

NEWS and VIEWS

Chair of Logic and Metaphysics at Edinburgh

Prof. N. Kemp Smith

FOR more than a century, largely on account of the eminence of its occupants, the chair of logic and metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh has been very generally, although quite unofficially, regarded as Scotland's premier philosophical chair. Since 1836 there have been four occupants, Sir William Hamilton (1836-1856), Campbell Fraser (1856-1891), Pringle-Pattison (1891-1919) and Norman Kemp Smith from 1919 to the end of the present academic session, when he retires. All four were celebrated for their mastery of the history of ideas, particularly in the eighteenth century and around it: Sir William Hamilton by work which, nominally at least, took its origin from Thomas Reid, Fraser by his unwearying labours on Berkeley, Pringle-Pattison by his dominant neo-Kantianism, and Kemp Smith by his massive study of Kant and of Hume. It is not very reckless to suggest that the last of the four professors surpassed all the others in this common tradition. Our standards in this field are very much higher in the present century than in the last, and only partially because the last had done so much. The intensive study of Kant which is so marked a feature of contemporary British academic philosophy owes more to Kemp Smith's "Commentary" than to the pen of any other English-writing author. His work on Hume, beginning with two masterly articles in *Mind* (1905), and continued in his edition of Hume's "Dialogues" (1935) has (perhaps) concluded with his "Philosophy of David Hume", a book which outstripped all other contemporary work on Hume, British or foreign, by a very comfortable margin. Kemp Smith brought to his classroom the high qualities that he showed in his writings; and all his varied contacts with students, colleagues and the public gained, in addition, from his broad humanity, his deep interest in the social problems of the present day and his catholic appetite for modern history and biography. He knew the United States well, for he was professor in Princeton between 1906 and his return to Europe to serve in the Ministry of Information during the War of 1914-18, and, in 1923, he was a visiting professor in Berkeley, California. A friend to both sides of the Atlantic, he was, is, and, one hopes, will long continue to be, one of the strongest links in the chain of Anglo-American unity and understanding in academic affairs.

Prof. A. D. Ritchie

IN inviting Prof. A. D. Ritchie, at present professor of philosophy in the University of Manchester, to succeed Prof. Kemp Smith, the electors have shown a courageous readiness to avoid too rigid an adherence even to a tradition so firmly established, for Prof. Ritchie, who has accepted the invitation, is as much a man of science as a philosopher. They may, indeed, be renewing the tradition. Sir William Hamilton, among his many pre-professorial activities, had studied medicine and had qualified for the Bar. Superficially, however, there is something like a break in the tradition. Prof. Ritchie's principal philosophical books are about scientific method and the natural history of mind. His other book deals with the comparative physiology of muscular tissue. His fellowship at Trinity College, Cambridge, was earned for his work in chemistry, and he was a

lecturer on chemical physiology in Manchester before succeeding J. L. Stocks in the chair of philosophy there. Some may think that first-hand acquaintance with the inferences of experimental science, accompanied by writing upon its general theory, is the best possible preparation for the teaching of logic. As for philosophy in a wider sense, including metaphysics, Prof. Ritchie's varied articles upon many themes, religion and sociology among them, give ample evidence of his interest and capacity. He began, too, in a very favourable environment, his father, D. G. Ritchie, professor of logic in the University of St. Andrews, though he died rather young, being still gratefully remembered as the most brilliant writer among Scottish philosophers at about the turn of the century.

Alexei Abrikosov

ALEXEI ABRIKOSOV has been awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labour by the Government of the U.S.S.R. Prof. Abrikosov has just celebrated his seventieth birthday. He is a leading specialist in pathological anatomy. He has been successful in combining a theoretical subject with the practical work of a clinic, and was the founder of a new anatomico-clinical branch of pathological anatomy. At the very beginning of his career, Prof. Abrikosov studied the relationships between disease-bearing micro-organisms and the protective powers which the human organism possesses. Allergy, one of the complex problems which arise from this, naturally attracted his attention. He has carried out extensive research on the morphology of the vegetative nervous system and its pathological condition. Applying methods of pathological anatomy, he has made a detailed study of the morphological changes which take place in the tissue as a result of metabolic disorders, avitaminosis and hypo-avitaminosis. For many years Prof. Abrikosov was at the Botkin Hospital, one of the largest in Moscow, and for twenty-five years has held the chair of pathological anatomy at the First Moscow Medical Institute. He was awarded a Stalin Prize for the two volumes already published of a work on pathological anatomy. Prof. Abrikosov still continues active research and teaching.

Research Development and Tax Relief

IN his Budget speech last year, the Chancellor of the Exchequer undertook to provide reliefs of income tax for industry and agriculture during the reconstruction period after the War. A Bill to give effect to these proposals has now been introduced in the House of Commons. So far as scientific research is concerned the allowance given in the Finance Act 1944 (see *Nature*, May 6, 1944, p. 542) is now to be extended to payments made after April 6, 1944. An allowance is also to be made for expenditure for buildings, plant and machinery for research incurred after January 1, 1937. Other proposals are concerned more directly with industry. Allowances are to be made for second-hand as well as new plant. A welcome sense of the well-being of personnel is shown by the inclusion, among industrial buildings qualifying for allowances, of those concerned with welfare, such as sports pavilions. An annual allowance for a period of years is proposed in respect of capital expended on purchasing patent rights after "the appointed day", and a corresponding charge is to be made against vendors of a patent. Agricultural buildings and works will qualify for allowances,