

News and Views

Dr. J. D. Cockcroft, F.R.S.

DR. J. D. COCKCROFT, whose election to the Jacksonian professorship of natural philosophy, in the University of Cambridge, has just been announced, is, like his predecessor, the present secretary of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, both a member of St. John's College and a northerner. Having gained valuable experience in heavy electrical industry at an early stage in his career, Dr. Cockcroft entered St. John's College from the University of Manchester as Dowman Sizar and Hoare Exhibitioner in mathematics in October 1922. In 1924, he obtained the highest possible honours in Part II of the Mathematical Tripos and was elected scholar of his college. Thereafter he was engaged in research in Cambridge, first of a mathematical nature, concerning the heating of transformer coils (1925) and later, at the Cavendish Laboratory, of an experimental character regarding the deposition of surface films by atomic beams (1928). He took his Ph.D. and was elected fellow of St. John's College in 1928. Although his publications have not been numerous since that date, during the last ten years he has contributed in a remarkable degree to the prosecution of physical research in Cambridge. He was largely responsible, with Kapitza, for the design of much of the equipment used in the production of intense magnetic fields in the early years of this period (and latterly the direction of the Royal Society Mond Laboratory has devolved almost entirely upon his shoulders)—and, with Walton, of the arrangement by which nuclear disintegration was first effected by artificially accelerated particles (1932). More recently, he has been the moving spirit in the construction and development of the Cambridge cyclotron, and he has taken over the major work of supervision of the building operations made possible by Lord Austin's bequest. Then, in college, he has filled the office of junior bursar for the last six years, and in the University has been indispensable on numerous executive bodies. He was elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 1936 and this year was the recipient with Walton of the Hughes Medal of the Society. His many friends will wish him well in his new office, and some measure of relief from his numerous extraneous duties.

The Royal Society: New Foreign Members

At a recent meeting of the Royal Society the following were elected to the foreign membership of the Society: Prof. Walter Bradford Cannon, professor of physiology in Harvard Medical School, Boston, U.S.A., distinguished for (a) his X-ray investigations of the movements of the alimentary canal, (b) his analysis of the mechanism and conditions of excitation of the suprarenal gland, and (c) his work on the chemical transmission of impulses in

peripheral nerves as shown by the sympathetic system; Prof. George von Hevesy, research professor in the Institute of Theoretical Physics, Carlsberg Laboratory, Copenhagen, distinguished for (a) his work in experimental chemical physics, particularly the use, for the solution of biological and chemical problems, of radioactive and isotopic substances as indicators, (b) for his discovery of hafnium, and (c) for his geochemical researches and for his work on isotopes and their separation; Prof. Herbert Freundlich, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, U.S.A., distinguished for his researches in colloid chemistry and colloid physics.

The Linnean Society: New Foreign Members

THE following five biologists were elected foreign members of the Linnean Society of London at the general meeting on May 11: Prof. Alfred Ernst, director of the Institute of General Botany in the University of Zurich, distinguished for his work on apogamy in plants and related subjects, and for his fundamental investigations on heterostyly in Primulaceae and tropical Rubiaceae. His monograph on the new flora of the volcanic island of Krakatau was translated into English more than thirty years ago. Dr. William King Gregory, of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, distinguished for his researches on the morphology and evolution of the vertebrate skull and locomotor systems, the evolution of mammalian molar teeth, the phylogeny of fish skulls and the origin of man. Dr. William Marins Docters van Leeuwen, formerly director of the Botanic Gardens, Buitenzorg, distinguished for his work on galls and the various relations between plants and insects, on the regeneration of vegetation on lava and the biology of plants on mountain tops. His recent "Biology of Plants and Animals occurring in the Higher Parts of Mount Pangrango-Gedeh in West Java" and "Krakatau 1883-1933" are outstanding contributions to tropical botany.

DR. ALFRED REHDER, associate professor of dendrology and curator of the Herbarium, Arnold Arboretum, distinguished for his outstanding contributions to the taxonomy of trees and shrubs. His "Manual of Cultivated Trees and Shrubs" is a standard work, as is also "The Cultivated Conifers", which he wrote in collaboration with Prof. L. H. Bailey. His contributions to botanical bibliography include the preparation of the monumental "Bradley Bibliography". He has played a valuable part in suggesting practical additions and emendations to the International Rules of Botanical Nomenclature. Prof. William Albert Setchell, emeritus professor of botany in the University of California, distinguished for his researches on the classification and distribution

of marine algæ, particularly kelps, calcareous algæ and parasitic red algæ. In addition, he is the author of several papers on mosses, fungi and flowering plants. At the same meeting Mr. John Ardagh, clerk in charge of the Library, Department of Botany, British Museum (Natural History), was elected associate of the Society. Mr. Ardagh has an extensive knowledge of botanical literature, and those engaged upon investigations in taxonomy or botanical history greatly appreciate the readiness with which this knowledge is placed at their service.

