

## NEWS and VIEWS

## British Association: Officers for 1952

THE Council of the British Association announce the following appointments for 1952, which includes the annual meeting at Belfast (September 3-10): *President*, Prof. A. V. Hill; *General Treasurer*, Mr. M. G. Bennett; *General Secretaries*, Sir Richard Southwell and Dr. George Taylor; *Presidents of Sections*, *A* (Mathematics and Physics), Prof. A. M. Tyndall; *B* (Chemistry), Prof. W. Wardlaw; *C* (Geology), Dr. J. E. Richey; *D* (Zoology), Prof. A. D. Peacock; *E* (Geography), Prof. R. O. Buchanan; *F* (Economics), Prof. D. T. Jack; *G* (Engineering), Sir Ben Lockspeiser; *H* (Anthropology and Archaeology), Prof. E. O. James; *I* (Physiology), Prof. R. C. Garry; *J* (Psychology), Prof. P. E. Vernon; *K* (Botany), Prof. Meirion Thomas; *L* (Education), Mr. A. L. Binns; *M* (Agriculture), Dr. N. C. Wright; *Conference of Delegates of Corresponding Societies*, Mr. J. A. S. Stendall. The Prime Minister of Northern Ireland and the Lord Mayor of Belfast will be patrons for the Belfast meeting, for which a local executive committee has been appointed under the chairmanship of the Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University, Belfast, Dr. Eric Ashby.

## International Council of Scientific Unions

THE Executive Board of the International Council of Scientific Unions held its annual meeting in the rooms of the National Academy of Sciences at Washington, D.C., on October 16-17. Prof. A. von Muralt, president, was in the chair. In addition to the members of the Board, a number of American scientific men were invited to attend the meeting from the State Department, the National Academy of Sciences and various national committees, from the National Research Council and the Science Foundation. Among the items of business mention must be made of the fact that for the first time the Board allocated among the Unions the grants-in-aid for 1952 made by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The total allowed for each category of grant was fixed by Unesco, and the internal distribution within each category by the Board. Applications for acceptance from the International Unions of Biochemistry and Scientific Psychology were deferred. A new Joint Commission on Electron Microscopy was set up, and a Committee on a Polar Year to be organized for 1957. A revised agreement with Unesco was approved. A new feature of a Board meeting was a symposium on "Development of International Co-operation in Science", at which the speakers were Prof. F. J. M. Stratton, Dr. W. A. Noyes, jun., Dr. J. N. Mukherjee, Dr. C. J. Mackenzie, Dr. Joseph B. Koepfli and Prof. A. von Muralt. Mr. William W. Rubey, chairman of the National Research Council, presided. At the close of the meeting, visits were arranged for delegates to a number of scientific institutions in Washington. Generous hospitality was offered by the National Academy of Sciences and its officers, and the Board was entertained to lunch by the Hon. James E. Webb, Under-Secretary of State.

## Nature Reserve in Ross and Cromarty

THE first national nature reserve in Britain has been established by the Nature Conservancy in the County of Ross and Cromarty. A property of some 10,450 acres within the great deer forest of Kinlochewe has been purchased by private treaty and declared a

nature reserve by the Conservancy. The reserve includes the woods of Coille na glas Leitire by Loch Maree (surface elevation 32 ft.) and the eastern slopes and ridges of Beinn Eithe, rising to more than 3,200 ft. The very ancient geological formations of this region are of great interest and exhibit some of their more striking features within the reserve. The mountain scenery is particularly impressive, where the white Cambrian quartzite is most prominent upon the dark torridonian sandstone. There are several small lochans and pools on the moors. The woodlands are occupied predominantly by Scots pines and birches and are of considerable scientific interest as part of a system embracing woodland and transitional moorland areas. The moorlands, which are generally very wet, reach upwards to screes and steep rocks. In the high corries and on the exposed ridges the flora is arctic-alpine in character. Among the mountain plants are: alpine bearberry, purple saxifrage, mountain azalea, alpine thrift, moss campion and the dwarf cornel. The fauna of the district includes red deer, roe deer, wild cat, pine marten, golden eagle, buzzard and ptarmigan. The reserve as a whole, with its wide range of altitudes and its various woodland, moorland and mountain top habitats, offers excellent opportunities for biological observations and research in relation to nature conservation.

## M. T. Kearney Foundation of the College of Agriculture, University of California

A NEW foundation, to be known as the M. Theodore Kearney Foundation of Soil Science, has been endowed in the College of Agriculture, University of California, with the proceeds of the bequest of the late Mr. Kearney, a prominent rancher in the Fresno area in the latter part of the last century, who died in 1906, leaving his estate to the University; the endowment now amounts to 2,268,000 dollars. The Foundation will be used for the advancement of knowledge of soil science, including soil-water-plant relations, by study of the basic physics, chemistry, biology and hydrology, with particular reference to arid and semi-arid farming regions; it will also serve to strengthen the services of the University in the education and training of soil scientists and teachers of soil science and closely related subjects. Mr. Kearney's interest in soil science arose from his experience of barrenness of soils resulting from alkali accumulations following irrigation. The current programme of the College of Agriculture includes research on the physical behaviour of soils, chemical problems of alkali soils and methods of cropping on them, both in the field and the laboratory, with the view of the permanent reclamation and agricultural use of such soils. Other studies include the behaviour of important chemical ions and their uptake by plants; direct fertility studies in relation to soil types; the palatability and nutritive value to livestock of forage crops produced on soils of different fertility levels; the clay minerals of the soil and the part they play in soil chemistry and physics; and soil surveys and land classifications of the agricultural, grass and forested areas of California.

## Inter-Commonwealth Postgraduate Scholarships in Science

THE Royal Society Empire Scientific Conference and the British Commonwealth Scientific Official Conference in 1946 recommended the preparation of a list of postgraduate scholarships available for scientific study within the Commonwealth. The task