NEWS and VIEWS

Physics at Middlesex Hospital Medical School: Prof. Sidney Russ, C.B.E.

PROF. SIDNEY RUSS, as announced in *Nature* of January 4, has recently retired from the Joel chair of physics, attached to the Middlesex Hospital Medical School, and been appointed emeritus professor of physics in the University of London. Prof. Russ was the doyen and one of the most distinguished members of the group of hospital physicists who have played an important part in developing the science of medical radiology. After a brilliant career as an undergraduate at University College, London, he was appointed demonstrator in physics at the University of Manchester. Here he became one of Rutherford's earliest research associates, and with the late Prof. W. Makower investigated the phenomenon of the recoil of atoms undergoing radioactive disintegration. His interest in radiology led to his appointment in 1910 to a Beit Memorial Fellowship tenable at the Middlesex Hospital, a connexion with this institution which remained unbroken until his retirement in September last. On the expiry of his fellowship he was appointed physicist to the Hospital, and later, in 1920, was appointed to the first chair in physics at a London medical school.

As an investigator and administrator, and also as a lecturer possessing great charm and lucidity, Prof. Russ has exerted a considerable influence on medical radiology. Probably his most notable contribution to the subject is the book which he published in collaboration with the late Dr. H. A. Colwell entitled "Radium, X-Rays and the Living Cell". This pioneer work attracted many to this field of investigation and stimulated the interest of a much wider circle. Later, again in association with Colwell, he published another work, "X-Rays and Radium Injuries", and was joint author with his colleagues, L. H. Clark and B. D. H. Watters, of the well-known "Physics in Medical Radiology". He also contributed a succession of original papers on the influence of radiation on living cells, organs and tumours. In addition to being honorary secretary of the Radiology Committee of the Medical Research Council, the first scientific secretary to the National Radium Commission, and radium adviser to the King Edward Hospital Fund, Prof. Russ was for many years a member of the British X-Ray Units Committee and of the British Committee for X-Ray and Radium Protection. The present international recommendations relating to X-ray units and to radiation protection are largely based on the work of the British Committees and owe much to Prof. Russ's knowledge, zeal and wisdom.

Prof. J. E. Roberts

DR. J. E. ROBERTS, who has been elected to fill the Joel chair of physics at the Medical School of the Middlesex Hospital, University of London, is a graduate of Leeds. He has for some years been associated with hospital physics mainly in connexion with radiotherapy. His work with Prof. W. V. Mayneord at the Royal Cancer Hospital resulted in his appointment about ten years ago to the Middlesex Hospital. His main research in the field of pure physics has been an attempt to formalize the energy distribution in the gamma-ray spectrum of radium B and C.

American Association of Physics Teachers: Award of Oersted Medal

THE Oersted Medal of the American Association of Physics Teachers has been awarded to Prof. Duane Roller, professor and head of the Department of Physics of Wabash College, Crawfordsville, Indiana. The award is made annually "for notable contributions to the teaching of physics". Through the *American Journal of Physics*, which he has edited since it was founded in 1933, Prof. Roller had made a notable contribution to the teaching of physics at the college and university levels. Prof. Roller was educated at Culver Military Academy and at the University of Oklahoma. He was later, for thirteen years, on the staff of the University of Oklahoma, during which period he received a doctorate at the California Institute of Technology. Afterwards he became a research associate at Columbia and an associate professor at Hunter College. During the First World War he was a pilot, and during the Second World War he was chief technical aide of the National Defense Research Committee. The formal award will be made at the annual meeting on January 31 of the American Association of Physics Teachers, to be held at Columbia University. In his address of acceptance Prof. Roller will discuss one of his chief professional interests, physical terminology, another field in which he has made notable contributions, both to the teaching of physics and to the science itself.

British Medical Journal: Retirement of Dr. Gerald Horner

THE news that Dr. Gerald Horner retired under the age limit from the editorship of the *British Medical Journal* at the end of 1946 will be heard with regret by all those who have benefited, during the last nineteen years, from his able editorship. The editing of a leading medical journal, which is also the official organ of the British Medical Association, has always been a high responsibility. During recent years it has carried with it an increasing preoccupation with the health and well-being, not only of the people of Great Britain, but also with that of great and harassed populations elsewhere. If, indeed, we seek a measure of the achievement of Dr. Horner, we shall find it in the fact that the whole world looked to the *British Medical Journal* for guidance and leadership.

Formerly an assistant editor of the *Lancet*, the staff of which he joined in 1911, Dr. Horner became editor of the *British Medical Journal* in January 1928. Under his editorship the circulation of the journal has increased so considerably that he cannot but have felt, when he left the editorial chair, that his labours have been well rewarded. It has fallen to his lot to edit the journal throughout the very difficult period of the recent War, when the paper shortage, air raids and a multitude of other difficulties coincided with the necessity of providing, every week, a journal well filled with news and informative and research articles. Among the latter were the records of noteworthy results of British war-time research; and their publication and the issue of a great deal of other information was an essential part of our war-time effort. How efficiently Dr. Horner discharged this task is well known; as are also his kindly and helpful influence and personality. During the later months of his editorship, the British Medical Association planned and launched