

University News :**Belfast**

DR P. G. BURKE has been appointed to the chair of mathematical physics.

Manchester

DR K. W. BAGNALL, at present senior principal scientific officer at the Atomic Energy Research Establishment, Harwell, has been appointed to the chair of inorganic chemistry, in succession to Professor J. Lewis, who has been appointed to the chair of chemistry in University College, London; Professor D. B. G. Edwards, professor of computer engineering in the University, has been appointed to the I.C.T. chair of computer engineering, and Mr A. J. Morton, at present group services engineer of the Southern Projects Group in the Central Electricity Generating Board, has been appointed to an additional chair of engineering. Mr D. L. Burn has been appointed visiting professor of economics for one year from October 1.

Appointments

DR E. PASSAGLIA, formerly chief of the Polymer Physics Section, has been appointed chief of the Metallurgy Division of the US National Bureau of Standards.

Meetings

PURE and Applied Chemistry, September 4-10, Prague (The Chairman, Organizing Committee, XXist International Congress of Pure and Applied Chemistry, POB 139, Praha 6—Dejvice).

INSTRUMENTATION for Engineers, September 4-October 6, University of Sheffield (Professor W. A. Tuplin, Department of Applied Mechanics, University of Sheffield, St. George's Square, Sheffield, 1).

PHYSICS of Quasars, September 5-7, University of Manchester (The Meetings Officer, The Institute of Physics and the Physical Society, 47 Belgrave Square, London, SW1).

SOLID State Devices, September 5-8, Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (The Meetings Officer, The Institute of Physics and the Physical Society, 47 Belgrave Square, London, SW1).

II-VI Semiconducting Compounds, September 6-8, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island (D. W. Langer, Conference Secretary, Aerospace Research Laboratories, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio).

MOLECULAR Spectroscopy, September 10-15, Madrid (IXth European Congress on Molecular Spectroscopy, Serrano, 117, Madrid).

AGRICULTURAL Engineering, September 11-14, National College of Agricultural Engineering, Silsoe, Bedfordshire (Honorary Organizing Secretary, Agricultural Engineering Symposium, The Institute of Agricultural Engineers, Penn Place, Rickmansworth, Herts).

CARBONIFEROUS Stratigraphy and Geology, September 11-16, Sheffield (Dr A. W. Woodland, Secretary-General, Geological Survey Office, Ring Road, Halton, Leeds 15).

8TH ANNUAL Scientific Meeting of the Anglo German Medical Society, September 14-16, Glasgow (Professor W. A. Mackey, Royal Infirmary, Glasgow, C4).

CREATIVE Engineering Design, September 11-16, Queen Mary College (Department of Mechanical Engineering, Queen Mary College, Mile End Road, London, E1).

QUANTITATIVE Methods in Reflected-light Microscopy, September 19-23, Cambridge (Mr G. A. Kingston, Department of Geology, Imperial College, London, SW7).

SURFACE Phenomena of Metals, September 20-22, Brunel University, London (Professor K. S. W. Sing, Department of Chemistry, Brunel University, Woodlands Avenue, Acton, London, W3).

USE of Radioactive Isotopes in Pharmacology, September 20-23, Geneva (Professor B. Glasson, Pavillon des Isotopes, 20 bd d'Yvoy, 1211 Genève).

MASS Spectrometry, September 25-29, Technische Universität, West Berlin (The Institute of Petroleum, 61 New Cavendish Street, London, W1).

DATAFAIR 67, September 25-29, University of Southampton (The British Computer Society, 23 Dorset Square, London, NW1).

MICROBIOLOGICAL Chemistry, September 26-28, Sheffield (Dr E. Haslam, Department of Chemistry, The University, Sheffield, 10).

ERRATUM. In the note "Shape of Universities" (*Nature*, 214, 865; 1967) it should have been stated that Sir Eric Ashby delivered the Queen's Lecture at the Free University of Berlin, not at the University of Belfast.

ERRATUM. In Table 1 of the article "Tale of Two Countries" (*Nature*, 215, 9; 1967) the figures for expenditure as a percentage of GNP have been interchanged. They should read United Kingdom, 2.3; West Germany, 1.3.

CORRIGENDUM. In the communication "Photosensitized Oxidation of Carbon Monoxide on Semi-conductors supported on Silver" (*Nature*, 215, 152; 1967) the values for activation energies should be double the values given in Table 1, with the exception of the activation energies for Ag.

CORRESPONDENCE**Equipment Grants**

SIR,—Your editorial, "Fighting the Wrong Battle" (*Nature*, 215, 337; 1967)—why such war-like terms?—is misleading in a number of important respects. As Sir Cyril Hinshelwood and his colleagues claimed, it is true that the University Grants Committee dishonoured firm pledges of monies for the equipment of new buildings, and your figure of a deficit of £15.5 million against previous promises confirms this claim. Other requirements were with, or going to, the UGC and these have to be added to this deficit. What you also do not note is that, without this money, science teaching departments will have to open this October without their planned complement of apparatus. Much effort in planning courses, preparing equipment schedules and so forth has been vitiated, and scratch arrangements will have to be made, very late in the day, to the extent that universities are able, and willing, to borrow funds for this purpose. Academic policy is being settled by finance. Further, commitments were made to new staff as to their facilities and equipment, and this, too, is in the melting pot. No new department, in old or new university, can feel confident about the future after this galling experience.

You also say that the UGC's proposed new system "means everyone will be better off". Until we know what this system is, no one can pronounce on it! Two things are clear. A simple, *per capita* scheme will not meet the very different needs of all our universities, since most are at different stages of equipment, and re-equipment, for science teaching and research. Until we know what adjustments are to be made for this, and what the specific allocation of funds will be, all planning for the future involves too many uncertainties to be faced with confidence. The student population, as you note, is growing; the question is: will the equipment and staff be there so that it can be properly taught?

Yours faithfully,

JAMES H. SANG

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