

the jay and the magpie, which are responsible for 80 per cent of the losses of wood-pigeons' eggs.

Dr. Bruce Campbell (British Trust for Ornithology) discussed population problems in a typical insect-eating forest bird, the pied flycatcher, illustrated by the ringing and nest-box experiments he was undertaking in the Forest of Dean.

Mr. W. A. Cadman (Forestry Commission) described the progression of wild life at various stages in the development of forests. He said that the pine marten had increased in some Welsh forests.

Mr. Nigel Gray (Imperial Chemical Industries Game Research Station) discussed the relations between game preservation and forestry. He said that good forestry made for good game habitat; but it was essential to have a reasonable mixture of tree species. If the Forestry Commission were to appoint game advisers, it would succeed in greatly

boosting private forestry, by showing owners how it could be combined with game preservation.

Dr. I. D. Pennie (British Trust for Ornithology) spoke about the capercaillie and its effects on woodlands. Foresters claimed that in autumn and winter the capercaillie ate almost exclusively the shoots and buds of conifers; but in fact it seemed much to prefer the shoots of transplanted trees in nurseries and plantations to those of naturally regenerating trees. It was thus the shift in forestry practice, from the natural woodland to the artificial plantation, that had transformed this normal member of the woodland avifauna of northern Europe into a forest pest in parts of Scotland.

There were two field excursions during the conference, one under Mr. B. Gale, with a forestry angle, and one under Mr. Edwin Cohen, mainly for bird-watchers.

R. S. R. FITTER

OBITUARIES

Mr. E. Price Evans

MR. EVAN PRICE EVANS died on April 27, 1959, at his home in Eastbourne, aged seventy-seven. He will be remembered for the part he played in introducing the teaching of plant ecology into schools; it is probably quite largely due to him that at least in some schools ecological teaching on scientific lines has taken the place of mere 'Nature study'.

Price Evans was a Welsh-speaking Welshman, born at Corris in Merioneth on January 19, 1882. Educated in his native village and at Towyn County School, he entered the University College of North Wales, Bangor, in 1900 and was trained to be a teacher. There he attended the botanical lectures of Prof. Reginald Phillips and Dr. (later Prof.) J. Lloyd Williams. His first appointment was at his own school at Towyn, under the headmastership of a notable chemist, Thomas Jones.

At Towyn he had already experimented with teaching field botany even to quite junior forms, and he later developed this teaching when holding a post at Ryhope, Co. Durham. In his youth, however, he was better known as a footballer than as a scientist and at one time played for Wales in the amateur internationals. From Ryhope he went to Warrington, where he became headmaster of the Grammar School.

At Ryhope from 1913 onwards he began teaching ecology and vegetation mapping to his classes, and his efforts in this direction led him to correspond with the late Sir Arthur Tansley, who was then at Cambridge. Tansley encouraged him to publish an account of his teaching methods in the *School Science Review*, and later they wrote in collaboration "Plant Ecology and the School" (1946).

Price Evans was a keen student of vegetation on his own account, especially that of his native mountains, which he knew very intimately. He contributed several papers to the *Journal of Ecology*, of which one dealing with Cader Idris is still the only published account of the vegetation of a geologically and botanically very interesting area and is often quoted. He was an accurate observer and kept notes methodically; his unpublished note-books are full of valuable observations on the plants and plant com-

munities of North Wales. The University of Wales recognized his work by awarding him the honorary degree of M.Sc. in 1933.

During and after the Second World War, Price Evans was a keen supporter of Nature conservation, and he was an active member of the Nature Conservancy's Committee for Wales from its inception until shortly before his death. He had a vigorous and friendly personality and will be much missed.

P. W. RICHARDS

Dr. Z. K. A. Moszynski

DR. Z. K. A. MOSZYNSKI, a principal scientific officer of the British Coke Research Association, died at his home in Chesterfield, Derbyshire, on February 13. Zbigniew Konrad Antoni Moszynski was born at Lwow, Poland, on December 16, 1907, and studied in the Department of Chemical Engineering, University of Lwow (1927-34), where he took his diploma (Dipl. Ing.). During 1934-35 he worked in the Laboratory of Potassium Salts, University of Lwow. During 1935-39 he was deputy inspector for civil defence of industry, Polish Ministry of Defence, in the County of Lwow.

In August 1939 he was mobilized and served in the Polish-German campaign, escaping to Hungary, where he was interned. For five months he was assistant to the professor of agricultural chemistry, University of Magyarovar, but in March 1940 he joined the Polish forces in France, being evacuated to England. On behalf of the Polish General Staff he carried out research work in the Mining Department, University of Birmingham, between 1944 and 1945 on the use of carbonized peat/coal blends for mobile gas generators. During 1946-47 he continued and extended this work on the production of reactive carbonized fuels in the Fuel Department, University of Leeds, and obtained the degree of doctor of philosophy.

