

NEWS and VIEWS

Principalship of the University of Edinburgh:

Sir Thomas H. Holland, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., F.R.S.

SIR THOMAS HOLLAND is retiring from the posts of principal and vice-chancellor of the University of Edinburgh at the end of the present session. In 1929 he succeeded Sir Alfred Ewing at Edinburgh, and the energy which he had shown during the seven years of his rectorship of the Imperial College of Science and Technology in London, and earlier in his war work in India and as director of the Geological Survey there, promised an era of vigorous development in Edinburgh. That promise has been amply fulfilled. He has been instrumental in instituting new degrees (B.Sc. and D.Sc.) in technical chemistry and in mining, and he has negotiated the passing of ordinances by the Privy Council modifying for the better the regulations for degrees in music, forestry, pure science and law. Under his care the teaching power of the University has expanded: nine new chairs have been founded—two in the Faculty of Arts, namely, psychology and geography, five in the Faculty of Divinity, the Edward Clark chair of child life and health in the Faculty of Medicine, and the Reid chair in the Faculty of Music. Although rumours have occasionally been heard of an alleged predilection for scientific interests, it is remarkable that the Faculty of Science is the only one (except law) in which there has been no new foundation during his tenure. Doubtless this apparent omission will be made good in the near future.

The professorial staff of the University of Edinburgh, therefore, increased during the past fifteen years from sixty-one to seventy, and in spite of the fact that about six chairs are vacant owing to war difficulties, this relatively short period has seen a great turn-over in the professoriate, Sir Thomas Holland having installed the present occupants of no fewer than thirty-six chairs. In other ways he has contributed to the development of Edinburgh as an educational centre, notably by the affiliation to the University, in 1933 and 1934, of two important teaching institutions, the Heriot-Watt College and the Royal (Dick) Veterinary College. The teaching and research staff (which has been augmented also by twenty new lectureships) is the most vital part of an educational institution; but buildings are also important, and here, too, great advances have been made. New independent blocks for the Departments of Engineering and Geology and the Institute of Animal Genetics have been erected in the King's Buildings area, which has become a considerable colony of the Faculty of Science, and there a much-appreciated social experiment has been successfully launched in the erection of a Common Room, with refectory, gymnasium, squash and tennis courts, all run by a committee of the students themselves. The creation of a much-needed extension of the medical buildings, already planned, has been unfortunately held up because of the War. It may interest readers, accustomed to standard gibes at the 'close fist' of the Scot, to learn that during Sir Thomas Holland's principalship, private individuals contributed, before the War, more than £500,000 to further the University's aims, and that even during the war years £180,000 has been given by former graduates and friends of the University.

Sir John Fraser, Bart., K.C.V.O.

SIR THOMAS HOLLAND will be succeeded in the principalship of the University of Edinburgh by Sir John Fraser, Bart. In Edinburgh the election of the principal is in the hands of the Curators of Patronage, a body consisting of three nominees of the University Court and four nominees of the Town Council of Edinburgh, a reminder of the fact that the "College of Edinburgh" was founded, in 1583, by the Town Council. The Curators' choice of Sir John Fraser will give general satisfaction. He is a medical graduate of Edinburgh, and studied as well in the Universities of Paris and Freiburg; since 1925 he has been regius professor of clinical surgery in the University and will be the first member of the staff to serve as principal since the days of Sir William Turner, who was transferred from the chair of anatomy in 1903. Sir John Fraser has gained fame as a brilliant surgeon, but he has also shown talent as an administrator, and is recognized as a man of generous outlook and keen social sympathies. In the difficult days which lie before the universities, Edinburgh is assured of steady and enlightened guidance, and of a wise balance of effort which will make for progress in all the activities, educational and social, of a great University.

Chair of Geography at Manchester:

Prof. H. J. Fleure, F.R.S.

IN September Prof. H. J. Fleure will retire from the chair of geography in the University of Manchester. He has held it since 1930, when he vacated the chair of geography and anthropology in the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth. During his tenure of the Manchester chair, Prof. Fleure has built up one of the strongest university schools of geography in Great Britain, and has increased the debt of which all who realize the significance of his subject in higher education were already conscious. He has combined to a remarkable degree unceasing efforts to raise the standard of geographical teaching in every branch of education with the continuous prosecution of active research. As honorary secretary of the Geographical Association and editor of *Geography* for twenty-five years, he has inspired many generations of teachers and greatly increased the facilities for the development of their subject in the schools. At the same time, his wide range of erudition, ripe scholarship and fertility of ideas, as exemplified in the illuminating series called "The Corridors of Time", which he wrote in collaboration with Mr. H. J. E. Peake, have earned him a high place in the field of investigation, which was fittingly recognized a few years ago by his election to the fellowship of the Royal Society. No scholar in Great Britain has done more to justify the claims of human geography, closely linked with both the natural sciences and the humanities but pursuing its own distinct objectives and devising its own technique and methods, to be one of the most illuminating approaches to the study of civilization and its problems.

Mr. Walter Fitzgerald

MR. WALTER FITZGERALD, who succeeds Prof. Fleure in the chair at Manchester, is a graduate of the University of Liverpool. His first appointment was as a lecturer in geography in the Transvaal University College at Pretoria. He returned to