

slowly, and there steadily declined the proportion of persons dying prematurely from diseases consequent upon under-nutrition; thus the death rate fell steadily and the average duration of life rose. The under-nourished are doomed to premature death no matter how efficient and active the health services may be; nothing can make a population increase faster than the food supply; if there be ten additional persons, and only food for eight, two must soon die. The high correlation between the birth rate and the death rate continued up to 1913; therefore, food shortage was still the cause of what was excessive in the death rate up to 1913. Thus the whole of the fall of the death rate from 1876 to 1913, the big reduction of poverty, and the rise in the average duration of life from about thirty-five years to more than fifty years, must be attributed to the decline of the birth rate steadily reducing the amount of the food shortage.

In all the other old countries, and not excluding France, one may similarly infer that up to 1913, notwithstanding the extent to which the birth rate had fallen in some of them, the population was still pressing on the means of subsistence. The main conclusion is most encouraging and is as follows: Virtually the sole economic difficulty which besets man is that he can only increase his food supply very slowly; consequently, small families and willing work would eliminate poverty.

University and Educational Intelligence.

CAMBRIDGE.—The Allen Scholarship has been awarded to Ralph Cooper, of Trinity College.

The list of those who have recently passed the qualifying examination (in elementary mathematics and mechanics) for the Mechanical Sciences Tripos shows that twenty-three per cent. of those who were successful had not yet come into residence. The curriculum for this examination can usually be dealt with at school, and it is of some satisfaction to realise that the slow but steady rise in the standard attained in the schools is gradually relieving the university of the load of elementary teaching, for which it is often not too well equipped, and with which it really ought not to be encumbered.

Sir Alfred and Lady Yarrow have offered to endow an Eric Yarrow lectureship for the study of Assyriology.

Dr. D. Stockdale, of King's College, has been elected to a fellowship at that College. He has taken both parts of the Natural Science Tripos and was elected to a Senior "1851 Exhibition" studentship in 1923.

MANCHESTER.—The following have been recommended for the honorary degree of D.Sc.: Mr. S. L. Pearce, Electricity Commissioner, formerly Consulting and Chief Engineer and Manager, Electricity Department, Manchester Corporation; Prof. A. C. Seward, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, professor of botany there; Dr. A. E. H. Tutton, formerly H.M. Inspector of Schools (Technological Branch), Board of Education.

THE British American Tobacco Co., Ltd., has sent a donation of 105*l.* to the funds being collected for the development of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, Trinidad. Other recent donations and promises include: 250*l.* from The Manchester Cotton Association, Ltd.; 105*l.* each from the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co., Ltd., and Messrs. Alfred Holt and Co.; and 100*l.* each from Lord Queenborough, M.P., and C. H. Gray, Esq. These donations, together with the sum of 15,000*l.* recently granted by the Imperial Government, will be devoted to the building of a

hostel for the students, and the provision of an estate where the business side of farming may be taught. A further 25,000*l.* is, however, still urgently required. Contributions may be sent to Mr. Algernon Aspinall, Secretary, 14 Trinity Square, London, E.C.3, or to Barclays' Bank (Dominion, Colonial, and Overseas), 30 Gracechurch Street, E.C.3.

WIDESPREAD interest will be aroused by the publication of the report of the Departmental Committee on the University of London (H.M.S.O. Cmd. 2612). This Committee was asked to consider the final (1913) report of the Royal Commission on University Education in London, and to make recommendations as to changes in the constitution of the University which may now be desirable. The terms of reference were wide, and the Committee, in its discretion, decided to make no recommendations on the questions of the site of the University and the external examination system. One of the main recommendations is that a council of sixteen should have the final control of finance, if and when the Senate approves of the educational policy implied. Nine of the sixteen are to be University representatives—the chancellor and the chairman of Convocation, the vice-chancellor and six others from the Senate; four will be nominated by the Crown, and two by the London County Council; one will be co-opted. As regards the constitution of the Senate, it is suggested that the present 'nominated third' should be replaced by a collegiate council consisting of the vice-chancellor and the principal of the University, and the heads of the seven chief schools and colleges, together with two representatives of the medical schools, and a few others representing minor schools. The chief function of this council will be the supervision of inter-collegiate affairs. The total membership of the Senate is to be reduced from 56 to 49.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, Reading, has now received its Royal Charter conferring upon it the full status of a university. This was announced on Saturday, March 20, by Mr. H. G. Williams, M.P., who congratulated the Lord-Lieutenant of Berkshire, Mr. J. H. Benyon, on becoming the first chancellor. This latest addition to the family, now numbering seven, of twentieth-century universities of England, is descended from "The University Extension College, in conjunction with the Schools of Science and Art, Reading," which was opened in 1892 and incorporated under the Companies Acts in 1896. Of its sister universities the youngest is Bristol, chartered in 1909. The University has an endowment of 285,000*l.*, of which 200,000*l.* came from the Palmer family and 50,000*l.* from Lady Wantage. The first principal was Mr. H. J. (now Sir Halford) Mackinder, then a student on the foundation of Christ Church, Oxford. The present principal, Mr. W. M. Childs, has held office since 1903. There are a strong faculty of agriculture and horticulture, and departments of fine arts, music, and domestic subjects, in addition to faculties of letters and science. The National Institute for Research in Dairying forms part of the University. The number of full-time students as shown in the University Grants Committee's returns for 1923-24 is 578, distributed as follows: Arts 339 (including 287 women), pure science 104, agriculture 135. A cardinal principle of the policy of the College from its earliest years has been to stress the importance of the corporate life of its members. This is reflected in the large proportion (70 per cent.) of its full-time students in halls of residence. In other modern English and in Scottish universities a large majority of the students reside in lodgings or at home.