

be almost sure, if he wants in his investigations the help of such technical means as only great works can afford, that he will get such assistance at once on application to any work; and the scientific papers of German chemists very often contain acknowledgments, with due thanks, of considerable help they have thus obtained.

"Besides these advantages for the development of scientific and technical chemistry in Germany, there exists another very important factor—practical assistance from the government. Universities are in Germany affairs of the State, not of the Empire, and in no other point has the division of the Fatherland into many smaller countries proved itself to such a degree a boon and a blessing. The essential character of the German universities, the freedom conferred by the independence of the numerous universities, is never lost. There have been hard times occasionally for the universities of one country or another; but some universities were always to be found where, even in times of hard oppression, liberty of teaching and learning remained complete and unaffected, and the spirit of purely unalloyed scientific research was preserved and encouraged. So this palladium of intellectual freedom has never been lost; and it regained the former influence as soon as the casual oppression ceased. In our days there is among all the separate State governments in Germany a clear conviction of the importance of practical support being given to pure scientific research. To take one instance, in order to facilitate teaching and research in electro-chemistry (a recently developed branch of science), a suggestion by some leading practical scientific men to the members of the Government was sufficient. Upon such a suggestion a considerable sum of money was spent first by the Prussian Government for the endowment of electro-chemical chairs and laboratories in the three 'polytechnic' colleges of that country; a short time afterwards it was resolved to erect at one of the universities, Göttingen, an institute for physical chemistry and especially electro-chemistry, in the shape of a building which has just been completed. At the same time other German countries have begun to grant their universities and technical colleges considerable sums of money for similar purposes—*eg.*, the Saxon Landtag alone has unanimously voted half a million marks (£25,000) for the creation of a splendid laboratory for physical chemistry at Leipzig.

"You will excuse my boasting about our German management of this most important question of scientific education. It is no blind admiration without criticism, for I know by practical experience the management in other countries, and I can compare them. And it is only for the sake of science itself that I write these lines. If they should help the spread of the conviction of the incomparable practical usefulness of every support given to pure science, together with the recognition of the fact that the latter can only grow in an atmosphere of liberty and confidence, I shall regard it as tending towards the progress of science itself, and destined to exercise such an influence on scientific progress as may be compared with the discovery of the most remarkable scientific fact."

LONDON FUR SALE.

The fur sales of the Hudson Bay Company came to a conclusion March 25th. The general tone was dull, and prices all round had a drooping tendency. The unsatisfactory state of the American market still maintains its depressing effect, supplies being large, while trade is partly deprived of its former channels of outlet. Also the home trade is hampered by the uncertainty of fashion, and the continental markets in their turn suffer as well from the inactivity existing here and in the States, the consequence being but little inclination to enter into transactions of a speculative character. The attendance of buyers was good, the Americans especially being present in large numbers. The results of the Hudson Bay Company's sale are about as follows:

Otter have been moving slowly, and the prime skins show a decline of from 15 per cent. to 20 per cent., the seconds 10 per cent. to 15 per cent., while the thirds are somewhat under 10 per cent. lower than last March. Fisher have sold fairly well and met with good competition. The prices of the firsts, seconds and thirds average an advance of about 10 per cent., and the pale are 20 per cent. higher. Silver Fox—General anticipations indicated an important reduction in the value of this article, owing to the demands of Russian fashion being more moderate for this expensive class of fur as compared with former years, but the decline generally has not proved so heavy as has been expected. The black and dark skins have sunk to rather low figures, quite 30 per cent. below those of last year, but the bright silvery and pale skins remain stationary at practically former prices, so that the average decline does not exceed about 12½ per cent. Cross Fox—As in the case of silver fox, this class of skin has also moved very slowly last year, the reduction in value all round being about 20 per cent. Marten—Of this article, among all others coming forward for sale, the best hopes were entertained, but contrary to all expectations, the latter have not been realized. This is the more surprising in view of the brisk competition which existed for the article in January, and which pointed to some advance (if only even a small one) in the present sales. An average decline, however, has resulted on the firsts, seconds and thirds of about 10 per cent., while the high class dark skins, as well as the pale and small sizes, were from 20 to 25 per cent. lower. Beaver are very much neglected, and declined 15 per cent. compared with January last, but the quality of the present collection was hardly up to that which was then offered. Musquash—There has been but little business done in this article since the January sales, and consequently there was no great inclination to increase present stocks. The small quantity offered attracted but slight attention, and sold at 15 per cent. to 20 per cent. lower prices, the quality of these skins, however, being inferior to that of the January collection. Red Fox—The change in values is very trifling, except in the case of thirds and fourths, which are about 15 per cent. un-