coal-tar colours and pharmaceutical and photographic products. This success was achieved in spite of the fact that England once possessed the whole of the heavy chemical industry of the world. We formerly produced practically all the nitric and sulphuric acids and the greater part of the alkali used throughout the world. This industry has been taken from us as the result of Germany's foresight and exploitation of scientific ability. The coal-tar industry was established originally in this country, and until ten years ago Germany was practically dependent on us for crude coal-tar and for the simpler first products separated from coal-tar. Alluding to the establishment of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research with an endowment of 1,000,000*l.*, Prof. Pope remarked that the question to be answered is why that experiment was not made twenty years ago, at a time when it would have been undoubtedly successful in preventing the horrors of the last three years. We have suffered in the past from the exclusively British method of making the specialist entirely subservient to the administrator, the administrator being generally chosen because he is available, because he is politically acceptable, and because he knows nothing whatever about the subject which is to be administered, and is therefore not likely to be prejudiced by any previous convictions. The process of appointing someone who knows nothing to super-