

chemistry. A very important problem is the writing and publishing of new text-books on organic chemistry that correctly portray the present state of chemical science. It is essential to speed up the issue of the works of our classical chemists and, particularly, of the complete works of A. M. Butlerov and of V. V. Markovnikov.

The Conference notes that the Chemical Science Section of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., and also scientific institutes and institutes of higher education, must pay more attention to theoretical chemistry and to questions concerning the ideological basis of chemical theories and must intensify their struggle against the infiltration of idealistic 'theories' that are foreign to Soviet science.

The Conference recommends:

(1) The prompt publishing (not later than the end of 1951) of the shorthand report of the Conference.

(2) Wide publicizing of the results of the Conference in scientific journals.

(3) That arrangements should be made to publish discussions on the development of the theory of chemical structure in organic chemistry in the scientific journals—in particular, in the *Journal of General Chemistry*, the size of the journal being increased for this purpose.

(4) The speeding up of the publishing of new text-books on organic chemistry that correctly portray the present state of chemical science, also of Soviet monographs on questions of theoretical chemistry.

(5) That the Chemical Science Section of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. should periodically call conferences on the most important questions of organic chemistry and should invite specialists from allied sciences (physicists, philosophers, biologists, etc.) to attend.

The Conference calls on chemists, and also on scientists working in allied fields of physics, to take up the further creative development of A. M. Butlerov's theory of chemical structure on the basis of dialectical materialism, guided by the great works of I. V. Stalin and by his directions concerning the role and significance of progressive science in the evolution of society and of the role and significance of criticism in the evolution of science. The Conference calls on Soviet chemists to take all possible steps for the further advancement of theoretical chemistry and for the wide utilization of the results of scientific work for the national economy.

Under the guidance of the party of Lenin and Stalin, Soviet chemists will honourably carry out the directions of the great leader of the workers, the scientific genius, Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin.

OBITUARIES

Mr. J. McC. Black

It is with regret that we learn of the death in Adelaide on December 3 of John McConnell Black, the doyen of Australian botany, in his ninety-sixth year. Born in Scotland on April 28, 1855, at Wigton, Black was educated at Wigton Grammar School, the Edinburgh Academy, Taunton College School, where other devotees of natural science have been trained, and afterwards at Dresden. At the outset of his career he joined the staff of the British Linen Company's Bank; but at the age of twenty-two he migrated to South Australia, where, in the Baroota district, he spent five years farming. For the next

twenty years he served as a reporter on the staff of the *Register and Advertiser* of Adelaide. When, in 1902, he retired from Press work, he devoted himself to the study of the local flora, a subject which he made peculiarly his own. In 1909 there appeared his "Naturalised Flora of South Australia", which included descriptions of 368 species. Thirteen years later, when Black had already attained the age at which most men are thinking of retirement, there appeared the first part of what has become the standard flora of South Australia. This contained generic and specific descriptions of all the then known indigenous species and established aliens among the vascular plants. Two years later, namely, in 1924, the second part was published, the third appeared in 1926 and the entire work of seven hundred pages was completed in 1929, embodying clear and adequate descriptions of nearly 2,500 species. In appreciation of this outstanding achievement, largely based on his own original work, Black received a number of recognitions. He was awarded the Verco Medal of the Royal Society of South Australia and became president of that body in 1933. In the same year Black was elected an associate of the Linnean Society of London, and the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science awarded him the Mueller Memorial Medal. He thus joined the eminent company of Douglas Mawson, Leonard Cockayne and Wood Jones, all fellows of the Royal Society of London who were his immediate predecessors as recipients of the Medal.

When I visited Mr. Black in Adelaide he was, at the age of ninety-four, remarkably active both in mind and body and might easily have passed for a contemporary of a man twenty-five years his junior. Then, and almost to the time of his death, Black was working on the second edition of his flora. Parts 1 and 2 have already appeared, and on the very day before Black died he had completed the revision of the manuscript for Part 3 up to the Plumbaginaceæ.

Thus botanical science loses one more of those gifted and distinguished amateurs who have often done so much to enlarge our knowledge of the floras and faunas of the world's surface.

E. J. SALISBURY

Sir Fred Clarke

SIR FRED CLARKE, who died suddenly at his home in London on January 6, played a notable part in the promotion of higher studies in education in Great Britain. Born and bred in Oxfordshire, he was professor of education for five years in Southampton, eighteen years in Cape Town, and five years in McGill, before he became, in 1936, professor and director of the Institute of Education in London. It is not surprising that an outstanding feature of his tenure of that office was the development of strong ties between educationists in the older Dominions and the Institute. Under his leadership the Institute became a centre for the exchange of educational ideas and experience for the whole Commonwealth.

He took an active part in many important educational movements during the war period. He was an active member of the National Union of Teachers. As a member of the McNair Committee he was a strong advocate of the participation of the universities in teacher training. It was largely as the result of his inspiration that the National Foundation for Educational Research came into being. He was the first