NEWS and VIEWS

Sir D'Arcy W. Thompson, C.B., F.R.S.: A Professorial Record

"YOU will never live to my age, without you keep yourselves in breath with exercise, and in heart with joyfulness"—and so successfully has Sir D'Arcy Thompson fulfilled the injunction of Sir Philip Sidney that ere Christmas Day he will have completed sixty years as professor of natural history. On December 22, 1884, at the age of twenty-four, he was elected, as its first incumbent, to the chair of natural history in the newly opened University College of Dundee. Here, as at Edinburgh Academy, he was fortunate in his environment of good companions: his unsuccessful competitors for the chair included J. T. Cunningham, W. E. Hoyle and Patrick Geddes; his new colleagues in due course numbered among them as young professors who later gained wide recognition, Sir Patrick Geddes, who had accepted the chair of botany, Sir Alfred Ewing, principal and vice-chancellor of the University of Edinburgh, Sir William McCormick, secretary to the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland, Sir James Walker, professor of chemistry in the University of Edinburgh, and Sir William Peterson, principal of McGill University, Montreal. In 1897, University College, Dundee, which had begun as an independent institution, became an integral part of the University of St. Andrews, and in 1917, on the retiral of Prof. W. C. McIntosh from the chair of natural history in St. Andrews, which he had occupied since 1882, it was a fitting and natural move that D'Arcy Thompson should be transferred to the senior chair. His predecessor retired in his seventy-ninth year; in his eighty-fourth Sir D'Arcy continues to teach with vigour and to take part in many activities outside the University.

In his early years in Dundee, Sir D'Arcy Thompson, like many another, was drawn to the marine invertebrates, particularly to the Cœlenterates and Bryozoa, and began the building up of a collection which eventually contained an unusual number of authenticated representatives of invertebrate species. But his interests were wide, and his appointment as a delegate to the Behring Sea Fisheries Conference in 1897 and his selection in the following year to be scientific member of the Fishery Board for Scotland gave public recognition to what has remained a main aspect of his scientific work. For forty years, that is until the Fishery Board was disbanded recently, he retained its scientific membership and guided the development of its scientific investigations; and his own published papers on the statistics of fisheries and the distributional occurrence of rare species of fishes show his personal predilection. This was but one of many interests—the classics and the natural history of the ancients, the perfection of adaptation in many creatures, the influence of physical law in moulding the parts of animals, growth and form; but perhaps the fundamental and rejuvenating interest throughout has been the outlook of the born naturalist, which finds its satisfaction by the shores of the North Sea or in the woods of the Spey valley.

Conway Evans Prize: Sir Thomas Lewis, C.B.E., F.R.S.

THE presidents of the Royal Society and of the Royal College of Physicians have awarded the Conway Evans Prize to Sir Thomas Lewis, in recognition of his great contribution to medical knowledge on the normal and abnormal mechanisms of the heart and circulation of the blood. This prize, in accordance with the will of the late Dr. Conway Evans, who was medical officer for the Strand District, is awarded from time to time for scientific work of outstanding distinction. It was first given to Sir Charles Sherrington in 1927 and since then to the late Dr. John S. Haldane in 1933, and to Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins in 1938. It will be seen that so far the prizes have been awarded infrequently with the intention that they should be given only in recognition of outstanding contributions to science, thus fulfilling the intention of the donor. Sir Thomas Lewis has worked essentially in a field which he has called 'clinical science', and he has clearly indicated how the modern developments of science in general can be applied to the many problems of medicine at the bedside.

An International Office for Education

DR. HARLOW SHAPLEY, speaking on behalf of the U.S. Office of War Information, recently broadcast an address in the United States with reference to an International Office for Education. He pointed out that both education and lack of education play a part in our present world-wide troubles. The high technical training in the armed forces, and also in the war factories that back the armies and navies, represents a type of education that is indispensable in our effort to bring back peace and social sanity to the world. But it is a lack of education—a deficiency in elementary social education, or a perversion of it, that has brought the madness of totalitarian war upon us. In too many parts of the world the fundamental education has not been planned so as to teach us how to live and let others live intelligently in the kind of world that modern technical civilization has given us. In the social evolution that is necessary for a good and progressive world society, we must have a basic education so widespread, and so democratic in spirit, that demagogues cannot easily lead us into inhuman and selfish and false creeds. We must have, if possible, in all grades of our educational systems, the desire and freedom to question statements, to challenge dogmas. We must question our teachers, and not be blindly led by them. We should encourage internationalism in our leaders. We must have, especially in our elementary schools, a universal recognition that there are international allegiances as well as national responsibilities, that we are a part of a world-wide human society.

It is to facilitate the reform or the improvement of educational systems in all countries that the setting up at the earliest time practicable of an International Office for Education is suggested. Such an office is not intended to be a temporary affair, concerned with rehabilitation problems. Such reconstruction work is necessary and immediately urgent. Steps toward carrying it through are well under way. But of necessity, rehabilitation is a re-establishment of the conditions that existed before the blight of war passed over the land. Rehabilitation is in a sense backward-looking, rather than forward-look and evolutionary. The advocated International