

University Events

BIRMINGHAM.—At the annual degree congregation held on July 3, the Chancellor (Viscount Cecil of Chelwood) conferred the honorary degree of LL.D. on the following: The Right Hon. Lord Austin, Sir Harry Gilbert Barling, Mr. Edward Cadbury, The Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Arthur Greene, and Sir Percival Perry. The honorary degree of D.Sc. was conferred on Mr. C. C. Paterson.

The ordinary degree of D.Sc. was conferred on D. A. Howes for a treatise on "The Principles of Motor Fuel Preparation" (in collaboration with Prof. A. W. Nash) and for a paper on "The Use of Synthetic Methanol as a Motor Fuel" and other papers on allied subjects (*J. Inst. Pet. Tech.*, *J. Soc. Chem. Ind.* and elsewhere).

The degree of M.D. (*ex officio*) was conferred on Prof. H. P. Newsholme.

CAMBRIDGE.—Dr. A. D. Thackeray, of King's College, has been appointed assistant director of the Solar Physics Observatory for five years from July 1.

An appointment to a research studentship at Christ's College will be made at the end of July 1938. Candidates must be men who will have graduated before October 1, 1938, at some University other than Cambridge, and they must be not more than twenty-six years of age on that date. Preference will be given to those who have already devoted at least a year to research. Further information can be obtained from the Master, Christ's College, Cambridge. Detailed information about the admission of research students to the University will be found in the "Student's Handbook to the University of Cambridge", published annually by the Cambridge University Press. It may be estimated that the total annual expenses, including vacations, of a research student at Cambridge, is about £350 a year.

Sir David Chadwick has been elected to an honorary fellowship at Sidney Sussex College, not at Christ's College, as stated in *NATURE* of July 3, p. 38.

EDINBURGH.—At a graduation ceremonial on July 2 the honorary degree of LL.D. was conferred on the following, among others: Prof. L. H. Baekeland, hon. professor of chemical engineering, Columbia University, New York; Sir William Bragg; Dr. N. M. Butler, president of Columbia University, New York; Sir Herbert Grierson, rector of the University; Dr. Alexander Morgan.

The Principal, Sir Thomas Holland, referred to the sense of loss felt by the University on the death of its Chancellor, Sir James Barrie, who in a letter written only three days before he was taken seriously ill, had expressed his intention of presiding at that graduation. It was at a similar ceremonial, as the Principal recalled, that Barrie was 'capped' fifty-five years ago.

ST. ANDREWS.—It has been decided to confer the honorary degree of LL.D. on the following: Prof. G. F. Stout, professor of logic and metaphysics in the University from 1903 until 1936, and Dr. W. T. Calman, president of the Linnean Society, lately keeper of the Zoology Department, British Museum (Natural History).

Science News a Century Ago

Mushet's Discovery of Blackband Ironstone

DAVID MUSHET (1772–1847) was among the foremost metallurgists of his day, and besides contributing articles on iron manufacturing to the "Encyclopædia Britannica" and "Rees' Cyclopædia", he contributed some thirty papers to the *Philosophical Transactions*. On July 12, 1837, he wrote a letter from Coleford, Gloucestershire, to the editor of the *Scotsman*, in which there had been a communication on the iron trade of Scotland and the blackband ironstone. In this letter he said: "As this ironstone has now become an object of considerable national importance, perhaps you will allow me room to allude more particularly to the circumstances of its discovery. Thirty-six years ago this summer, in attempting to cross the river Calder on foot, in the Old Monkland Parishes, I obtained nearly a dry footing upon what appeared to be a continuous black pavement, from the upper edge of which I struck off a piece of substance resembling coal, which upon closer examination, was found interlaminated with yolks of brownish matter, about three-eighths of an inch in thickness. These when separated from the carboniferous schist, proved to be good ironstone, but so small in quantity, that the average of the mass did not exceed 13 per cent. Next day I returned to the black pavement, better prepared to ascertain its extent and thickness. On removing a portion of the entire bed, I found it to be fourteen inches in thickness, viz., three and a half of coaly schist with the before-mentioned yolks, and ten and a half of more compact and solid matter. . . . In a short time from making this discovery I had ascertained the existence of the Blackband in 2,000 acres of land, including the Airdrie estate (for right of working in which, to a limited extent, £12,000 a year is now to be given) and determined it to be a regular member of the coal formation. . . ."

Advancement of Medical Science

AN editorial article in the *British Annals of Medicine* of July 14, 1837, contains the following passage: "Reform in institutions is advancement in the sciences, and the latter is not the least deserving attention at the present time. Our practice is based on physiological indications, and much of the current physiology is false; in this country it is not yet on a line with the actual state of the science. We have too much metaphysical reasoning *about* functions and *about* diseases, too little systematic observation. Could not the Association encourage the invention of some systematic form by which the observations of a great number of members may be collected and compared? If we are to believe a contemporary, Dr. Haviland rebuked the College of Physicians in very elegant Latinity—not for their scientific apathy, not even for forgetting their mathematics, or for not applying them to vital phenomena, but for selecting fellows unversed in Latin and Greek. Better things may have been expected from Dr. Haviland, but it is as difficult for an Oxford and Cambridge professor as for an Irvingite to raise his thoughts above the 'tongues'. The University of London will, we understand, reduce languages to their subordinate place as instruments in the general scheme of education."