Dr. E. W. R. Steacie

DR. E. W. R. STEACIE has been appointed director of the Division of Chemistry, National Research Council of Canada, in succession to Dr. G. S. Whitby, who recently resigned to accept the post of director of the Chemical Laboratories of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in Great Britain. Dr. Steacie, who will assume his new duties in July, has been a member of the teaching staff of McGill University for the last ten years, being at the present time associate professor of chemistry. During this period most of his time has been spent in the supervision of research by graduate students working on problems in the fields of hydrocarbon chemistry, combustion, chemical kinetics and photochemistry, in which work he is recognized as an authority. Dr. Steacie's studies have been directed largely along lines of fundamental research on problems of industrial importance, such as gaseous combustion, catalysis, pyrolysis of organic compounds, gases in metals, and high-pressure reactions. He has published many scientific papers and treatises, and is an associate editor of the *Journal of Chemical Physics*.

Sir John Eliot, K.C.I.E., F.R.S., 1839-1908

ON May 25, 1839, the distinguished meteorologist Sir John Eliot was born at Lamesley, Durham. Though the son of a schoolmaster, he did not matriculate until he was twenty-six years of age, and he then entered St. John's College, Cambridge. In 1869 he graduated as second wrangler and he was first Smith's Prizeman. After graduating he went to India and successively was professor of mathematics at Roorkee Engineering College (1869-72), at Muir College, Allahabad (1872-74), and professor of physical science at the Presidency College, Calcutta (1874-86). This last post he relinquished to succeed Henry Francis Blanford (1834-93) as meteorological reporter to the Indian Government. He had already served as reporter to the Government of Bengal. In 1899 he became director-general of Indian observatories, retiring from this post in 1903, being made K.C.I.E. He wrote largely on meteorological subjects, and his "Handbook of Cyclonic Storms in the Bay of Bengal" proved of great use to commerce and shipping. Elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 1895, after his return to England in 1904 he was president of the sub-section of astronomy and cosmical physics of the British Association. He died suddenly at his estate at Var, in the south of France, on March 18, 1908.

Civil Defence Research Committee

SIR JOHN ANDERSON, the Lord Privy Seal, has appointed a Civil Defence Research Committee, to be constituted as follows: Dr. E. V. Appleton (chairman), formerly Jacksonian professor of natural philosophy at the University of Cambridge, now Secretary of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research; Prof. J. F. Baker, professor of Civil engineering at the University of Bristol; Prof. J. D. Bernal, professor of physics at Birkbeck College, University of London; Dr. C. G. Darwin, director of the National Physical Laboratory; Prof. A. J. S. Pippard, professor of civil engineering in the Imperial College, University of London; Prof. R. V. Southwell, professor of engineering science at the University of Oxford; Prof. G. I. Taylor, Yarrow research professor of the Royal Society at Cambridge; Prof. W. N. Thomas, professor of engineering at University College, Cardiff. The secretary of the committee is Dr. E. N. Fox, Cleland House, Page Street, S.W.1. The committee will advise the Lord Privy Seal on programmes of research and experiment. The aim is to secure the fullest possible co-ordination over the wide field of work now comprised in civil defence.

Pottery from Mersin, Cilicia

EXAMPLES illustrative of the whole of the remarkable range of pottery discovered by Prof. John Garstang in his archaeological investigations on the prehistoric Cilician site of Mersin in Asia Minor (see NATURE, March 18, p. 464) are to be available for study in Great Britain. Prof. Garstang, in the course of an account of his excavations before the Society of Antiquaries of London on May 11, paid a tribute to the Turkish Government not only for the facilities afforded him for excavation, but also for the generosity with which the authorities had allowed a selection of no fewer than five hundred pieces to be brought to England for exhibition on long-term loan. In making his selection, Prof. Garstang added, his aim had been to secure that the series should be as representative as possible of the whole sequence of development on this very ancient site, and also to demonstrate in the sequence the position of the remarkable early architectural remains, which had been discovered—at present the oldest known. A number of specimens of the pottery were shown by Prof. Garstang to illustrate his lecture, including wares of the Cilician-Hittite periods, as well as of the whole range of the series of the chalcolithic culture, in which several new types are included. Attention was specially directed to the examples of the black ware with white decoration of the late chalcolithic culture of about 3000 B.C., and the trichrome ware from the sixteenth level, showing direct contact with predynastic Mesopotamia and the Tell Halaf culture. Wares from the neolithic level, still incompletely explored, were also shown. Arrangements are being made for the pottery to be allocated to the British Museum and museums at Oxford, Cambridge, Birmingham, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Glasgow and elsewhere. Prof. Garstang also spoke of his discoveries in Cilicia in a Friday evening discourse at the Royal Institution on May 12.