

## NEWS and VIEWS

## Forest Products Research Laboratory

Mr. W. A. Robertson

MR. W. A. ROBERTSON retired on March 31 from the position of director of forest products research (Department of Scientific and Industrial Research). He took over charge of the Laboratory at Princes Risborough in 1933, the earlier part of his career having been spent in the Indian Forest Service, mainly in Burma. Mr. Robertson has thus been responsible for the direction of timber research in Great Britain during a period of important development which would undoubtedly have been greater but for the restrictions caused by the War. In 1941, when the Secretary of State for the Colonies decided to appoint a forest adviser, Mr. Robertson was selected for this responsible post on a part-time basis. He will now be enabled to devote his entire attention to the problems confronting the Colonial Office in its reorganization of the Colonial Forest Service. In view of his wide experience, it may be considered fortunate that Mr. Robertson's services will continue to be available in this capacity.

Dr. F. Y. Henderson

DR. F. Y. HENDERSON, who has taken up the post of director of forest products research on Mr. Robertson's retirement, joined the staff of the Imperial College of Science and Technology in 1921 as plant physiologist. He devoted much of his time to research, and took an active part in teaching, and organizing the practical teaching in plant physiology. He was also for many years director of biological studies at the John Cass Institute, and superintendent of examinations for the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. In 1931 Dr. Henderson took over the work of Prof. Percy Groom as timber technologist, and did much teaching in this field as well as research on the biological changes in felled timber.

## Research in Animal Health at Aberystwyth

THE research professorship in animal health endowed by the generosity of Lord Milford at University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, has been filled by the appointment of Mr. Alastair N. Worden. Mr. Worden, who is twenty-eight, was educated at Queen Elizabeth's School, Barnet, the Royal Veterinary College, London, and St. John's College, Cambridge. After experience of veterinary practice for more than two years with Mr. J. Pickup, of Barnet, Mr. Worden was awarded in 1938 a Ministry of Agriculture studentship in animal health, spending the first year of his tenure of this studentship in the Division of Nutrition of the Lister Institute, the second in the Bacteriological and Biochemical Departments of the Ministry of Agriculture's Veterinary Laboratory at Weybridge and the third in the Department of Agriculture at the University of Cambridge. He also spent some time at the Rowett Research Institute, Aberdeen. In 1941 he was appointed to the Biochemical Department of the Institute of Animal Pathology, University of Cambridge. His research has dealt mainly with human and animal nutrition and with the relation of nutrition to infectious diseases. He is a member of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee on which he represents the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare and he is secretary of the Institute of Animal Behaviour.

Prof. Worden starts with the great assets of youth, energy and the breadth of outlook which his training has given him. He goes to a centre already made famous by the work done by Sir George Stapledon and Dr. T. J. Jenkin at the Welsh Plant Breeding Station at University College, Aberystwyth. Everyone will wish him success in a field which has become, as one result of the War, of great moment, not only to Britain, but also to the world in general.

## Educating the Citizen

THE central problem of the planned society is, as Prof. H. J. Laski has pointed out, to make the issues at stake intelligible and to bring out in individuals the interest that compels action; in "Planning Our Country", J. F. Adburgham and Elizabeth Halton well maintain the standard set by earlier pamphlets in this "Unless We Plan Now" Series (English Univ. Press, Ltd. 4d. net). The main aspects of the problems involved in town and country planning are simply but adequately explained and in a way which should conduce to discussion. There is a short but adequate bibliography, and the pamphlet should fulfil its avowed purpose of bringing home to the ordinary citizen the exact meaning of planning and of how much depends on his contribution and interest if effect is to be given to such proposals as are to be found in the Barlow, Uthwatt and Scott reports.

Much the same can be said of the pamphlet "The Struggle for Democracy", by W. E. Brown, in the "Changing Britain" Series (Univ. of London Press. 1s. net). This is even more elementary, and the appeal is largely pictorial. The graphic presentation shows vividly how the development of the British system of government reflects the efforts and strivings of the individuals in the community. The pamphlet indicates not merely how immense has been the broadening of the basis of government and of the sphere of government action in the last century, but also, and more important still, that government is not to be thought of as something apart from the ordinary citizen: it is a matter of 'we', not of 'they', and the interest or inertia of the ordinary citizen, what he does, as well as how he votes, that ultimately shapes our institutions.

## Rose-bay Willow-herb and Honey Bees

In the *Bee World* of January, A. Norman Handley discusses the status of the rose-bay willow-herb (*Epilobium angustifolium*). He mentions that the Press has joined forces with the farmers in condemning this plant as a noxious weed. The author believes that it is very questionable whether the plant could establish itself in properly cultivated ground. The roots appear to thrive best on waste lands where the soil is firm and undisturbed. The beekeeper, however, appreciates this herb because it yields valuable nectar and pollen especially during periods of scarcity from about early July until mid-August. In 1944, which was a notoriously bad year for bees, many hives managed to build up and even store surplus nectar from the rose-bay willow-herb. This plant also provides humble bees with food at a time when the next year's queens are being reared. The value of these insects as a general aid in pollination and a particular help in the case of red clover is, of course, well known. Now that the author has brought up this subject it would appear desirable that the true status of this kind of willow-herb should be determined. Much more information is needed before it