

University and Educational Intelligence.

CAMBRIDGE.—The General Board has appointed Dr. H. Jeffreys, of St. John's College, reader in geophysics.

The Council of the Senate has recommended that it be authorised to inform the Plummer Trustees that the University would approve of the establishment in the University, on the John Humphrey Plummer Foundation, of professorships of inorganic chemistry, of mathematical physics, and of colloid science, and of an annual payment at the initial rate of £300 from the Plummer Fund towards the maintenance of the Department of Colloid Science.

The Council of the Senate has issued a report on the proposed allocation of the Rockefeller benefaction. In 1928, the International Education Board offered to provide a sum not exceeding £700,000, provided that the University obtained from other sources the balance of £479,000 necessary to put the scheme into operation. At his installation last year, the Chancellor announced that the University had received promises which would enable it to satisfy this condition. The complete scheme consists of two parts, one dealing with the University Library involving a capital sum of £500,000, and the other dealing with scientific developments involving a capital sum of £679,000.

On the scientific side of the Rockefeller scheme, money is to be received from the International Education Board *pro rata* as it has been collected and paid in from outside sources or guaranteed by the University. At present, the University has received approximately £110,000 from outside sources and £210,000 from the International Education Board. The income of the sums already in hand will be about £15,000. In the opinion of the Council of the Senate, this income is sufficient to finance those parts of the Rockefeller scheme which the heads of departments think can now suitably be put in hand, provided that the professorship of mathematical physics and a professorship of colloid science (to replace the temporary professorship of colloidal physics) are financed from the Plummer Foundation. The Council has accordingly recommended that the General Board be requested to take the necessary steps to bring into operation, by Oct. 1, 1931, so much of the scheme as can be carried out under present conditions.

EDINBURGH.—The University Court, at its meeting on April 27, resolved to appoint as the first professor of geography, Mr. Alan G. Ogilvie, at present reader in geography at the University, the appointment to begin from Oct. 1, 1931. The foundation of this new chair has been made possible by a grant from the Carnegie Trustees and funds collected by public subscription through the action of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society.

LONDON.—Prof. Max Jakob is giving a course of four lectures on "Steam Research in Europe and in America", at the Institution of Civil Engineers, on May 7, 8, 14, and 15 at 5.30 P.M. The lecture on May 14 will deal with optical measurements—theories and thermodynamical evaluation and control of the results of experimental work; and that on May 15 with special thermal properties and processes of water and steam, and a note on international steam table conferences and international steam tables. Admission to these lectures is free, without ticket.

OXFORD.—The debate on the enlargement and improvement of library facilities in Oxford has been postponed to May 19; the voting on the actual decree

to take place on May 26. In each of the schemes now before Congregation, the addition is advocated of a new wing to the Radcliffe Science Library.

The Rhodes Memorial lectures will be delivered in German, on May 9, 16, and 23, by Prof. A. Einstein, on "The Theory of Relativity".

APPLICATIONS for a Ramsay Memorial Fellowship for Chemical Research will be considered at the end of June next. The fellowship will be of the annual value of £250, with a possible additional sum of not more than £50 per annum for expenses. The tenure of the fellowship will be two years, but it may be extended for a third year. Applications should be sent not later than June 5 to the Secretary, Ramsay Memorial Fellowships Trust, University College, Gower Street, W.C.1.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, London, in its recently published report for the year ending February 1931, records the closing, as from July 31, 1930, of the College Centenary Appeal Fund, which was inaugurated in 1925. The appeal was for £500,000 and towards this a sum of £227,764 was raised. Among the departments for the development of which contributions from the fund have been made are those of chemical engineering and zoology. To the former has been allocated more than £60,000, the full amount appealed for in 1925; but meanwhile the position and needs of the department have been reviewed by a special committee over which the late Lord Melchett presided and a further sum of £110,000 will be needed to give effect to this committee's scheme. For the department of zoology, the appeal asked for £50,000, but the International Education Board interested itself in the matter and offered to pay half the cost of a wider scheme involving an expenditure of £240,000. The question of ways and means for qualifying for this gift is now engaging the attention of the College Committee. The total number of students registered last session is 3150, as against 3249 the preceding year. The decrease is more than accounted for by the fact that there was in 1929 no vacation course in spoken English for foreign students, the attendance at which normally exceeds two hundred.

Birthdays and Research Centres.

May 9.—Sir JAMES IRVINE, F.R.S., Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of St. Andrews.

In large measure through the adoption of methods developed in my earlier researches on sugars, the structural chemistry of carbohydrates has been greatly expanded during the past thirty years. The progress is gratifying, yet, after all, it must be admitted that these advances, which enable us to ascribe structural formulæ to representative carbohydrates, do not lead very far towards the interpretation of fundamental problems.

So many questions remain unanswered: Is glucose the first product of photosynthesis? Why are sugars optically active, and why is the glucose configuration favoured above all others? By what processes are the hexoses converted one into the other? What is sucrose and how is it formed? These are but examples. If I had my scientific life to live over again, I would study these additional problems, but would do so under conditions approximating to those which prevail in plant and animal life. If it be the case that "even a paramecium is not quite himself under the fierce light which beats on the microscope stage", it is equally true that a sugar is unlikely to reveal its true characteristics when exposed to the fierce reagents of the organic chemist.