

main nutrients hinders recovery from attack by curtailing the production of new secondary roots to replace those destroyed by the fungus. In Australia phosphate is usually the missing nutrient, in England nitrogen. The exceptional severity of the disease in certain southern counties of England in 1942 may have been due in part to leaching-out of nitrates by abnormally heavy rainfall in January. Survival of *Ophiobolus* in infected root and stubble residues is mainly dependent on an adequate supply of nitrogen from the soil, which encourages fresh hyphal growth.

For some years Miss M. D. Glynne has made a special study of eyespot in wheat and barley, and the account she gave of this disease revealed how closely it is bound up with lodging in these crops. Less eyespot occurs on light, well-drained soils than on heavy, wet ones, and the climate of the west and north of Britain favours attack by it more than conditions in the south and east. Yet, because oats are highly resistant and the disease increases with the frequency of wheat and barley in the rotation, eyespot is more prevalent in the eastern than the western half of southern England. In a thin crop the individual affected straws begin to fall over among the upright ones from the end of June, giving the condition known

as 'stragglings'. If the affected crop is a heavy one general lodging is likely to take place sooner or later in long-strawed varieties. In a survey carried out in 1941, lodging caused by eyespot was about as common as lodging due to non-parasitic causes. In addition to direct loss from the disease there may be indirect loss as a result of lodging. Experimental work has shown that in a field with about 60 per cent severe infection, yield is reduced by 30 per cent and there is a marked increase in the amount of tail corn; if lodging occurs the loss is much greater or even complete. Such losses can be minimized by sound rotation or by using short-strawed varieties and feeding them well.

Dr. F. R. Immer, professor of genetics in the University of Minnesota, was warmly welcomed as a visitor at the meeting, and in the general discussion that followed he referred briefly to the programme for plant breeding in relation to disease that is now under way in Minnesota. He expressed surprise at the wide differences in cereal disease problems in Britain and the United States; but entered a word of warning against underestimating the real effect and the potentialities of common but apparently harmless diseases.

## NEWS and VIEWS

### Research Fellowships at British Universities

THE directors of Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., have offered to provide eighty fellowships at nine universities in Great Britain, to be held by senior workers in certain sciences. The scheme is announced to operate for an initial period of seven years, and the fellowships will be of the average value of £600 a year, though the universities will have power to determine the emolument for each particular appointment. The subjects to which the fellowships are to be devoted are laid down as physics, chemistry and the sciences dependent thereon, including chemotherapy. The administration of the scheme rests wholly with the universities, which will select and appoint the fellows, subject only to such conditions as to duties and tenure as the universities themselves impose. No conditions whatever are attached by I.C.I. to the tenure of these fellowships. The fellows will be members of the university staffs, and will be concerned only with the duties laid upon them by the universities. Their primary work will lie in research; but they must also take some part in university teaching. It is intended not to relieve the universities from the cost of maintaining any part of their normal work, but to enable them to add to what they already do. The universities to which this offer has been made comprise the larger metropolitan universities and those which have a close geographical relation to the main centres of the Company's production. Twelve fellowships have been offered to the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and London, eight to the Universities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool and four to the University of Durham.

The purpose of the directors of Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., in instituting this scheme is to strengthen the general provision in British universities for scientific teaching and research. It is in-

tended to implement the Company's view that academic and industrial research are interdependent and complementary, and that substantial advances in industry cannot be looked for without corresponding advances in academic science; and the main purpose is the strengthening of university scientific departments in whatever way each university thinks to be best. A rational policy of this character, together with a wise selection of men both as regards capabilities and tenure of office, will lead, it is thought, to the emergence of a body of men capable of taking high academic or industrial positions, thereby advancing academic and industrial research. This it should certainly accomplish, for the scheme is so wide in its scope, and the universities are given so free a hand in its working, that most of the limitations usually inherent in trusts and endowments are avoided. The task is now before the selected universities, while preserving scrupulously their independence, so to select recipients of these fellowships as to justify the belief in the importance of university research which has led to their establishment.

### The Society for Cultural Relations

THE Society for Cultural Relations between the Peoples of the British Commonwealth and the U.S.S.R., known more widely by its briefer title S.C.R., has just completed its first twenty years of activity and has issued a concise and very interesting report on its work during the period. It is difficult now to recapture the atmosphere of 1924, when the sufferings caused by the Revolution and the Civil War were still fresh in people's minds, and only relatively few recognized the importance of trying to understand what was going on in Russia and of breaking down the barriers that threatened to isolate that country from the Western world. A small but distinguished group of people founded the Society and organized an exhibition of Soviet art, books and