

THE KEKULÉ ANNIVERSARY.

The celebration by the Berlin Chemical Society, of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the announcement of the benzol theory and the reception to its author Prof. August Kekulé, occurred at Berlin, on March 11, 1890.

Notices of the coming celebration were received by the American Chemical Society, with an invitation to send a representative to the meeting, but the time was too short to permit of action by the Society. Official acknowledgment of the invitation was made, however, in the following letter by the president, Prof. H. B. Nason.

TROY, N. Y., Feb. 22d, 1890.

TO THE PRES'T OF THE CHEM. SOC. OF BERLIN :

My Dear Sir : Your kind letter inviting us to send a representative to the Kekulé Festival on the 11th of March is at hand. We regret exceedingly that we cannot be represented there, but desire to express our deep interest in the Festival, as well as in the man who has done so much for the advancement of Chemistry.

Believe me, my dear sir, to remain, yours most truly,

H. B. NASON,

Pres't of the "Amer. Chem. Society."

Adequate accounts of the meeting through scientific sources have not yet reached this country. The following extract from a daily paper of Berlin will be of interest:

(From the "Vossische Zeitung," March 12, 1890.)

The great celebration given yesterday by the German Chemical Society, in the large room of the City Hall, in honor of August Kekulé, upon the twenty-fifth anniversary of the formulation of the benzol theory was a reunion of the representatives of chemical science from every quarter.

By the side of the honored guest, whose seat was entwined with foliage, was seated the representative of the government, Minister

of State von Gossler. Among others present were the Director General of the Royal Museum, Privy Counsellor Schoene; the Director of the Museum of Natural History, Privy Counsellor Moebius; the Director of the Imperial Board of Health, Privy Counsellor Köhler, in company with "Regierungsrath" Prof. Sell; the Director of the Bureau of Statistics, Privy Counsellor Blenk; the Rector of the Technical High School, Prof. Jacobsthal; the President of the Photographic Society, Prof. Vogel; the Aldermen Marggraf and Borchardt and others.

Of the numerous chemists who appeared, some of them even from the New World, were Prof. Armstrong of London, Prof. Körner of Milan, Prof. Bischof of Riga, Profs. Wislicenus of Leipzig, von Baeyer of Munich, Victor Meyer of Heidelberg, and his brother Rich. Meyer, Poleck and Ladenburg of Breslau, Zinke of Marburg, Döbner and Volhard of Halle, Wallach of Göttingen. Privy Counsellor Dubois-Reymond represented the Academy of Sciences. Practical chemistry also was represented by the bearers of well known names; we mention only Directors Finkelberg and Holtz of Schering's Works, and Hasenclever of the Rhenania, Dr. Bannow of the firm of Kahlbaum, Dr. Sarnow, Dr. Kraemer, Dr. Marrasse and others. The spaces under the arcades were occupied by ladies.

Prof. von Hofmann, as President of the German Chemical Society, opened the meeting with words of welcome and presented a letter from the Cabinet of the Emperor in regard to the celebration, which had been "noticed with especial interest; returning thanks for the invitation and regretting that it was impossible to be present." Prof. Hofmann then briefly described the origin of the benzol theory and gave a sketch of its importance to science and industry. He showed in a striking manner how a small thought may permeate an entire science, and how Kekulé's theory in particular will be a guiding star towards which chemical investigators of coming generations will thankfully direct their eyes.

Dr. Adolph von Baeyer of Munich, the successor of Liebig and the oldest of Kekulé's pupils, commended the work of Kekulé in the light of the latest investigations, and characterized the

celebration as the crowning festival (Richtfest) of structural chemistry.

Prof. Wichelhaus congratulated the honored guest of the meeting in the name of the German Chemical Society, and presented an address artistically executed by K. Roehlich.

Prof. Armstrong, representing English chemists, offered an address printed in gold upon white satin, the reading of which was received with great applause. The address of the French chemists was read by Prof. Martius. Prof. Bischof spoke for the chemists and physicists of the Russian Empire, and characterized the celebration as a day of triumph for science. He also presented an address, which was heartily applauded. Prof. Durand Woodman, of New York, spoke in English for the chemists of America.* Prof. Körner, of Milan, a former assistant of Kekulé, spoke for the chemists of Italy, and especially for the academies and universities. The Academie de Lincei of Rome and numerous corporations of Italy also sent congratulations. For the industry of the coal tar colors Dr. Glaser, of Ludwigshafen, delivered a lengthy address, and announced the completion of a portrait of Kekulé by Prof. von Angeli, which was to be presented after the dinner, and which is to be hung in an appropriate place in this city.

Prof. Kekulé, in conclusion, heartily thanked the assemblage for the ovations tendered him, which he declared to be "far above his deserving." His remarks, which were as modest as they were witty, were enthusiastically received by the meeting.

* Dr. Woodman was in Berlin at the time of the celebration, and, at the request of Prof. A. W. Hofmann, and as a member of the American Chemical Society, merely read the letter of the President of the Society, Prof. Nason, which is published herewith. In a letter to the editor he disclaims any attempt to act as the official representative of the Society or of the chemists of America in the absence of direct authority to do so.