OBITUARIES

Prof. T. Slater Price, F.R.S.

Prof. Thomas Slater Price was born on August 24, 1875, and died on October 29, 1949. Educated at King Edward's High School, Birmingham, he proceeded to Mason College, Birmingham, and graduated with first-class honours in chemistry and physics at the University of London in 1895. In that year he was appointed Priestley Research Scholar in chemistry at Mason College and in the following year, as an 1851 Exhibition Scholar, he proceeded to Leipzig to study under Prof. W. Ostwald. Graduating Ph.D. "summa cum laude" in 1898, he studied for a further year in Prof. Arrhenius's laboratory at Stockholm.

On returning to Britain in 1900, he was appointed honorary lecturer in chemistry at Mason University College, and in the following year he proceeded to University College, Sheffield, as assistant lecturer. After two years as senior lecturer in chemistry at the University of Birmingham, he was appointed head of the Chemical Department of the Birmingham Central Technical College in 1903, a post which he held until 1920. Under his direction the work in this Department was completely re-organised and extended, and although his energies were very fully occupied in teaching and organisation, he was able to carry out a large number of researches on peracids, organic disulphides and complex metallic ammines, the results of which are embodied in some forty papers published during this period. For his work he was awarded the degree of doctor of science of both the Universities of London and Birmingham.

In April 1916, Slater Price was commissioned as lieutenant, R.N.V.R., in order to take up special chemical work of a secret nature at the Royal Naval Experimental Station, Stratford, and later he was put in charge of all the chemical and technical work of this Station and promoted lieutenant-commander. Among the many problems which were studied under his direction at this time was the devising of smoke materials for making smoke screens such as were used in the Zeebrugge raid.

Early in 1920 he was appointed director of research to the British Photographic Research Association. Under his able direction and inspiration, a long list of papers was published year by year from the laboratories of the Association until it closed down in 1930. He was appointed to the chair of chemistry in the Heriot-Watt College, Edinburgh, in 1931, and retired in 1940.

Slater Price was a member of the General Council of the Royal Institute of Chemistry during 1911–14 and 1921–24, and served as vice-president during 1924–27. Keenly interested in the training of young chemists, he was largely responsible for the initiation of the scheme for national certificates in chemistry. In 1921 he was elected to the Council of the Chemical Society and served as its senior secretary during 1924–28 and as honorary treasurer during 1928–31.

He was gazetted an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (Military Division) in 1919 and elected a fellow of the Royal Society of London in 1924 and of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1932.

Since his retirement, Slater Price had been in very poor health, and those who watched him during these latter years could not but be impressed by the patient fortitude and inner peace with which he bore his increasing physical limitations. The death of his beloved wife a little more than a year ago was a loss which he felt most keenly, for she had nursed him with loving care in his great weakness.

Prof. Slater Price was a man of outstanding gifts of mind and insight. His clear and definite faith in the reality of God was the mainspring of his life, enabling him in the days of his health to serve loyally and devotedly his Church, and all his days to inspire those who met him in scientific circles or in private life.

Hugh B. Nisbet

Prof. C. A. Bentley, C.I.E.

In the death of Prof. C. A. Bentley, tropical sanitation has lost an ardent and zealous worker and an established authority on malaria. In his early work in Assam, Bentley made many contributions to tropical medicine, including recognition of the cause of 'ground itch' in coolie labour as due to penetration of the skin by ankylostome larvæ and the finding of the Leishman–Donovan bodies in kala azar, thus establishing the true nature of this important disease. With Christophers he was joint author of a monographic report on blackwater fever, establishing the dependence of this disease on long-continued malarial infection. In 1909 he was appointed to special duty under the Government of Bombay to investigate the malaria conditions in Bombay City, his report embodying his results and recommendations being one of the most complete malaria surveys ever carried out and to this day a classic. Later, as Director of Public Health with the Government of Bengal, Bentley was instrumental in securing large-scale anti-malaria measures in that Presidency, including an active policy of quinine distribution and measures for combating malaria in the unhealthy sracts of certain dying river systems, a subject on which he wrote many important reports. Following his retirement from India, Bentley was appointed to the chair of hygiene in the Egyptian University, Cairo. Just before his death he had been made director of the London Office of the Dutch Cinchona Bureau, an appointment in which he had hoped to renew his ever-abiding interest in quinine.

Dr. Bentley in all his work brought to bear unbounded enthusiasm, never sparing himself in active personal investigation and endeavour to arrive at the essential facts. He was a fluent writer and a great advocate when any subject seemed to him important. He received the Kaisar-i-Hind Gold Medal in 1916, was appointed C.I.E. in 1929 and on retirement from his Egyptian professorship was made emeritus professor and Commander of the Order of the Nile. He leaves a widow, two sons and two daughters.

