

## NEWS and VIEWS

## Sir John Orr, F.R.S., and the Rowett Research Institute

SIR JOHN BOYD ORR's wide circle of friends will greatly regret that he has tendered his resignation from the directorship of the Rowett Research Institute after holding that post since its foundation, in which he took a prominent part. All over the world it is recognized that to a very large extent it was his vigorous and stimulating direction that made "the Rowett" one of the outstanding research centres where problems relating nutrition to agriculture have been studied. The wide recognition to-day that planned agriculture is the only sound foundation of a national nutrition policy is one direct result of Sir John's teaching and influence. His ideas prompted the appeal for "the marriage of agriculture and nutrition" that the Right Hon. Stanley Bruce made to the League of Nations on an historic occasion. They can be regarded, therefore, as having been prominently in the mind of those who called together the United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture at Hot Springs, Virginia, in 1943. Whatever benefits to the world at large may ultimately be derived from what happened at that great conference will be related in the minds of many people with the views that have dominated everything that Sir John Orr has said or written during the past twenty years.

Sir John's own research has been mainly of protein and mineral metabolism; but he is perhaps best known to the general public for his published works on the nutritional needs of the people of Great Britain. A very deep impression was made just before the War by the appearance of his book "Food, Health and Income". The data presented in this work have been used by sociologists all over the world, but, perhaps, no more important use has been made of them than when they were adopted as a background against which a nutritional policy for Great Britain during the period of the War was planned. Among Sir John's many contributions to the advancement of nutritional science, there can be mentioned his establishment at the Rowett Research Institute of the Imperial Bureau of Nutrition and his foundation of *Nutrition Abstracts and Reviews*, of which he has been editor-in-chief since it first appeared. Sir John has been a member of many international and national committees dealing with matters concerning nutrition, more particularly in its relation to agriculture. He took an active part in the deliberations of the Technical Commission on Nutrition of the League of Nations and helped to draw up a number of the invaluable reports this Commission issued from Geneva. He served on the Advisory Committee on Nutrition of the Ministry of Health before the War and has since acted as chairman of the Scottish Scientific Advisory Committee. He was recently elected by a group of United States men of science to receive an award for the most outstanding work in the international field of nutrition. There will be everywhere an earnest hope that Sir John will continue to exert, perhaps in other spheres, the same powerful influence that he has exerted in the past. A great deal of enterprise and effort will be needed if the recommendations and resolutions of the Hot Springs Conference are to be implemented, even in the countries where the attitude of the politicians and the public is relatively enlightened

towards social and economic problems. We understand that no successor at the Rowett Research Institute to Sir John Orr has yet been elected, but the post, which also carries with it the directorship of the Imperial Bureau of Nutrition and the editorship of *Nutrition Abstracts and Reviews*, will be advertised in due course.

## Sir William Wright Smith

ON February 2, at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, Sir William Wright Smith, King's Botanist in Scotland, regius keeper of the Royal Garden, and professor of botany in the University, was presented with a portrait of himself, on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. Sir John Stirling-Maxwell presided, and the presentation was made by the Earl of Stair. At the same ceremony a second portrait of Sir William was presented to the Botanic Garden by Sir John Fraser. The portraits, which were painted by Mr. Stanley Cursiter, were the gift of a large number of Sir William's botanical and horticultural colleagues and other friends. Sir William has been connected with Edinburgh since the beginning of his career. He was educated at the University, and was lecturer in botany there during 1902-7. In 1908 and 1909, he explored the vegetation of north-west Sikkim, and of the Tibet-Nepalese and the Sikkim-Chumbi frontiers, returning to Edinburgh in 1911 as assistant keeper of the Garden; in 1922 he was appointed regius keeper and professor at the University. Sir William's early explorations have given him a life-long interest in the mountain flora of India, Tibet and Nepal, and it is for his work on the classification and introduction of plants from these regions, notably primulas and rhododendrons, that he is best known to botanists and horticulturists all over the world. Under his genial direction, the great traditions of the Edinburgh Garden, and of the University Botanical Department, have been worthily upheld, and his many friends have welcomed this opportunity of showing him their admiration and affection.

## Institution of Electrical Engineers:

## Faraday Medallist

THE Council of the Institution of Electrical Engineers has made the twenty-third award of the Faraday Medal to Dr. Clifford Copland Paterson, past-president, for the conspicuous services rendered by him in the advancement of electrical science, particularly in the field of electrical research. The Medal is awarded not more frequently than once a year, either for notable scientific or industrial achievement in electrical engineering or for conspicuous service rendered to the advancement of electrical science, without restriction as regards nationality, country of residence or membership of the Institution. On the staff of the National Physical Laboratory during 1903-19, Dr. Paterson took charge of the electro-technical and photometric departments and was largely responsible for building up this section of the Laboratory. During the War of 1914-18 he participated in the inception and development of the Paterson-Walsh electrical height finder, which provided an automatic record of the heights of aircraft. He has been director of the Research Laboratory of the General Electric Company at Wembley from its inception, guiding the whole of its activities, which range from the heavy engineering field to electronics. His contribution to investigations into new methods