

## Shri P. R. Krishna Rao

SHRI P. R. KRISHNA RAO succeeds Shri S. Basu as the director general of observatories, Government of India. He has had long experience of work in the department, having entered the service thirty-three years ago. He has had experience of international meteorological conferences since 1946, when he attended the first International Meteorological Organization Conference of Directors held in London after the Second World War. He recently led the Indian delegation to the joint session of the Meteorological Division of the International Civil Aviation Organization and the Commission for Aeronautical Meteorology of the World Meteorological Organization held in Montreal, and later paid short visits to the Canadian and United States Meteorological Services at Toronto and Washington.

## Botany at Belfast :

Prof. D. J. Carr

DR. D. J. CARR has been appointed professor of botany in the Queen's University of Belfast in succession to Prof. J. Heslop Harrison, who has been appointed professor of botany in the University of Birmingham (*Nature*, 173, 150; 1954). Prof. Carr was educated at the University of Manchester after war service with the Royal Air Force. In 1949 he became an assistant lecturer at Manchester, and after a year at the Max Planck Institute at Tübingen, working in association with Dr. G. Melchers, he was appointed a senior lecturer in the University of Melbourne. His promotion to a readership at Melbourne followed in 1959. While at Manchester and Tübingen, Carr was engaged in work on developmental physiology, especially in relation to the photoperiodic responses of flowering plants. Among his contributions in the field of photoperiodism was a demonstration, using grafting techniques, that leaves cannot be photoperiodically induced unless they are in organic connexion with a shoot apex, a result interpreted as favouring Gregory's hypothesis of photoperiodic induction, according to which there can be no accumulation of a 'flowering hormone' in leaf tissues. In Australia, Carr's interests have ranged widely, penetrating into the fields of ecology and taxonomy. He has added to the Australian bryophyte flora a remarkable member of the Marchantiales, *Monocarpus sphaerocarpus* D. J. Carr, a plant of saline flats in north-western Victoria. In association with his wife, Dr. S. G. M. Carr, he has recently begun a major study of the developmental morphology of the inflorescence and flowers of the important genus *Eucalyptus*.

## Commonwealth Assistance in Training Teachers

IN a written answer in the House of Commons on February 24, the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, Mr. C. J. M. Alport, said that good progress was being made in carrying out the proposals for assistance in training teachers put forward by the United Kingdom at the Commonwealth Education Conference. By the beginning of the next academic year it was expected that more than four hundred additional Commonwealth students would be coming to the United Kingdom to take courses in teacher training institutions with bursaries provided by the United Kingdom Government covering their tuition fees and full maintenance. This was more than half the existing total of Commonwealth teachers already receiving training in Britain. Places would be available for these students in a

wide variety of training courses at institutions throughout the United Kingdom, and arrangements for their reception and welfare would be made by the British Council.

## Mathematics and Science Teachers in Great Britain

IN a written reply to a question in the House of Commons on February 25 regarding mathematics and science teachers, Sir David Eccles said that in 1959 there were 5,100 mathematics and 7,700 science graduates teaching senior pupils in maintained schools, as well as 3,250 non-graduate specialists in these subjects in schools with courses leading to the General Certificate of Education at Ordinary level. Inquiry in 1958 revealed 244 vacancies in these schools for mathematics teachers and 261 for science teachers. Assuming an annual net increase of 500 mathematics and science graduates, the shortage of these teachers on 1959 staffing standards would be 500 in 1961, 750 in 1962, 900 in 1963 and 350 in 1964. In 1965, 250 would be available to improve on 1959 standards. The actual shortage would depend on the results of present measures to increase the number of graduates and the output of specialists from training colleges.

## Laboratory Accommodation in British Schools

IN reply to a question in the House of Commons on February 11, the Minister of Education, Sir David Eccles, said that about £5 million would be spent in the 1960-61 and 1961-62 major building programmes to improve laboratory accommodation in existing schools; in addition, new schools had the full range of science facilities. He said he regarded this provision as one of the most important elements in the building programme, and in the maintained schools we were building, and would continue to build, every year at a higher rate than ever was spent on the public schools.

## The Library Service in Great Britain

REPLYING in the House of Commons on February 11 to a question regarding the introduction of legislation to implement the recommendations of the Roberts Committee on the Public Library Service, the Minister of Education said that the Government accepted the need for legislation in this field, and he hoped shortly to begin discussions with associations of local authorities on his proposals. He thought it wise to obtain the views of local authorities before the subject was discussed in the House, and agreed that it was necessary to take into account the view that no good local authority that is running a virile library service should be deprived by its size of the right of continuing to do so. Sir David Eccles undertook to bring into his discussions the Smaller Library Group of the Library Association. He indicated that his proposals were more in the sense of retaining the power, authority and responsibility of smaller local authorities, and not transferring all these responsibilities to county councils, and that the library service essentially should be decided by local authorities and not subject to national standards other than the proposals of the report. He also agreed that account must be taken of the possibility of changes in the structure of local government resulting from the recommendations of the Commissions now operating before making any alteration in the library service and that the problem was highly controversial.