

The British Dyestuffs Corporation.

TWO important pronouncements regarding the present position of the British Dyestuffs Corporation appeared in the press last week. In a written reply to a question put in the House of Commons by Mr. Graham White, the President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Sidney Webb, said: "The Board of the British Dyestuffs Corporation have been informed that the Government would feel compelled to exercise their power of veto with respect to an agreement with the *Interessen-Gemeinschaft* on the lines suggested."

In making this decision, the Government has taken the only course consonant with national welfare and with the best interests of the textile industries. The question of the agreement has never been specifically before the shareholders of the Corporation, but it has been for some time abundantly evident that the views and policy of the directors and of the financiers who hold large blocks of shares were opposed to the considered opinions of all the important industrial and scientific organisations concerned.

In view of the Government veto, other methods of dealing with the present unfortunate position of the British Dyestuffs Corporation must be necessarily explored, and definite alternative proposals are not lacking. In his recent address as chairman of the Colour Users Association, Mr. Sutcliffe Smith made proposals for the reconstruction both of the financial and management sides of the Corporation, and, speaking before the Society of Dyers and Colourists in Bradford on October 9, Dr. Herbert Levinstein, who has been engaged in dyestuff manufacture all his life and is also probably the largest individual shareholder in the British Dyestuffs Corporation, subjected the position of the Corporation to a critical examination.

According to the *Times*, October 10, Dr. Levinstein said: "Last April, at the annual meeting, the chairman stated that the board would resign if they were not encouraged to complete the agreement as outlined. The colour consumers, the customers of the company, through the chairman of their association, have definitely stated that they disapprove of the agreement, that they will prevent it if they can, and will welcome an entire reorganisation of the management. Further, the agreement, the headings of which have become known, is opposed by every one of the organised bodies in Great Britain representing pure and applied chemistry, including the Association of British Chemical Manufacturers. Thus it appears that the policy of the board and the constitution of the board are disapproved by the whole of the chemical world and by their customers, the colour-using interests. Out of much that is obscure this much is certain. The agreement has not been approved. The situation contemplated by the chairman and his colleagues has arisen. The board have not been encouraged to complete the arrangements with the I.G. in which they put their faith, and they will no doubt tender their resignations." At the annual meeting of the Corporation last April, several speakers, men of high standing in the City of London, who represented substantial financial interests in the company, supported both the board and the agreement. The public flotation of the Corporation was not a success, a large proportion of the shares remained, and apparently still remain, with the underwriters, and Dr. Levinstein viewed with concern this divergence of views between colour users and those who represented the underwriters.

The position is one of great gravity as regards the future of the British Dyestuffs Corporation. The

problems imposed on the directors by inherent difficulties of the position have not been solved by their proposals, and it has been shown once again that the special conditions involved in chemical manufactures in general, and in dyestuff manufacture most particularly, cannot efficiently be dealt with by a board which bases its policy on financial, rather than on technical requirements. The improbability of the success of any dyestuff concern managed on these lines was predicted by Lord Moulton and others, and strong but unavailing appeals were made in *NATURE* and elsewhere that the directorate should contain a strong technical element.

The solution of the present lamentable position appears to be a drastic reorganisation of the British Dyestuffs Corporation's finances and policy, coupled with an all-British, instead of a German-British, agreement. It is stated that British firms outside the Corporation are at present supplying three or four times as much dyestuff to British consumers as does the Corporation, and are, in fact, its chief competitors.

WALTER M. GARDNER.

University and Educational Intelligence.

BIRMINGHAM.—The following appointments have been made: Mr. Robert H. Kinvg to be reader in geography; Mr. Launcelot P. Timmins to be lecturer and demonstrator in oil production in the Department of Oil Mining; and Mr. W. J. Shearer to be lecturer in coal mining and mine rescue work. Dr. Beatrice Webb has been appointed medical officer to the Women's Training Department in the place of Mrs. Olive Elgood Turner, who has resigned.

Under the title "Careers to which subjects may lead, and other information," the Faculty of Science has issued a booklet "for the guidance of those who intend to enter the Faculty of Science of the University, and for the information of Heads of Schools, Parents and Guardians concerned." This publication, for which there is already a considerable demand, sets forth the qualifications desirable in any one about to enter the Faculty of Science, great stress being laid on the necessity of a sound knowledge of English. Some knowledge of physics is regarded as essential in all subjects, and an acquaintance with German is strongly advised. An indication is given of the careers which are open to successful students in the various departments, and the pamphlet should be of great value in enabling intending undergraduates to decide upon the subjects to which they can most advantageously devote their time at the University.

BRISTOL.—An agricultural chemist is shortly to be appointed to assist in advisory work in the Bristol province under the advisory scheme of the Ministry of Agriculture. Particulars may be obtained from the Registrar of the University. Applications for the post should reach the Registrar not later than October 25.

CAMBRIDGE.—The new year finds the colleges busily occupied with the drafting and passing of statutes to meet the recommendations of the recent Royal Commission and the requirements of the Statutory Commissioners. So far the University has not been asked to devote much time and labour to the task of drafting statutes and ordinances, save for the new pension statutes, which will bring its future staff, and, so far as possible, its present staff, within the Federated Superannuation System for universities. It would, however, seem inevitable that when

the Commissioners come to grips with the detailed requirements of the Faculty Scheme, the provisional outlines of which have been already reported in these columns, the co-operation of the resident teachers must be sought. University and college officers alike look forward to a busy year, which will, in many matters, be of vital importance in the history and development of the University.

