

Winckworth was enthusiastic and energetic in all that he undertook and was always ready to help students of Mollusca; all were hospitably received at his house at South Norwood. As editor of the *Proceedings of the Malacological Society* (1928-47), he gave many a beginner valuable aid and encouragement in writing a first paper, and the more experienced could always obtain sound advice on their problems. He was a simple and generous man, neat and methodical in his ways, and had a passion for orderliness in all things. His particular niche in British malacology will not easily be filled and his death will be felt as a personal loss by friends in many lands.

Winckworth belonged to many scientific societies and held office in several, including the Linnean Society of London (council 1943-47, vice-president 1945-47); the Malacological Society of London (council 1924-48, president 1939-42, elected honorary member 1949); the Conchological Society (president 1930-31). He was also a founder member of the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History and of the Systematics Association.

He first married Margaret Wallace, who died in 1939, and later Alison Mary Cruickshank, who nursed him with great devotion through a long illness.

W. J. REES

## NEWS and VIEWS

Radcliffe Observatory, Pretoria:

Dr. H. Knox-Shaw

DR. HAROLD KNOX-SHAW has retired from the post of Radcliffe Observer and director of the Radcliffe Observatory, Pretoria. A pupil of S. A. Saunder at Wellington College and of A. R. Hinks at the Cambridge Observatory, he left Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1908 to become astronomical observer and afterwards director of the Khedivial Observatory, Helwan, Egypt. There his chief work lay in the photography of nebulae and comets with the 30-in. Reynolds reflector. He secured the first photograph of Halley's comet at its return in 1910. In 1924 he succeeded Rambaut as Radcliffe Observer at Oxford, carrying on such work as measures of stellar parallaxes, and of Kapteyn's selected areas. The decision of the Radcliffe Trustees to sell the Oxford site to Lord Nuffield, to meet the growing needs of the Radcliffe Infirmary, was coupled with a plan to build a new 74-in. reflecting telescope in the southern hemisphere on a suitable site. While carrying on work on the reduction of stellar observations, including a long early series by Hornsby, Dr. Knox-Shaw's activities centred more and more from 1934 onwards on the erection of the new observatory buildings near Pretoria and of the telescope itself. A series of delays due to legal proceedings, difficulties in casting the mirror and the War prevented the arrival of the mirror in Pretoria until 1948, while even now the spectrograph for use at the Cassegrain focus, ordered and put in hand before the War began, has not been delivered. Much sympathy has been felt in astronomical circles with Dr. Knox-Shaw for the years of frustration that he passed through, but at least he has had the joy of seeing a first-class 74-in. mirror successfully at work in the telescope, and of knowing that a tremendously rich field of opportunity has opened up for the future. Dr. Knox-Shaw was president of the Royal Astronomical Society during 1931-33.

Dr. A. D. Thackeray

DR. A. D. THACKERAY, who succeeds Dr. Knox-Shaw as Radcliffe Observer, was educated at Eton and King's College, Cambridge. He was elected to the Sheepshanks Exhibition at Cambridge to work at the Solar Physics Observatory and later to a Commonwealth Fund Fellowship, with which he worked for two years at Mt. Wilson Observatory. He returned to Cambridge as assistant director of the Solar Physics Observatory, acting as director for a time in the early years of the War. In 1947 he became chief assistant at the Radcliffe Observatory. His

work has been principally observational, covering a wide range of problems on stellar spectra, contours of absorption lines and on nebulae. He has taken part in eclipse expeditions in Canada (1932) and Japan (1936). He has now a great opportunity of organising a wide programme of research in a very open field: happily, there is good prospect that his small staff will be supplemented by observers from other countries, who will make of the Radcliffe Observatory an important international centre of research.

Carty Medal and Award of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences: Dr. Irving Langmuir

THE John J. Carty Gold Medal and Award of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences has been awarded to Dr. Irving Langmuir, who recently retired from the post of associate director of the General Electric Research Laboratory, Schenectady, New York. This Medal was established in 1930 in honour of the late John J. Carty, a member of the Academy, by his close associates, as a token of esteem on the occasion of his retirement from the vice-presidency of the American Telephone and Telegraph Co. It is awarded not more than once in two years and is given for noteworthy contributions to the advancement of fundamental or applied science in any field. Dr. Langmuir has received many high honours, among which may be mentioned the Nobel Prize in Chemistry (1932), his election as a foreign member of the Royal Society (1935), the Faraday Medal of the Chemical Society (1938), and the Faraday Medal of the Institution of Electrical Engineers (1944). His research work is remarkable for the extraordinarily wide range of his investigations. These include electric lighting, electron emission and gaseous discharge, surface chemistry and (during the Second World War) the production of smoke screens. Besides his interests in many branches of pure and applied science, Dr. Langmuir has made a number of valuable contributions to general scientific thought and the philosophy of science.

Geology at the Aligarh University

A DEPARTMENT of Geology has been created at Aligarh University and Dr. P. N. Ganju has been appointed reader and chairman of the new Department. Dr. Ganju has recently returned from King's College, University of Durham, where he specialized in coal petrology. The importance of trained geologists in India needs no emphasis; a great deal remains to be done in developing and exploring the mineral resources of this vast country. At the