

NEWS and VIEWS

Chemical Engineering at Swansea : Prof. E. S. Sellers

PROF. E. S. SELLERS resigned his post as head of the Department of Chemical Engineering, University College of Swansea, on January 31, to join the British Petroleum Co. as manager of the Petroleum Division at the Sunbury Research Centre. When in 1955 Prof. Sellers went to Swansea from the Department of Chemical Engineering, University of Cambridge, he faced the task of building a new department in a College that planned unusually rapid extension to its facilities for education in applied science. He leaves a department of chemical engineering with a well-established teaching programme that makes provision for the admission of some thirty honours students annually and the expectation of expansion to an entry of fifty students when new accommodation becomes available during the next five years. A special feature of the course for chemical engineers in Swansea has been the more than usual involvement of local industry. A considerable part of the practical work for undergraduates has been carried out on industrial plant rather than on laboratory equipment in the Department. This has been made possible by the excellent relations that the Department of Chemical Engineering has established with industry. During his period in Swansea, Prof. Sellers has supervised research on the flow of non-Newtonian liquids and the control of continuously operating process plants. In 1957 he was awarded the Moulton Medal of the Institute of Chemical Engineers for work (with Dr. D. R. Augood) on the distillation of hydrogen. He has served the Institution of Chemical Engineers as a member of the Council and on the Board of Examiners. He has been a member of several advisory committees of the Admiralty and the Ministry of Supply.

Prof. J. F. Richardson

PROF. J. F. RICHARDSON, who succeeds Prof. E. S. Sellers at Swansea, graduated at the Imperial College of Science and Technology in 1941. After six years of postgraduate research with Sir Alfred Egerton, he was appointed lecturer and later senior lecturer at the College. In 1958 he resigned his university appointment to join the Development Division of Messrs. A. Boake Roberts and Co., Ltd., as senior chemical engineer. Prof. Richardson has served the Institution of Chemical Engineers for four years as a member of the Board of Examiners, as honorary librarian since 1954, and as a member of the Nominations Committee, the Careers Advisory Committee and the Advisory Panel on student membership. His publications cover a wide range and include a text-book on chemical engineering written jointly with Prof. J. M. Coulson. During 1941-47 his work was largely concerned with laboratory and large-scale studies on fire prevention and extinction. More recent research by Prof. Richardson has related to the physical properties of two-phase systems.

Royal Naval Scientific Service :

Mr. J. Buckingham, C.B.

MR. JOHN BUCKINGHAM, who recently retired from the Royal Naval Scientific Service, where he held

the post of director of research programmes and planning, joined that Department as a technical assistant in the Board of Invention and Research in 1917 and made naval science his career. During the years between the Wars he played an important part in the development of what was ultimately to become the Royal Naval Scientific Service. He was the assistant and confidant of the first director of scientific research, Dr. (later Sir) Frank Smith, and of his successors. The last of these, Mr. (later Sir) Charles Wright, selected him in 1936 as his deputy, a post he filled for ten years. In 1946 he was appointed the first director of research programmes and planning, with special responsibility for the management of peace-time research and development expenditure. Successive controllers of the Navy have spoken warmly of the skill with which these duties were carried out. He served on various Admiralty committees and represented the Admiralty on outside committees, always with distinction. His valuable advice was sought officially and unofficially by high and low on almost any matter which was 'tricky', and what he did behind the scenes often determined the success of actions in which officially he took no part. His many important works were recognized in 1953 by the award of the C.B.

Dr. W. E. Pretty

WITH the retirement of Mr. Buckingham, the Department of Research Programmes and Planning has been absorbed into a new Department of Research and Development Services; Dr. W. E. Pretty has been appointed to be its first director. As a Royal Scholar, Dr. Pretty was awarded the A.R.C.S. and the Governors' Prize in physics at the Imperial College of Science and Technology in 1925, and in the same year took his B.Sc. (first-class honours), London. For the next six years his time was spent between teaching and research at the College under Prof. A. Fowler. His researches in spectroscopy gained him his Ph.D. degree. In 1931 he joined the Science Museum as assistant keeper in charge of the optics and the astronomy collections. He served as secretary to the Advisory Council of the Museum and was much concerned with the successful introduction of a new type of 'special exhibition' showing really up-to-date science and technology in a particular field. In 1939 he was seconded to the Admiralty Department of Scientific Research and at the end of the War accepted an invitation for permanent transfer to the newly formed Royal Naval Scientific Service. He was promoted to the rank of deputy chief scientific officer and appointed director of research programmes and planning in 1948.

Toxic Chemicals in Agriculture

THE Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, with the Minister for Science, the Secretary of State for Scotland and the Minister of Health, have appointed the following Research Study Group to consider this subject: Prof. H. G. Sanders, chief scientific adviser (agriculture), Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (*chairman*); Dr. H. R. Barnell, chief scientific adviser (food), Ministry of