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NEWS AND NOTES.

UNITED STATES.

Fire-resisting Shelving.—In a recent fire which caused extensive damage in the Chemistry Building, of Tulane University, some attic shelves which had been treated ten years previously with aniline hydrochloride and copper sulphate were not even scorched, but brass situated within three feet of these shelves, which were within ten feet of the source of the fire, was melted.

The Metric System in Chemical Industry.—The Division of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry of the American Chemical Society, at its last meeting, declared itself unanimously in favour of having pure chemicals supplied by manufacturers in metric units and only in standard packages. Efforts are being made to induce all chemical manufacturers to insist upon having their orders executed and invoiced in metric units.

"Anthracol."—A new domestic and metallurgical fuel called "anthracol" has been produced by mixing small particles of anthracite and a matrix of practically pure carbon formed from the distillation of coal-tar pitch or other suitable bitumen. "Anthracol" can be made in a coke oven upon the same large scale as bituminous coke and with little more expense, as anthracite culm can be used in its manufacture. The content of pitch varies, but in experimental tests 14.8 to 25 per cent., with m. pt. 265°—280° F. has been found satisfactory. On an eight-day kitchen-range test the best "anthracol" was found to be 20 per cent. more efficient than anthracite coal of chestnut size.

"Chemical Literature and Its Use" is the title of a pamphlet (second edition) by Marion E. Sparkes, Library Assistant in Chemistry at the University of Illinois, containing notes of a course of 16 lectures given to third-year students who have a reading knowledge of French and German. The first four lectures treat of the method of handling the literature adopted by the librarian, the following eleven deal with the literature relating to the various branches of chemistry, and the final lecture contains suggestions upon searching all the literature for a given topic. The bibliography appended includes "Some Papers upon Chemical Literature, Its Value and Utilisation."

A careful perusal of the pamphlet leaves the impression that the chemistry students of Illinois University are, indeed, fortunate in having the opportunity of attending this course of lectures, and as a result they should certainly be able to find any information they require in the University Library or in libraries associated with it. Students of chemistry everywhere will find the pamphlet very useful for the purpose of reference, since the publications mentioned are in general use where they are available. The absence of systematic instruction in the consultation of chemical literature is a fault of academic training which should be remedied. The process by which the chemist becomes familiar with the literature is comparatively lengthy, and circumstances may conspire to keep below his horizon publications which would prove of great value to him; a little systematic training, such as is outlined in the pamphlet, together with some instruction in indexing, would eventually save him much time and minimise the possibility of such undesirable incidents. The pamphlet may be obtained from the author at Urbana, Illinois, for one dollar, post paid.

Phosphate Rock in 1920.—The phosphate rock sold in the United States in 1920 amounted to 4,103,982 long tons, valued at \$25,079,527, an increase in quan-

tity of 80 per cent. and in value of 116 per cent. as compared with 1919. The quantity actually mined, however, was 3,975,001 t., an increase of 115 per cent. Production in Florida more than doubled, and all the other producing States, except S. Carolina and Wyoming, showed an increased output. The improvement noted in the export trade in 1919 continued, and in 1920 1,069,712 t. was exported, mainly to northern Europe, Spain and Portugal (*cf. J.*, 1921, 194 n.).—(*U.S. Geol. Surv., Aug. 11, 1921.*)

The Uses of Slate Flour.—From 80 to 95 per cent. of the gross production of the slate quarries in the United States has been discarded as waste, and the expense of handling so much unsaleable material has added to the cost of finished slate. Numerous uses for the waste have been discovered by the U.S. Bureau of Mines working in conjunction with manufacturers of mechanical rubber goods. Thus powdered slate or slate flour can be used as a filler to give "body" or impart resistance to wear to hose-pipe, rubber heels and soles, tyres and packing, as well as linoleum, oilcloth, etc. It is already extensively employed as a filler for road asphalt, tarred roofing and flooring. In these new fields pulverised slate will have to compete with well-known fillers, such as talc, china clay, limestone, barytes, etc., but its low price will give it a great advantage.—(*Oil, Paint and Drug Rep., Oct. 10, 1921.*)

CANADA.

The Mining Industry in British Columbia.—The unsatisfactory state of the metal markets has had a marked influence upon the mineral production of British Columbia, and many mines have been closed down during the present year. The value of the gold production for the year 1921 will approximate to \$3,000,000, chiefly derived from the Rossland district, and Surf Inlet, Princess Royal Island. There has been a great decrease in the production of silver, owing to the closing of the Dolly Varden and many of the Slocan mines.

The copper output for this year, based upon figures to date, should be about 14,300 long tons, the greater portion being from the Hidden Creek mine of the Granby Company. The Canadian Pacific Railway is repairing the Copper Mountain branch of the Kettle Valley Railway, preparatory to operations being resumed at the mine of the Canadian Copper Corporation, near Princeton, which has very large reserves of low-grade copper ore. The Trail smelter is chiefly dependent upon this mine for its supply of copper ore. It has not operated since last winter. About \$5,000,000 has been expended on construction of a concentrating mill, equipment and development, another half million dollars upon hydro-electric power supply by the West Kootenay Power and Light Company, and \$2,000,000 by the C.P.R. in constructing a line connecting the mine with Princeton. It is quite probable that the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Co., which is interested, may operate the mine. The present capacity of the developed mines and smelters of British Columbia is 33,500 long tons of ingot copper per annum, which can, taking into consideration projected undertakings, be increased to double that quantity in a few years.

The lead production will probably be the highest which the province has had in the past twenty years. It is nearly all from the Sullivan Mine at Kimberley, East Kootenay, the property of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Co. The ore body of this mine consists of a quartzite containing blende and argentiferous galena. From this mine comes the greater portion of the zinc production of British Columbia, which is refined electrolytically at Trail, and will be approximately 22,300 t. for the current year.