theories of Schuster and others of the possibility of a 'fundamental' connexion between the angular momentum of a large rotating body such as the Earth, and its magnetic field. Further astronomical and geophysical evidence made the theory untenable. As a by-product, a special magnetometer was designed for this work and has been widely used in the rapidly growing subject of palaeomagnetism. Out of this work, which is being energetically pursued in many countries, is emerging the beginnings of a history of both the wandering of the continents and of the Earth's magnetic field. During recent years Blackett has directed a small group working on palaeomagnetic problems, doing much of the experimental research himself.

Blackett has made many valuable contributions in the wider field of British science. Always an enthusiastic supporter of and advocate for the applied sciences he became an active member of the National Research and Development Corporation in 1949, and is now deputy chairman of the Advisory Council in the Ministry of Technology. From 1956 until 1960 he was a member of the council of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research during a period when a phenomenal growth occurred in grants to university departments for scientific and technological research. In January 1965 he was appointed by the Secretary of State for Education and Science to the Council for Scientific Policy. Blackett has played an active part in many aspects of the impact of science on public affairs. His contributions to the study of problems of disarmament are well known, as also is his interest in scientific and technological aid to emergent countries—the subject of his Presidential Address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science in 1957.

Biochemistry and Organic Chemistry at Charing Cross Hospital Medical School : Prof. A. N. Davison

DR. A. N. DAVISON has been appointed to succeed the late Prof. J. Patterson (see p. 1042 of this issue of *Nature*) in the chair of biochemistry and organic chemistry at Charing Cross Hospital Medical School. Dr. Davison was born in 1925 and was educated at Westcliff High School, University College, Nottingham, and Birkbeck College, London. He holds the following degrees of London University: B.Pharm. (1946), B.Sc. (1950), Ph.D. (1954) and D.Sc. (1963). He served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1946 until 1948, and was afterwards appointed a group manager with Messrs. Potter and Clark, Ltd. In 1950 he joined the staff of the Medical Research Council Unit for Research in Toxicology to work on cholinesterase inhibitors. A year (1954–55) at the Sorbonne was followed by his appointment as biochemist to Roche Products, Ltd., and then (1957) by his becoming a member of the Medical Research Council external staff in pathology at Guy's Hospital Medical School. In 1960, Dr. Davison was appointed lecturer and then reader in the Biochemistry and Chemistry Department at Guy's Hospital Medical School. He is particularly well known for his work on the biochemistry of brain lipids and on aspects of brain metabolism generally. His demonstration (with the late Prof. G. Payling Wright and Dr. J. Dobbing) in 1958 of the persistence of radioactive cholesterol, once deposited in the brains of young animals, contradicted generally held biochemical opinion, which was dominated by Schoenheimer's conception of a dynamic equilibrium of constituents of the living body.

Science in Belgium

THE National Council for Scientific Policy, Belgium, has published a study of the scientific potential of Belgium in 1961. It covers the whole range of scientific activity in Belgium, including manpower, organization, institutions, equipment, financial resources and distribution (Conseil National de la Politique Scientifique. *Inventaire du Potentiel Scientifique 1964 de la Belgique—Année 1961.* Pp. 303. Bruxelles: Conseil National de la Politique Scientifique, 1964). Of a total of 22,504 full-time scientific workers, 6,703 had university degrees and 2,451 diplomas or some higher technical qualification, the remaining 13,350 being technicians or other workers. These were distributed among 1,644 scientific units with an expenditure of 4,312 million francs, excluding that in the educational field, inter-university centres and learned societies; 810 units employing 3,623 of those with a university degree were in the educational sector; 204 (1,100) were in the public sector; 431 (1,437) in private enterprise; 57 (328) in research associations; 44 (143) in inter-university centres; and 84 (11) in learned societies. The expenditure in the public sector was 1,465 million francs; in private enterprise, 2,404 million francs; and in research associations, 400 million francs. Of the scientific units and persons with a university qualification, 1,284 and 5,433, respectively, were engaged in the exact sciences; biology (174 and 764), medicine (182 and 1,064), and technology (620 and 2,136) taking the most, with physics (99 and 604) and chemistry (85 and 496) coming next; 180 units and 821 of the qualified personnel were in the social sciences, but expenditure was only 264 million francs, compared with 3,902 million francs on the exact sciences. In the field of education, in 81·5 per cent of the scientific units employing 85·5 per cent of the staff, research was an important activity; in the public sector the corresponding figures were 71·6 per cent and 73·9 per cent; in private enterprise, 55·7 per cent and 86·6 per cent; and in research associations, 61·4 per cent and 71 per cent. 80 per cent of the scientific units and 88 per cent of qualified staff in the educational sector are in the four universities, and 56 per cent of this staff is in the faculties of science and medicine. Only 10 per cent of the private firms employed more than 1,000 people, but these firms employed 49 per cent of the university-qualified staff engaged in this sector. Almost half the scientific units and a little more than half the staff with a university degree are employed in the provinces of Brabant, Liège and East Flanders, with some 15 per cent of the scientific units, and corresponding proportions of qualified staff, but in the latter province some 85 per cent are employed in the educational sector. In the exact sciences, 25·9 per cent of the scientific units and 33·7 per cent of the qualified staff were engaged exclusively or mainly in fundamental research, and 62·1 per cent and 54·1 per cent, respectively, exclusively or mainly in applied research.

Training of Public Health Officials

UNDER the lengthy title *Special Courses for National Staff with Higher Administrative Responsibilities in the Health Services*, a report has been published by the World Health Organization (Technical Report Series, No. 311. Report of a WHO Study Group. Pp. 31. Geneva: World Health Organization; London: H.M.S.O., 1965. 2 Sw. francs; 3*s.* 6*d.*; 0.60 dollars). The document attempts to emphasize the need for well-informed public health officials and to outline the general principles underlying the training they require. The report points out that many public health administrators, whether medically qualified or not, are not conversant with the knowledge and techniques required for the efficient administration of public health services. In order to meet the pressing demand for competent health administrators, particularly in the developing countries, the World Health Organization Study Group has advocated the establishment of intensified two-month courses for health administrators with or without medical qualifications. Such courses, the report concludes, should be sponsored at Government level or by official health organizations. The content of such courses should cover three principal aspects of public health: (1) historical development and philosophical concepts;