Dr. R. A. Hull

Dr. R. A. Hull was killed at the age of thirty-eight when he fell while climbing the Brouillard ridge of Mont Blanc on August 22. Going up to Oxford in 1929 as an exhibitioner of St. John's College, he obtained a first class in Physics Finals in 1932 and was elected a senior scholar of Christ Church in 1934. He took the degree of D.Phil. in 1936 and was then working in the low-temperature team at the Clarendon Laboratory. The work was often harassing and difficult. Experiments frequently lasted as long as twenty hours, yet his great powers of concentration enabled him to keep command of an experiment in the most trying conditions. His patient and ingenious experiments contributed much to the technique of

working below 1° K. which had been established in Oxford by 1939. When the War came he joined the Admiralty research team at Oxford, and in 1941 designed and constructed what was probably the first continuous-wave oscillator in the millimetre region. As the War progressed he became more and more occupied with the training of physicists, who were required in ever-growing numbers. His very considerable administrative abilities now became apparent, both in the organisation of teaching and elsewhere in the Laboratory. In 1944 he spent a term as a visiting professor at Harvard University, assisting in the U.S. Navy's radio training scheme, and in the same year he was elected a fellow of Brasenose College. In 1948 he became a member of the General Board of the Faculties and was soon an accepted and vigorous representative of the science faculties.

Any problem Hull took up was considered long and deeply. When his mind was made up, he would speak it even though it meant saying the difficult and unpopular thing. Something of this same deliberate quality was the secret of his success as a teacher and a man of science. He would never willingly accept a partial solution. Many brought their problems to him and found him very generous of time and trouble in helping them. Above all was his sincerity and reliability : what he said, he meant, and what he promised, he did.

Though perhaps too reserved for more than a few to know him intimately, he found many friends not only in the learned faculties but also in a wide range of University life from the hockey field to the Bach Choir and the Music Club. An experienced mountaineer and an expert photographer, he was never happier than when among the hills either in Britain or in the Alps. Even on the wettest and coldest of days, it was always good fun to be with him there.

In 1937 Hull married Miss Judith Moore, like himself a research worker in the Clarendon Laboratory. She died in 1943. They leave one daughter.

J. WILKS

NEWS and VIEWS

Pituitary Adrenocorticotropin : Research at Cambridge

THE hormone of the anterior pituitary lobe has excited great interest over the past twenty-five years, and although results of the greatest theoretical significance have accrued from the large amount of research carried out on this subject, little of practical importance has developed therefrom until recently. Within the past year, interest has been particularly directed to the adrenocorticotropic hormone of the anterior pituitary gland for two reasons. First, as would be expected from the action of cortisone, adrenocorticotropin is effective in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis. Secondly, Li and others have shown that the biological activity of adrenocorticotropin can be retained during the degradation of this protein hormone to a moderately sized peptide. The synthesis of such a peptide, the activity of which would be of the greatest interest in practical medicine, is therefore within the realm of possibility.

The Nuffield Foundation, whose support of research on rheumatism is of many years standing, has not been slow to realize the significance of this position, and the Trustees have recently made an offer to the University of Cambridge, which has been accepted, to provide a grant of £11,000, spread over three years, to support research on adrenocorticotropin in the School of Biochemistry under the direction of Prof. F. G. Young. For the past fifteen years, Prof. Young has been pursuing research on the relationship of anterior pituitary hormones to metabolic processes with particular reference to diabetes, and has recently identified one diabetogenic pituitary substance with the growth hormone. As has been demonstrated in the United States by Li, Conn and others, pituitary adrenocorticotropic hormone can also be diabetogenic in some species. In Great Britain, however, research of this type has always been hampered by the poor supply of active material, and with the support of the Nuffield Foundation Prof. Young will be able to prepare substantial quantities of adrenocorticotropic hormone, and to pursue investigations, which would otherwise not have been possible, on the structure of the hormone itself and of derived peptides. The hope that this work may provide a basis for an attack on the synthesis of active substances is a real one, and in this aspect of the work Prof. A. R. Todd and his staff, in the University Chemical Laboratories at Cambridge, are prepared to collaborate with Prof. Young and his team, also with the support of the Nuffield Foundation.

Trotter and Paterson Memorial Lectures of the Illuminating Engineering Society

THE Council of the Illuminating Engineering Society is raising a fund to provide for public lectures in memory of the late Mr. A. P. Trotter and the late Sir Clifford Paterson. It has been suggested that the money should be contributed in small sums from the whole membership of the Society, and that the interest on the capital be used to provide fees for the lecturers. The cost of the meetings and of the publication of the lectures in the *Transactions* of the Society will be borne by the Society out of its general income. The lectures will be given alternately as the Trotter Memorial and the Paterson Memorial at intervals which will depend on the response to this appeal, and they will take place, in the first instance, in London and will be repeated in the Provinces, if appropriate. The subjects of the first few lectures will be related to the particular interests of Mr. Trotter and of Sir Clifford Paterson ; but later lectures will be of a more general character, dealing with pioneer work or with some broad review of developments or knowledge.

Mr. Trotter's association with lighting was unique (see *Nature*, **160**, 390 ; 1947). More than sixty years ago he was a pioneer in photometry, public lighting and vision under conditions of low illumination, and as president of the Society during the First World War he paved the way for collaboration between the lighting industry and the Government. In the Board of Trade he contributed largely to the Electricity Regulations, and as editor of the *Electrician* he had a considerable influence on the growth of the industry. Sir Clifford Paterson also made a very personal contribution to the science and industry of illumination (see *Nature*, **162**, 325 ; 1948). His connexion with