One department of the University which looks forward to immediate development is that of pathology, owing to the generous endowment for a new laboratory by the Rockefeller Trustees and Mr. Ernest H. Gates. Building is also to be done for the Animal Diseases Institute and for an extension of the School of Agriculture. New college buildings at Clare and Sidney Sussex Colleges will also soon be completed, the former being occupied this term. From all accounts the number of students is to remain at the same high level as in recent years, and the pressure on laboratories and on college accommodation is to remain very heavy.

Dr. T. M. Cherry and Mr. J. H. Quastel, research student, have been elected to fellowships at Trinity College.

LONDON.—The final report of the Royal Commission on University Education in London was dated March 27, 1913, and it is suggested that some modifications of its provisions may be desirable. The president of the Board of Education has therefore appointed a committee "to indicate what are the principal changes now most needed in the existing constitution of the University of London and on what basis a Statutory Commission should be set up to frame new Statutes for the University." The committee is constituted as follows: Lord Ernle (chairman), Sir Robert Blair, Dr. H. L. Eason, Mr. H. B. Lees-Smith, Sir Henry Miers, Prof. A. F. Pollard, Sir Amherst Selby-Bigge, Bt., Miss K. Wallas, and Mr. S. H. Wood as secretary, to whom all communications should be addressed at the office of the Board of Education, King Charles Street, Whitehall, S.W.1.

At an extraordinary meeting of the Senate held on October 9 to consider a communication, dated September 15, 1924, from the president of the Board of Education with reference to the appointment of a Departmental Committee on matters connected with the University, the following resolution was unanimously carried: "That the president of the Board of Education be respectfully reminded that the Senate was not consulted as to the reference to the Haldane Commission, nor represented upon it, nor gave evidence before it; and that, having regard to the successful progress of the University since the report of that Commission, the Senate is of opinion that such changes in the organisation of the University as are necessary may be more readily effected by amendments promoted by the University than by a statutory revision of the University as constituted by the Act of 1898; but that the Senate will be prepared to furnish through its officers and appropriate Committees any information desired by the Departmental Committee, and trusts that the various bodies and interests represented on the Senate will receive a full opportunity of putting individually or collectively before the Departmental Committee their views on the matters under consideration."

The Semon lecture for the present year will be delivered at the Royal Society of Medicine, 1 Wimpole Street, W., at 5 o'clock, on Thursday, November 6, by Dr. D. Guisez, of Paris, who will speak (in French) on "Malignant Disease of the Gullet." A course of four lectures on "Enzymes" will be given by Prof. J. Mellanby on November 6, 13, 20, and 27 at St. Thomas's Hospital Medical

School at 4.30 each day. No tickets will be required either for the Semon lecture or the course on "Enzymes."

ST. ANDREWS.—At a meeting of the Court held on September 7, it was unanimously resolved to appoint Mr. J. N. Wright, at present assistant in the department of logic in the University, to the lectureship in logic and psychology in University College, Dundee, and the United College, St. Andrews, which became vacant upon the appointment of Prof. Morrison to the chair of moral philosophy. Mr. Wright, who is a graduate of the University of Durham, has been assistant in the department of logic in the University since 1920.

At a meeting of the University Court on September 29, Dr. O. R. Howell was appointed lecturer in chemistry in University College, Dundee, in succession to Dr. J. S. W. Boyle, lately appointed headmaster at Prestonpans. The following nominations of assistants were approved: botany (St. Andrews), Miss C. I. Kean; chemistry (Dundee), Mr. C. A. Kerr; mathematics (Dundee), Miss Mary C. Simpson; chemistry (St. Andrews), Mr. G. J. Robertson. Mr. G. B. Steele was appointed lecturer in civil engineering and structural design, University College, Dundee.

It was intimated at the meeting that the arrangements are now complete for carrying on in Dundee a course of lectures during the coming session in railway geography, intended for the staffs of the railway companies, the lecturer being Mr. D. E. I. Innes.

The degree of Ph.D. has been conferred on Mr. G. J. Robertson for a thesis entitled "Investigations on Cellulose," and on Mr. R. S. Vaidyanathaswamy, of Madras Province, for a mathematical thesis entitled "Contributions to the Theory of Apolarity."

SHEFFIELD.—The following appointments have been made: Miss Alice Garnett, to be assistant lecturer in geography; and Dr. R. Platt and Dr. C. W. A. Lister, to be demonstrators in physiology.

ACTIVE efforts are being made to raise the sum of 20,000*l.* for necessary extensions of Queen's College, London. The chairman of the general committee is Lord Askwith, and a distinguished body of patrons is supporting the appeal. Donations amounting to 7000*l.* have already been received, and it is hoped that the remainder of the sum required will be forthcoming from old students of the College or benefactors interested in the higher education of women. The Duchess of York has graciously consented to visit the College on Saturday, November 1, and to receive purses collected for the extension fund. Queen's College was established in 1848 and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1853. It was the first college for women, and remains as independent to-day as it was when first constituted by F. D. Maurice, R. C. French, Charles Kingsley, Sterndale Bennett, D. T. Ansted, Edward Forbes, and other leaders in different departments of progressive thought. For some years the work of the College has been carried on without adequate accommodation or equipment, yet its record for scholarship and inspiring teaching is remarkably high. There should not be much difficulty in securing the relatively modest sum required to enable the College to maintain a worthy place among institutions for the higher education of women. Contributions to the appeal fund should be sent to the hon. treasurer, Sir James Williamson, or to Mrs. Allport, at the College, 47 Harley Street, London, W.1.