

Irish chemist and administrator, Sir Robert Kane, to arouse interest in the application of science to industry. In 1867 the Museum became the Royal College of Science for Ireland. This College was transferred to University College, Dublin, in 1926 and the chair of chemistry merged in that set up by Cardinal Newman in the Irish Catholic University in 1856.

The occupants of the chair established in 1796 were William Higgins, F.R.S. (1796-1825); Edmund Davy, F.R.S. (1826-54); chair transferred to the Museum of Irish Industry: W. K. Sullivan (1854-67); chair transferred to the Royal College of Science for Ireland: W. K. Sullivan (1867-73); Robert Galloway (1873-79); Sir Walter Hartley, F.R.S. (1879-1911); Sir Gilbert Morgan, F.R.S. (1912-16); W. E. Adeney (1916-23). The chair was then left vacant pending transfer to University College, Dublin. It will be seen that this chair is nearly as old as the oldest in Scotland (Aberdeen, 1793), but is long antedated by that at Cambridge (1702).

<sup>1</sup> *Nature*, 169, 160 (1952).

<sup>2</sup> *Nature*, 169, 292 (1952).

## TERCENTENARY OF THE LEOPOLDINA ACADEMY, HALLE

THE Leopoldina Academy (Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher) at Halle (Saale), in the East Zone of Germany, celebrated its tercentenary during February 16-17. The University of Halle co-operated closely with the Academy throughout the proceedings. Addresses of congratulation were received from the Royal Society, the Cambridge Philosophical Society and the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

After addresses of welcome by the first vice-president, Prof. Otto Schlüter, and others, a historical account of the Academy was given by Prof. Rudolph Zaunick, of Dresden. The programme of future work laid down in this connexion is primarily to resume and speed up publication projects in abeyance since the War. The Academy's journal, the *Nova Acta Leopoldina*, has completed Vol. 14 (New Series) with the appearance of Heft 5, and will continue. The Commentary on Euclid Book I by Proclus Diadochus (A.D. 410-485) has appeared. A complete edition is in progress, in fourteen volumes of text with commentary, of all Goethe's scientific works, of which the Academy has already brought out a very large index. These and other beautifully produced publications were on view in the Library of the Leopoldina Academy. Losses of valuable records and collections were, however, also noted.

At the scientific session on the second day, Prof. Hans Georg Kienle, of Heidelberg, discussed cosmical theory of the past fifty years. Prof. Max Bürger, of Leipzig, was too ill to give his lecture, "Die Lebensschicksale des menschlichen Herzens", and his place was taken by Dr. Max Ratschow, of Halle-Wittenberg, who spoke on problems of old age ("Über die Verhütung von Alters- und Aufbrauchsschäden unter besonderer Rücksichtigung der hormonalen Therapie"). Ageing, which generally speaking is a drying-up process, connected with a reduced water-absorption and water-retention capacity of tissues, is largely caused through disturbance of hormonal balance, and a natural approach is to redress this balance as far as possible. Prof. Hans Theo Schreus,

of Düsseldorf, under the title "Besondere Gesichtspunkte bei der Behandlung mit Chemotherapeutica und Antibiotica von Geschlechtskrankheiten", gave an account of his researches into the treatment of venereal diseases, with special reference to the increase in bacterial resistance against penicillin during the years 1949-51. He has studied in detail the effect of combining the chemotherapeutics terramycin, streptomycin, penicillin with one another and with other antibiotics, and has tabulated the correlation coefficients obtained. He also described the results in serum reactions of saturation treatment or short-term treatment with penicillin-bismuth-salvarsan.

Finally, Prof. Kurt Mothes, of Halle-Gatersleben, gave an address entitled "Die stoffliche Organisation der Pflanze". His theme was the lack of parallelism between complexity of organization and multiplicity of chemical substances in living organisms. Metabolic products found in the more complex organisms, such as animal bodies, in particular the human body, are neither very numerous nor very complex; thousands of other substances are present in lower forms of life, such as plants and micro-organisms. One reason for the variety of products found in lower organisms may be their lack of secretory mechanism, which favours storage, whereas, for the animal body, rapid excretion is typical. Referring to the virus world, Prof. Mothes suggested that not only do viruses vary considerably in size, but also many may exist besides those that manifest themselves by pathological effects.

The occasion was used further to honour the memory of Prof. Emil Abderhalden, whose place as president has not yet been filled.

Social gatherings forming part of the celebrations included a reception by members of the East Zone Government in Berlin, one by the local Government of Sachsen-Anhalt, and musical and dramatic performances.

## INDIAN SCIENCE CONGRESS

### THIRTY-NINTH SESSION

THE Indian Science Congress has been holding its annual sessions since the year 1914 at different towns and cities of India with the view of enabling eminent men of science of India as well as from abroad to meet on a common platform of intellectual kinship and to keep abreast of the times in discussions of scientific problems. The 1952 session was held early in January in Calcutta, which has always been one of the nerve-centres of India's intellectual life. The meeting-place was the historic compound of the Presidency College, Calcutta, which also saw the birth of the Indian Science Congress thirty-nine years ago.

In a spectacular pandal bedecked with floral and artistic designs and packed to its capacity of more than six thousand people, the session was opened by the chanting of Vedic hymns and the recitation of *Vande Mataram*. H.E. Dr. H. C. Mukerji, Governor of West Bengal, welcomed the distinguished gathering of scientific workers who had come to attend the session; and he urged that, although imported from the West, the modern scientific spirit should not be looked at askance by the people of India. In the course