

Educational Topics and Events

CAMBRIDGE.—Trinity College announces the usual offer of a research studentship open to graduates of other universities who propose to go to Cambridge in October 1936 as candidates for the degree of Ph.D. The value of the studentship may be as much as £300 a year. The studentship is open this year only to men who have not reached the age of twenty-six years before May 1, 1936. Applicants shall ordinarily be nominated by the authorities of their universities. Applications must reach the Senior Tutor not later than May 1, 1936. The same College offers, as usual, Dominion and Colonial exhibitions to students of Dominion and Colonial universities who wish to go to Cambridge next October as candidates for the degree of B.A., M.Litt., M.Sc., or Ph.D. These exhibitions are of the titular value of £40. Candidates must apply through the principal authority of their University, and applications should reach the Senior Tutor (from whom further particulars may be obtained) by May 1, 1936.

OXFORD.—In Congregation on December 3, it was proposed to make statutory the decree governing the relations between the committee of the Museum of the History of Science and those bodies which use part of the Old Ashmolean building where the Museum is housed. A concordat was recently arrived at in which the Museum obtains the whole building in "1942 or earlier". By making the decree statutory, the proposers hoped to get this vague phrase interpreted as "early as possible". The motion was defeated by 75 votes to 46. The speakers against it were all sympathetic to the objects of the Museum but they pointed out that until the new extension of the Bodleian library is available, the work in the large room required by the Museum could not be conveniently removed elsewhere. It was stated that probably by 1941 the whole of the building could be given to the Museum.

READING.—Following the installation of Sir Austen Chamberlain as Chancellor of the University on December 2, the honorary degree of D.Sc. was conferred on Sir Rowland Biffen, Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins, Lord Rutherford and Sir J. J. Thomson.

Later in the day, Sir Austen announced that the installation of the new Chancellor is being commemorated by the gift from Mr. Reginald Marden of the freehold of Shipley Court Farm, a fine property of more than 300 acres, representing a value of £10,000–£15,000.

DR. ERNEST RENAUX has been nominated successor to Prof. Jules Bordet in the chair of bacteriology in the University of Brussels.

THE annual Conference of the Geographical Association will be held in the London School of Economics on January 1–3. On January 1, Mr. J. Fairgrieve will deliver his presidential address entitled "Can we Teach Geography Better?" On January 2, a symposium on "Soils in Geography" will be held, when the speakers will be Dr. W. G. Ogg, Dr. S. W. Wooldridge and Dr. L. Dudley Stamp. On the same day, Dr. E. B. Worthington will deliver a lecture on "A Biologist Looks at Africa", and a discussion on "The Use of the Epidiascope in the

Teaching of Geography in Schools" will be opened by Mr. L. S. Suggate. On January 3 there will be two discussions, namely, "Higher Certificate Courses in Geography", to be opened by Mr. L. B. Cundall and Mr. H. W. Ogden, and "A Geography Course in Senior Schools", to be opened by Mr. A. E. Moody; and a lecture by Dr. H. J. Wood on aspects of irrigation development in the western United States. On January 4, there will be a demonstration of films for use in the teaching of geography in the Gaumont-British Theatre, Film House, Wardour Street, W.1. This will be followed by a discussion. Further information can be obtained from the Secretary, Geographical Association, Municipal High School of Commerce, Princess Street, Manchester, 1.

Science News a Century Ago

Faraday and Lord Melbourne

PRIOR to 1835, several men of science had received the honour of knighthood, and during the first administration of Sir Robert Peel, which lasted from December 16, 1834, until April 18, 1835, Civil List pensions were bestowed on Mrs. Somerville and Prof. Airy. Faraday's name had also been put forward in connexion with the award of pensions. After at first refusing to acquiesce in the proposal, Faraday had his memorable interview with Peel's successor, Lord Melbourne, which led Faraday afterwards to write to his Lordship: "The conversation with which your lordship honoured me this afternoon, including as it did your Lordship's opinion of the general character of the pensions given of late to scientific persons, induces me respectfully to decline the favour which I believe your Lordship intends for me. . . ."

An article afterwards appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* entitled "Tory and Whig Patronage to Science and Literature", which purported to give an account of the interview. Comments on the article appeared in the Press, and on November 28, 1835, *The Times* gave a long extract from it. On December 7, Faraday wrote to the editor of *The Times* saying, "neither directly nor indirectly did I communicate to the Editor of *Fraser's Magazine*, the information on which that article was founded, or further, either directly or indirectly, any information to or for any publication whatsoever." The letter was published on December 8.

Airy Declines a Knighthood

IN his autobiography, Airy noted under the year 1835: "On Dec. 8th Mr. Spring Rice and Lord John Russell offered me knighthood, but I declined it." At that time, Lord Melbourne was Prime Minister, Spring Rice Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Lord John Russell Home Secretary. Airy's letter to Spring Rice declining the honour was written from the Observatory, Cambridge, on December 10, just before he left for Greenwich.

In the course of his letter, Airy said: "The unalterable custom of this country has attached a certain degree of light consideration to titles of honour which are not supported by considerable fortune; or at least, it calls for the display of such an establishment as may not be conveniently supported by even a comfortable income. The provision attached to