News and Views

Salaries of Scientific Workers in Government Employment

THE restoration of the economy cuts in salaries made by county councils and other public bodies in Great Britain within the last six months raises the important question as to when the Government proposes to follow suit. These cuts have inflicted considerable hardship on a large body of scientific workers in Government employment, and they were always avowedly temporary in their incidence. The ten per cent reductions have now been operative for two years, and in very many cases they were imposed on basic salaries that were in no way adequate considering the scientific attainments of the victims. Admittedly they were a breach of contract, and there is considerable force in the contention that the Government is in honour bound to follow the example of municipal bodies, and to restore these cuts at the earliest possible moment. The country's financial position is very different now from what it was in October 1931. The national finances have been stabilised. Successive conversion schemes have reduced the burden of debt charges. The estimated revenue from the new tariffs for the current year is £24,500,000. Moreover, during the current year the revenue has received a windfall of more than £8,000,000 from death duties on the estate of the late Sir John Ellerman alone.

TRADE is improving, and the adverse balance of trade is smaller than it has been for some considerable time. Employment is improving, whilst unemployment is decreasing. New industries are being launched, such as coal hydrogenation, which will be productive of increased employment and revenue. These new industries are frequently the outcome of scientific research; and it is not too much for scientific workers to expect that the conditions under which they have laboured during the past two years shall, at least, be restored to the level of 1931. Point is added to this expectation when it is borne in mind that the Government from time to time creates fresh appointments of a non-scientific character which carry no such burdens as salary cuts. A whole batch of appointments has recently been created under the Milk Marketing Board, none of which appears to have salary cuts imposed—notably a general manager has been appointed to this Board at a commencing salary of £5,000 rising to £7,000; that is to say, this general manager's salary is not subject to the cut which is imposed on the Prime Minister's, and will eventually be higher than the Prime Minister's basic salary. Then recently a fresh appointment was made at the Post Office, and there was no mention of the salary being subject to an economy cut. It is obvious that the time is ripe for reviewing the whole situation.

Dr. Herbert E. Ives

DR. HERBERT E. IVES, who is to deliver the Thomas Young Oration before the Physical Society on October 6 at 5.45 p.m., at the Royal Institution, is well-known to British physicists interested in optical subjects for his outstanding work on the theory and practice of modern photometry and colorimetry. For a period extending approximately from 1914 until 1925, Dr. Ives, with various collaborators, directed his attention to the various outstanding problems of light measurement, and in a succession of important papers introduced science where chaotic empiricism had previously prevailed. To him we owe the first systematic study of the problems of heterochromatic photometry, and his classical work on the theory of the flicker photometer is still the basis of present-day practice in the use of this instrument. He also laid the foundations on which any successful method of physical photometry must be built. While Ives cannot be said to have discovered the foundations of scientific colorimetry, which lay unnoticed in the work of earlier pioneers, he unearthed them and revealed their essential simplicity; and his work on this subject was the basis from which all modern developments in the United States, Great Britain and many other countries have followed. In more recent years, in the laboratories of the Bell Telephone Company of New York, Ives has been engaged on photoelectric problems, and has been personally responsible for many of the striking developments which have taken place in telephotography, television, stereoscopic cinematography and allied subjects.

Marking of European Storks

ARRANGEMENTS that have been made to broadcast the progress of flights of storks marked with numbered rings at the ornithological stations at Rossitten and Essen in Germany, recall the history and results of bird-ringing in Europe, which commenced with the stork and have, perhaps, revealed most regarding the migrations of the white stork, *Ciconia alba*. In 1710 a large bird, described as a heron or a stork, probably the latter, was captured in Germany and on its legs were several metal rings, one of which bore an inscription stating the bird had been caught in Turkey several years before. This is believed to be the first attempt at marking migrating birds with rings. A hundred years later Brugmann captured a few storks in Holland and placed rings on their legs, but failed to trace them. In 1899, Mortensen, in Denmark, succeeded in marking and recovering a number of birds, and after that the practice of ringing became very extensive. Two years later, Prof. Thienemann founded the Rossitten Ornithological Station on the Baltic shores, where bird marking has since been carried out on an extensive scale. 110,000–120,000 storks have been marked since 1917 in Denmark and one from Jutland is believed to be between thirty and forty years of age (Skovgaarde). At the same time, however, the stork population has been reported to be decreasing in Holland and elsewhere. 2,000 storks are estimated to inhabit Denmark, but France's nesting colonies have vanished and nests are rare in Italy and Russia, and the