

into germination problems, potato virus diseases, and the yield and maturity of potato varieties. The potato Synonym Committee, of which Dr. Salaman is the chairman, has reported a substantial improvement in the nomenclature of potatoes; the council hopes to win the cooperation of seed men in extending this work to cereals. Dr. Beaven referred to the encouragement offered in the last century by the Royal Agricultural Society to plant-breeders and, after tracing the relationship between animal and plant breeding and the influence of Mendel's work, pointed out that field trials of the kind undertaken by the institute would be needed for many years. The difficulty of the task

and the value of the results were illustrated by the series of barley trials completed in the past year. Two varieties raised by systematic methods of plant breeding were shown to be generally and significantly more profitable to farmers than any others, and records collected independently by the Official Seed Testing Station and the Essex County Farmers Union not only confirmed this conclusion but also showed that these two varieties are now grown more widely than any others. The study by competent critics of these and the similar results now being obtained at the institute should win for it the support of agriculturists.

## UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NOTES

THE dedication of the new Markle Museum Engineering Building at Lafayette College will take place on December 6. During the week there will be a conference on mining engineering and a series of lectures by prominent engineers.

A GIFT of \$100,000 to the building fund of Boston University has been made by Dr. William E. Chenery and Mrs. Chenery. Dr. Chenery is a nose and throat specialist of Boston and a lecturer at the medical school of the university, of which he is also a trustee.

DR. L. V. HEILBRUNN has become associate professor in the department of zoology at the University of Pennsylvania. Last year the courtesies of the department of biology at the Washington Square College of New York University were extended to him

and he carried out there work on the effect of temperature on the viscosity of amoeba.

EARL W. HENDERSON, of the University of Missouri, has been appointed head of the department of poultry husbandry at the Iowa State College.

PROFESSOR P. H. H. GRAY, a graduate of Queen's College, Oxford, has been appointed head of the department of bacteriology at Macdonald College (faculty of agriculture, McGill University) and has recently arrived to assume his duties. He goes to Macdonald from the Rothamsted Experimental Station, where he has been engaged in research work in soil microorganisms and general microbiology.

DR. H. W. DAVIES, lecturer in physiology in the University of Leeds, has been appointed to the chair of physiology in the University of Sydney.

## DISCUSSION

### IS THERE AN AGE DEAD-LINE IN THE SCIENTIFIC AND ENGINEERING PROFESSIONS?

RECENT articles in various periodicals have called attention to an age dead-line, not only in manual occupations, but also in sedentary positions. Among the causes to which this situation is attributed are physical condition, retirement pensions, decreased productivity, liability to injury, and group insurance, all of which are said to militate against the employment of men over forty.

The general subject of unemployment in the scientific and engineering professions has aroused considerable discussion recently, as evidenced by several notes in the scientific journals. It is, therefore, of timely interest to consider whether or not conclusions regarding an age dead-line drawn from mass data on employment as a whole can be accepted without question as applying to the scientific world, since in cer-

tain respects the technical man occupies a position apart.

The comparative newness of the technical professions and the remarkable expansion of industries involving science and engineering have resulted, in the past few years, in an unprecedented demand for scientists and engineers. This demand has been augmented by the fact that many manufacturers have come to realize that research and development work are an investment. Such executives now adopt a more patient and sympathetic attitude toward the technical man. Experience has shown them that just as industrial research has made many important contributions to theory, so does disinterested investigation often give findings of great commercial value. That is to say, any research whatever has a reasonable chance of being profitable.

At this point it should be noted that the organization and personnel of the scientific and engineering