In September 1947 he was demobilized and in the same year became a British subject. He joined the staff of the British Coke Research Association, at the Midland Coke Research Station, where he was in charge of personnel and acted as secretary of a

research group working on the analysis of coal and coke. His bomb combustion method for the determination of both sulphur and chlorine in coal is well known to fuel scientists, and is to become an international standard method. With the building

of the new Coke Research Centre at Chesterfield in 1958 he transferred his home to Derbyshire and took up new work for the British Coke Research Association dealing with the problems of air and water pollution.

NEWS and VIEWS

Physiology at Oxford :

Prof. E. G. T. Liddell, F.R.S.

THE near prospect of Prof. E. G. T. Liddell's retirement from Oxford's Waynflete professorship of physiology has aroused a widespread interest among physiologists everywhere and, indeed, among all those who are concerned for the advancement by experimental research of knowledge in the medical range of the sciences. For there can be no doubt that the Waynflete chair, during the tenures of a succession of distinguished occupants, has achieved and maintained a reputation second to that of no other chair of physiology, anywhere in the world. Sir John Burdon-Sanderson and his pupil and successor, Prof. Francis Gotch, made contributions of fundamental importance to knowledge of the nature of nervous impulses, as excited and propagated in the continuity of nerve fibres. Under Sir Charles Sherrington the reputation of the Waynflete chair, and of the Oxford School of Physiology attached to it, attained additional eminence, through the discoveries which he and a series of distinguished associates made concerning the intricate phenomena of the central nervous system, involving the transmission of nervous excitations across systems of synaptic junctions of varying complexity; discoveries which have provided a large component of the foundation for modern neurological theory and practice. It is in this field of research, on the physiological processes of the brain and the spinal cord, that Prof. Liddell, as an intimate pupil of and collaborator with his great predecessor, has maintained that distinguished tradition.

Sir Lindor Brown, C.B.E., F.R.S.

UNDER Sir George Lindor Brown, Jodrell professor of physiology in University College, London, whose appointment to succeed Prof. Liddell in the Waynflete chair has recently been announced, it may be confidently expected that the tradition will be further maintained. After a distinguished student career in physiology at Manchester, Brown held a lectureship at Leeds, where the late B. A. McSwiney was then the professor. Work there, with McSwiney and others, gave early evidence of Brown's interest in the special physiology of the autonomic nervous system, and in the then recent evidence for a chemical mechanism of excitatory transmission at its ganglionic and peripheral junctions. With a grant from the Medical Research Council, he also worked for a period in Sherrington's Oxford department with J. C. Eccles. He then, in 1934, accepted an invitation to join Sir Henry Dale's team at the National Institute for Medical Research, and played a prominent part in extending the evidence for a cholinergic mechanism, to the transmission from motor nerve endings to the end-plates of voluntary muscle. Brown continued investigations in this general field with a series of distinguished colleagues and visiting experts after

Sir Henry's retirement in 1942, having meanwhile become engaged in important war-time researches and responsibilities. In 1949 he became professor of physiology in University College, London, where another famous chair of physiology will be vacated by his removal to Oxford; and since 1955 he has been the biological secretary of the Royal Society. The chief focus of research-interest in the Oxford School of Physiology may, perhaps, move for a time from the central towards the peripheral nervous system; but there need be no fear of a lowering of its standard.

Astronomy at Oxford : Prof. H. H. Plaskett, F.R.S.

ON September 30, Prof. H. H. Plaskett retires under the age limit, after twenty-eight years as Savilian professor of astronomy and director of the University Observatory at Oxford. His tenure of office has been notable for the building up of a school of solar physics, now well known for the thoroughness of its methods, the clarity of exposition in its lectures, and its avoidance of popular publicity. With only modest resources, two new solar telescopes and large spectrographs have been built and operated successfully. Prof. Plaskett's own work has been both observational and theoretical. He has studied models of the solar atmosphere, the formation of Fraunhofer lines, the structure of the solar granulation and problems of the chromosphere. Under his inspiration and guidance his colleagues and pupils have also made important contributions to solar physics. Among them they have discovered the strengthening of weak Fraunhofer lines from centre to limb, they have invented elegant interferometric methods for measurement of Fraunhofer and chromospheric lines, developed improvements in the mathematics of stellar atmosphere theory, and made long series of precision measurements to try to find whether the Einstein red-shift can be detected in the solar spectrum. Finding that the red-shift is obscured by spectrum line displacements arising from other causes, they have been led on one hand to study velocity fields in the solar photosphere, and on the other to make laboratory measurements of pressure shifts in atomic spectra of astronomical importance. Astronomy could well do with more of the devotion to careful measurement and the restraint on speculation which have characterized Oxford work under Prof. Plaskett.

Prof. D. E. Blackwell

DR. D. E. BLACKWELL, who is to succeed Prof. Plaskett, has been assistant director of the Solar Physics Observatory, Cambridge, since 1948. He entered Sidney Sussex College in 1943 as a major scholar, from the Merchant Taylors' School, took first-class honours in both parts of the Natural Sciences Tripos, was an Isaac Newton Student in 1946 and Stokes Student at Pembroke College in 1947. His astronomical work has dealt chiefly with