

procedure, which enables preparation to be made, would not be much of a linguistic feat for most members of the Congress and would add greatly to the intelligibility of the proceedings.

There was a universally expressed desire on the part of the members to meet in England at some future date in order to see the classic sections of East Anglia and Yorkshire.

Contributions of Chemistry to Pharmacy and Medicine

THE Hanbury Gold Medal of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, which is awarded for "high excellence in the prosecution or promotion of original research in the Chemistry and Natural History of Drugs", was presented to Dr. F. Pyman at the opening of the School of Pharmacy on October 7.

Dr. Pyman afterwards delivered the inaugural sessional address, in which he reviewed the contribution made by chemistry to pharmacy and medicine during the twentieth century. He pointed out that whereas medicine has contented itself for many thousands of years with the use of drugs of animal, vegetable and mineral origin and of their simple extracts, it is only within a comparatively short period of the world's history—barely 130 years—that the development of organic chemistry and other sciences has enabled these crude drugs and pharmaceutical preparations to be replaced in many instances by principles isolated from them in the form of pure chemical compounds. This tendency has been reflected in the diminution in the number of crude drugs and galenical preparations included in successive British Pharmacopœias. This isolation of the pure active principles of drugs has been of importance not only as an end in itself, but also as a means of giving the organic chemist opportunities of working on the constitution of these compounds both analytically and synthetically.

Expense may prevent the widespread substitution of the synthesized product for that obtained from natural sources but, Dr. Pyman noted, the improvement in the methods for the production of tropinone by Robinson is at least one example of a laboratory synthesis which has brought the time appreciably nearer when both atropine and cocaine may be commercially available as synthetic products. The extraction of chemical constituents of vegetable drugs has stimulated the search by biochemists for the active principle of biological products. Raw liver taken by sufferers from pernicious anæmia over long periods caused nausea, and many patients were unable to continue the treatment. The work of Cohn led to the introduction of a method by which the activity present in the original liver could be concentrated in a fraction which represented about one thirtieth of the original bulk, while further work has enabled still more concentrated preparations to be made. Attempts to effect still further concentration and to isolate the active principle are making slow progress, firstly owing to the instability of the active principle and secondly to the fact that there is no satisfactory animal test for its efficiency in pernicious anæmia.

The consideration of these researches led Dr. Pyman to review the development of chemotherapy, research in which postulates co-operation between chemist and biologist. It is a commentary upon the

difficulties in this field of research that the pioneer work of Ehrlich and Bertheim in 1907 still remains the outstanding example of the application of chemotherapeutic principles. That the laboratory worker will steadily add to the products available for the physician is certain, and there is no doubt that in many directions laboratory products will produce results not otherwise attainable. Nevertheless, the isolation of an active principle does not mean the death of the original vegetable or biological product. Tincture of *nux vomica*, tincture of *digitalis* or extract of ergot will have their place in medicine and may well produce physiological effects which cannot be obtained by their isolated active principles.

Educational Topics and Events

CAMBRIDGE.—The Central Committee for Agricultural Research Organizations has appointed H. Hunter, of St. Catharine's College, to be director of the Plant Breeding Institute in succession to Sir R. H. Biffen.

The director of the Solar Physics Observatory has made the following appointments: W. Moss, to be first senior observer, J. C. Dobbie, of Trinity College, to be second senior observer, E. G. Williams, of Trinity College, to be first junior observer.

OXFORD.—Dr. H. M. N. H. Irving, of Queen's College, has been appointed tutor in natural science at St. Edmund Hall—a new appointment.

Mr. Alec Naylor Dakin, formerly Lady Elizabeth Hastings Scholar of Queen's College, has been elected to the Lady Wallis Budge Fellowship in Egyptology at University College. Mr. Dakin was educated at Heath School, Halifax, and was placed in the first class in Classical Honour Moderations and in the second class in the Final Honour School of *Literæ Humaniores*.

The Right Hon. W. G. A. Ormsby-Gore has been elected to an honorary fellowship at New College. Mr. Ormsby-Gore's work when Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies in a former administration, as well as his archaeological writings, which have achieved a wide success, and his work in the preservation of ancient monuments while acting as Chief Commissioner of His Majesty's Office of Works, thus receive well-deserved academic recognition.

SHEFFIELD.—The following appointments have been made: Dr. R. Rado, to be assistant lecturer in mathematics; Mr. T. L. Morgan, to be assistant lecturer in civil engineering; Dr. W. A. Kirkby, to be lecturer in fuel technology.

THE formal opening of the thirty-fifth session of the Sir John Cass Technical Institute took place on the evening of October 6, when an address was delivered by Bishop Paget to those assembled in the Great Hall, which forms a part of the recently erected extension of the Institute. The chairman of the Governors, the Rev. J. F. Marr, who presided, remarked that during the past two sessions, in which the additional accommodation provided by the extension has been in use, the volume of work has increased 15 per cent. This continued expansion is creating a new demand for additional laboratory accommodation for chemistry and biology, and also for lecture rooms for chemistry and physics