physics or chemistry laboratory as the balance or the microscope.

At the Imperial College, while continuing to make, by ingenious use of electron diffraction, notable contributions to our knowledge of the physics and chemistry of surfaces, Thomson turned his attention more and more to the field of atomic physics and, in particular, to the neutron. That the atomic energy project was embarked on with maximum effort early in the War was due to Thomson's grasp of the subject and his almost prophetic vision. In returning to Cambridge, the brilliant son, a Nobel laureate and Royal and Hughes medallist of the Royal Society, is following still further in the footsteps of his father, the great "J. J.", and the Imperial College loses a famous man of science and a stimulating lecturer and conversationalist for whom his friends and colleagues have real affection and admiration.

Meldola Medal, 1951

THE Meldola Medal is the gift of the Society of Maccabæans and is normally awarded annually, the award for any year being made to the chemist who, being a British subject and less than thirty years of age at December 31 in that year, shows the most promise as indicated by his or her published chemical work. On the recommendation of the Council of the Royal Institute of Chemistry, the Society has decided to award two medals for 1951, there being two candidates adjudged to be of equal merit in diverse fields of work; they are Dr. C. Kemball and Dr. G. W. Kenner.

Dr. C. Kemball

Dr. Kemball was educated at Edinburgh Academy and Trinity College, Cambridge. In 1943 he joined the Department of Colloid Science, University of Cambridge, working with Prof. E. K. (now Sir Eric) Rideal on the adsorption of vapours on mercury. The researches showed that many of the phenomena that were known to occur with surface films of long-chain molecules on water also took place with smaller molecules on the more strongly adsorbing mercury surface, and led to interesting developments in the use of entropy measurements for investigating the state of adsorbed substances. In 1946 he was elected to a fellowship at Trinity College and to a Commonwealth Fund fellowship at Princeton University, where, in collaboration with Dean H. S. Taylor, he studied the catalytic rupture of the carbon-carbon bond in ethane on nickel surfaces. Returning to Cambridge in 1947, Dr. Kemball applied the technique of surface potentials to following chemisorption of vapours on mercury and, in the Department of Colloid Science and later in the Department of Physical Chemistry, developed a mass spectrometer for studying catalytic reactions on evaporated metal films.

Dr. G. W. Kenner

Dr. Kenner entered the Victoria University of Manchester in 1939, obtaining a B.Sc. in 1942, and the M.Sc. degree in 1943. His first work was on the reactions of amidines with derivatives of malonic acid and the synthesis of pyrimidine derivatives. These substances were used in his work in Manchester, and then after 1944 in Cambridge, on the synthesis of purine nucleosides, work which culminated in 1948 with the synthesis of adenosine. In 1944 Kenner went to Cambridge as a research student and was awarded the Darwin Prize for his Ph.D. dissertation in 1946. At this time he was elected a Fellow of Trinity Hall, Cambridge. During the academic year 1948–49 his tenure of a Rockefeller fellowship enabled him to spend a year at the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule, Zurich, studying the structure of the erythrina alkaloids with Prof. V. Prelog. Since his return to Cambridge in 1949, Dr. Kenner has been collaborating with Prof. A. R. Todd in his work on the synthesis of oligonucleotides, while developing another investigation into the peptide field. This has led to new methods for the synthesis and selective degradation of peptides, such as form the active constituents of the pituitary hormones.

Safe Transit of Delicate Instruments across National Frontiers

FROM time to time, research laboratories making very precise scientific measurements need to exchange instruments, for purposes of comparison, with similar laboratories in other countries, and if these, often very delicate, instruments are to reach their destination undamaged, they must be handled with extreme care during the customs inspection in both exporting and importing countries. As part of its objective of reducing administrative and other barriers to the passage of educational and scientific materials from country to country, Unesco (19 Avenue Kléber, Paris 16e) is sponsoring a scheme whereby the inspection of these instruments is made in the laboratories themselves, under competent supervision, rather than in customs depots at national frontiers or terminals. Each Government participating in the scheme would name the laboratory or laboratories in its country to which it wished to extend the privileges of the scheme. The actual procedure might vary from country to country. Under an arrangement suggested by the United Kingdom, a customs officer would supervise the packing of an instrument at an exporting laboratory and affix an internationally recognized label. The authorities at the place of importation would allow the package to be forwarded unopened to its destination, where it would be opened in the presence of a customs official. Unesco will keep a register of laboratories designated by Governments and would periodically send to interested countries a list of these laboratories, as well as details of operation. Information reaching Unesco by June 1 will be included in the first circular.

The scheme seeks to apply more widely an arrangement already operating among a limited number of laboratories as follows: the National Physical Laboratory, Teddington; Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers, Paris; Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt, Brunswick; Deutsches Amt für Maasse und Gewichte, Weida; Electrotechnical Laboratory and the Central Inspection Institute of Weights and Measures, Tokyo; National Bureau of Standards, Washington, D.C.; and the Institute of Metrology of the U.S.S.R., Leningrad. These institutions at present conduct exchanges on a limited scale and also maintain regular contact with the International Bureau of Weights and Measures for the purpose of exchanging apparatus and scientific data. The Bureau itself maintains an international laboratory at its headquarters at Sèvres, near Paris, which exchanges physical standards and scientific data with leading national laboratories. Both the Bureau and the International Council of Scientific Unions have endorsed the proposal as a practical means of reducing obstacles to the international exchange of scientific information.