

## News and Views

Prof. F. W. Thomas, C.I.E.

PROF. F. W. THOMAS of Oxford has been elected president of the ninth All-India Oriental Conference, which will be held at Trivandrum in December next. He has also been elected a corresponding fellow of the Philosophical and Historical Section of the Prussian Academy of Sciences. Prof. Thomas, who has been Boden professor of Sanskrit in the University of Oxford since 1927, and is a fellow of Balliol College, was librarian of the India Office from 1903 until 1927, and was awarded the C.I.E. in the honours list of 1928 on his retirement from that office. He is chairman of the Section of Oriental Studies of the British Academy, and represents that body as a governor of the School of Oriental Studies of the University of London. He is also reader in Tibetan and lecturer in comparative philology in the University of London. Prof. Thomas has long been known as one of the foremost scholars in the classical languages of the East, in which he has acted as examiner not only in all the universities in Great Britain which offer a course in those languages, but also in the principal universities of India. His outstanding knowledge of Buddhist art and literature received the signal recognition of the award of a medal in 1934 at the Tokyo celebration of the two thousandth anniversary of the birth of Buddha. He is the author of a large number of publications on the philology and literature of Sanskrit, Pali and other oriental languages, as well as on the art and literature of Buddhism.

Prof. Walter G. Cady

THE Council of the Physical Society has awarded the fourteenth Duddell Medal to Walter G. Cady, professor of physics at the Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, U.S.A., for his work on piezo-electric resonators and oscillators as standards of frequency. Prof. Cady's pioneer work on the subject was published in 1922 (*Proc. Inst. Radio Eng.*, 10, 83) and the value of the device may be judged from the fact that it stimulated research work on the subject in all parts of the world, more than a thousand papers having been published on the properties of piezo-electric crystals since the appearance of Cady's first paper. Of course, these are not all due to Cady's work, for Langevin had previously used piezo-electric crystals as vibrators for underwater signalling, but Cady's particular contribution—the use of the quartz resonator as a standard of time or frequency—has quite obviously inspired most of the work. The use of these resonators as standard vibrators has made it possible to measure frequency and intervals of time with an accuracy not previously attained. It is scarcely necessary to emphasize the importance to physics of increased accuracy in such fundamental measurements. Among the applications which have already been made the following may be

mentioned: (1) The quartz-clock now used as standard in some observatories. It is in some respects superior to the pendulum clocks, and in any event is a most valuable supplement to them. (2) The measurement and control of the frequency of alternating currents in connexion with measurements of dielectric constant, 'absolute' electrical measurements, etc. (3) The measurement of the velocity of ultrasonic sound waves. Duddell, who was responsible for so much elegant instrumental work, would have been the first to recognize the beauty of Prof. Cady's device, and it will be a source of great satisfaction to all scientific workers to know that the value of Prof. Cady's work has been recognized in such an appropriate manner.

Centenary of the University of Durham

THE University of Durham, though now well over a hundred years old, has just celebrated its centenary. It was originally intended to hold the celebrations five years ago, since the Act of Parliament which provided for the foundation was passed in 1832. Owing to the economic depression, however, it was felt inappropriate to enter into rejoicings under the cloud of industrial stagnation which, in 1932, was locally responsible for widespread distress. The present year has a historical claim to recognition, apart from the atmosphere of returning prosperity, for it was in 1837 that the University was granted its charter by William IV. Moreover, as a result of the recent Royal Commission, the University is about to enter upon a new phase of its history. The main celebrations were held at Durham on July 1, and were attended by delegates from all the other Universities of the British Isles and from several in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India and the United States. Learned societies were represented by, among others, Sir William Bragg, Lord Dawson of Penn, Dr. H. Spencer Jones, Prof. F. G. Donnan and Prof. O. T. Jones. After a morning visit to the Colleges, including the Castle, a centenary service was held in the Cathedral, where the preacher was the Bishop of Durham. The keynote of Dr. Henson's discourse was that universities are the "watchdogs of human liberty". "The new universities," he said, "were born and cradled in an atmosphere of freedom. They surely must stand in the forefront of the champions of academic liberty against the aggressions of the totalitarian State or the subtler assaults of racial fanaticism". After the service, the delegates were entertained to luncheon, some in the Great Hall of the Castle (by the University), and others at the Town Hall (by Lord Londonderry, Chancellor of the University and Mayor of Durham).

IN the afternoon, a Centenary Convocation was staged in the picturesque surroundings of the Castle quadrangle. Each delegate was introduced to the