

THE TYNDALL FELLOWSHIPS.

At the close of Professor Tyndall's brilliant tour as a lecturer on physics in various cities of this country during the winter of 1872-73, he devoted with unparalleled generosity the net results of all that he had earned to the encouragement of studies in physical science among young Americans. The amount thus set apart was somewhat more than thirteen thousand dollars (\$13,033.34), and it was given to three trustees, — Professor Henry of Washington; the founder's kinsman, Gen. Hector Tyndall of Philadelphia; and Dr. E. L. Youmans of New York. After the death of the first two named, President F. A. P. Barnard and Professor Lovering succeeded to the vacant places. In the deed of trust, which is dated Feb. 7, 1873, and may readily be found in the Smithsonian report for 1872 (p. 104), the giver declared his purpose to be the advancement of theoretic science, and the promotion of original research, especially in the department of physics. The method of employing the fund which he then proposed was to assist in supporting, at such European universities as they might consider most desirable, two American pupils who might evince decided talent in physics, and who might express a determination to devote their lives to this work. He added that it would be his desire to have each scholar spend four years at a German university, — three devoted to the acquisition of knowledge, and the fourth to original investigation.

For some reasons not publicly explained, and not difficult to conjecture, the trustees have been embarrassed in trying to carry out the precise wishes of Professor Tyndall; and consequently but a very small part of the income of his fund has been directed toward the assistance of young physicists. One of those who received encouragement from the fund generously returned to the trustees the sum advanced to him; another to whom the benefit of the scholarship was offered hesitated about pledging himself to remain four years in Europe, and declined the honor of an appoint-

ment. Meanwhile the opportunities for studying physics in this country have rapidly improved. Excellent investigators in several universities have been provided with admirable laboratories, and with all the requisite apparatus for research. It is true that the opportunity to go abroad for a brief sojourn is still highly prized by our young men; but, if associated with an implied obligation to remain in Germany during four years, the value of the opportunity is seriously impaired. Meanwhile the trustees have been careful in the management of their fund, and, having added the unexpended income to the principal, are able to report that the original thirteen thousand dollars have grown to thirty-two thousand dollars, — a remarkable record in these days of financial shrinkage.

Fortunately the donor of the fund is still living, and has been able to modify the original conditions of his gift. At the recent commencement of Harvard college, President Eliot announced that Professor Tyndall gave to Harvard one-third of the accumulated fund, another third to Columbia college, and the remainder to the University of Pennsylvania. The income is to be devoted to the maintenance by each institution of a graduate scholarship or fellowship in the department of physics.

Under these new conditions, the original purpose of this generous gift is sure to be accomplished. By the maintenance of a wise system of appointments, such as the experience of these three colleges will certainly devise, the hope of winning a Tyndall prize will prove a strong incentive to young American physicists. The foundation will have an influence upon scientific studies akin to that exerted upon classical studies for many generations by the prizes of Bishop Berkeley. It is also interesting to remember, that, as the name of Rumford, an American physicist, is associated indissolubly with the Royal institution of Great Britain, where Tyndall holds the commanding station, so the name of an English physicist, Tyndall, will always be remembered with gratitude in the land of Rumford's birth, for kindred generosity in the encouragement of kindred pursuits.