

University Events

LONDON.—Sir Robert Pickard, director of the British Cotton Industry Research Association, and a member of the Senate since 1926, has been elected vice-chancellor for the remainder of the year 1936–37 and for the year 1937–38. He succeeds Mr. H. L. Eason, who took up his duties as principal on July 1. Prof. J. C. Philip has been appointed deputy vice-chancellor for the year 1937–38.

Dr. William Wardlaw has been appointed to the University chair of physical chemistry tenable at Birkbeck College as from October 1. Since 1918 he has been on the teaching staff of the University of Birmingham and has held the post of senior lecturer in chemistry since 1926.

The title of professor of morbid anatomy in the University has been conferred on Dr. G. R. Cameron (Melbourne), in respect of the post held by him at University College Hospital Medical School, and that of reader in chemistry in the University on Mr. Henry Terrey, in respect of the post held by him at University College.

The degree of D.Sc. has been conferred on the following: G. P. Crowden, university reader at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (applied physiology), G. E. R. Deacon (chemistry), G. S. Hartley (chemistry), H. L. Chhibber (geology), Dr. W. F. Whittard (geology), Marion G. Eggleton (physiology), T. H. C. Taylor (entomology), R. A. Frazer (mathematics) and H. O. Bull (zoology).

MANCHESTER.—Among the numerous appointments announced at the end of this session is one of somewhat unusual interest—that of Mr. A. D. Ritchie, at present lecturer in physiological chemistry, to the Sir Samuel Hall chair of philosophy and public administration in succession to the late Prof. J. L. Stocks. Mr. Ritchie took first-class honours in philosophy at St. Andrew's in 1911, and second-class honours in Part I Natural Sciences Tripos at Cambridge in 1914. He was elected fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge and worked on the philosophy of science, and was Tarned Lecturer in 1935. Though for the last twenty-three years he has been professionally engaged as a teacher of physiology, he has published various philosophical works in this period.

The following further appointments have also been announced: Prof. P. M. S. Blackett, professor of physics in Birkbeck College, University of London, to succeed Prof. W. L. Bragg in the Langworthy chair of physics; H. Davenport, P. Du Val and W. W. Sawyer, assistant lecturers in mathematics; G. D. Rochester, assistant lecturer in physics; D. G. Evans, assistant lecturer in chemistry in the Department of Bacteriology; E. L. Patterson, assistant lecturer in anatomy; and Miss Margaret I. Williams, assistant lecturer in applied physiology.

SHEFFIELD.—The following appointments have recently been made: J. W. Watson to be assistant lecturer in geography; Gilbert Forbes to be lecturer in forensic medicine; J. M. Kennedy to be lecturer in infectious diseases; G. A. de Belin to be assistant lecturer and research assistant in the Department of Metallurgy.

ST. ANDREWS.—A lectureship in political science has been instituted in the United College, St. Andrews, and Mr. J. M. Brown of Glasgow has been appointed to the new post. Mr. B. S. Robertson has been appointed lecturer in regional anatomy in University College, Dundee.

Science News a Century Ago

The Diet of Silkworms

At a meeting of the Paris Academy of Sciences on July 31, 1837, reported in the *Gazette Médicale de Paris* of August 5, MM. Moriset, de Clavaison and Durrand recorded the results of an experiment on the feeding of silkworms by substituting for mulberry leaves those of the Spanish *scorsonera*. The silkworms which had been so fed from the time that they had been hatched did not appear to suffer from this diet, and had produced cocoons which were in no way inferior to those of silkworms which had been given mulberry leaves at the same time. Some of the cocoons had been sent to the Academy, but did not appear to competent judges to be the product of healthy silkworms. Similar trials had previously been made at different times with the leaves of *scorsonera*, and had always been abandoned. In any event, what had encouraged the speakers to pursue the experiment was the fact that the silk industry would never acquire a great development in the south of France so long as silkworms were fed exclusively by mulberry leaves, in view of the fact that cultivation of the mulberry tree did not harmonize with the other principal cultivations in the country; whereas cultivation of *scorsonera* did very well and would yield a double profit, the root forming a wholesome food similar if not preferable to salsify root.

Hospitals in Russia

A PAPER in the *British and Foreign Medical Review* of July 1837 on the present state of medicine and medical institutions in Russia by Dr. George Lefevre, late physician to the British Embassy at St. Petersburg, contains the following account of the hospitals in that country: "Although few countries can boast of finer institutions for the sick and infirm than Russia at the present day, it has nevertheless been the work of nearly two centuries to bring them to their actual state of perfection. Commenced by a private individual, whose example was soon followed by Government, they only began to have a character of importance under Peter the Great. . . . As regards the external appearance of the hospitals in Moscow and St. Petersburg, they are splendid in the extreme, resembling more the palaces of princes than the abodes of the sick. But it is of their discipline we have to speak, and many of the regulations of these institutions are worthy of imitation by similar establishments in other parts of Europe. One great advantage they possess over charitable institutions of a similar kind in England is the *daily* admission of patients, the vacant beds being immediately occupied by the most urgent cases. All applicants are not admitted indiscriminately into the General Hospitals; for there are others devoted to the reception of particular diseases, as eruptive fevers, venereal diseases, etc., and persons labouring under diseases which are considered incurable are not treated in the hospitals but are admitted to almshouses. . . . As regards the internal arrangements there is no cause for complaint. The wards are spacious and lofty, the beds not too much crowded together and cleanliness is carried to a point almost deserving of ridicule. . . . The most decided defect in all these institutions is a thorough disregard of ventilation."