

NEWS AND VIEWS

The Royal Visit to America

THEIR MAJESTIES were greeted on their return to England on June 22 and again on their drive to, and from, the Guildhall in the City of London on the following day with enthusiasm which needed no pageantry, no ceremonial, to quicken its sense of the significance of the events of the brief period which have elapsed since the King and Queen sailed for Canada on May 6. King George and his Consort were being hailed as conquerors—conquerors of a continent—no less certainly than were those of their predecessors, who in days gone by had passed through Temple Bar to celebrate a victory in the capital city. In this enthusiastic, but intimate, greeting of King and Queen there was a deep and strong undercurrent of loyal gratitude to them that in their journey from one end to the other of the vast Dominion of Canada, and no less in their visit to its great neighbour, the United States of America, their Majesties had so borne themselves that personal devotion to those wearing the Crown and a spirit of kindly hospitality to honoured guests had been transmuted to a deeper consciousness of the common devotion of all, President and citizen, Sovereign and subject alike, to the ideals of liberty and justice which transcend birth, creed and the barriers of national division in a supreme loyalty to the cause of humanity. In all the ceremonies and incidents of the Royal tour which, as His Majesty said at the Guildhall with a homely but happy touch of common interests, have been made "familiar . . . through the daily press, the news reels, and the Broadcasting Corporations", none was so deeply charged with emotion, none so moving to those gifted with historical imagination, as the simple scene in which King George laid a wreath upon the tomb of George Washington. This act of homage epitomizes as a symbol a memorable episode in the history of the British Commonwealth of Nations no less surely than His Majesty's impression of his experience, summed up in the memorable words "the strength of human feeling is still the most potent of all the forces affecting world affairs".

Pilgrim Trust Lecture

THE Pilgrim Trust Lectures, administered jointly by the Royal Society and the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, were inaugurated last December by a notable lecture delivered by Dr. Irving Langmuir in the theatre of the Royal Institution, London. The selection of the lecturer for the second of the series was in the hands of the Royal Society, which decided, most appropriately, to send its president, Sir William Bragg, as the ambassador of science in Great Britain to the United States. Sir William visited the United States during the spring, and on April 24, in the course of the annual meeting at Washington of the National Academy of Sciences, delivered the second Pilgrim Trust Lecture, which appears on p. 21 of this issue of NATURE. The

effect of science upon social conditions formed the theme of Sir William's address, which he illustrated by dipping into the history of the Royal Society. Starting as a body of 'virtuosi' who met for discussion and experiment about the middle of the seventeenth century, the Royal Society early became concerned in problems of interest to a wider circle and to the State. Inquiries submitted to correspondents, their reports, and papers read before the Society, illustrate the effects of science upon society and conversely, of the circumstances of the times upon scientific investigations. Sir William leads up to an eloquent plea for the earnest consideration of current affairs in the spirit of science, which links up with the efforts of the Division for Social and International Relations of Science of the British Association; the Manchester meeting of the latter referred to on p. 1 of this issue deals specifically with some social aspects of scientific research, while Sir William points the moral on the wider issue.

Mr. M. G. Evans

THE chair of physical chemistry in the University of Leeds which fell vacant by the death of Prof. H. M. Dawson in February last, has been filled as from October 1 by the appointment of Mr. M. G. Evans, lecturer in chemistry in the University of Manchester. Born on December 2, 1904, he was educated at Leigh Grammar School and passed through the University of Manchester, where he was a pupil of Prof. A. Lapworth. While Prof. Hugh S. Taylor of Princeton was staying as a visitor for one term at the University of Manchester in 1931, Mr. Evans joined him in research on adsorption, and he renewed this connexion later by working for one year in the Frick Chemical Laboratory in Princeton, where he was closely associated with Prof. Henry Eyring. Since his return to Manchester in 1934, Mr. Evans has steadily developed his theoretical investigations on the mechanism of chemical reactions. During this time he has richly contributed to the fund of ideas which, it is the hope of the younger school of physical chemistry, promises to form a pattern for the understanding of at least the simpler types of reactions. Though Mr. Evans's principal contributions to science are in the theoretical field, he also took active interest in the experimental work carried on in Manchester. His appointment to one of the three chairs in the Department of Chemistry in Leeds is a significant recognition of the part which the new theories originating from quantum mechanics have to play in the life of chemistry to-day.

Dr. J. B. Speakman

THE appointment of Dr. J. B. Speakman to the chair of textile industries of the University of Leeds will afford pleasure to the many admirers of his work on the structure and properties of the wool fibre. Dr. Speakman is a graduate and D.Sc. of the University