

106 NEWS and VIEWS

Prof. A. W. Stewart

THE many friends of Prof. A. W. Stewart learned, with regret, of his retirement in 1944 from the chair of chemistry at Queen's University, Belfast, which he had held for twenty-five years. Educated at the University of Glasgow, the University of Marburg and University College, London, he in turn held the lectureship in organic chemistry at Belfast and the lectureship in physical chemistry and radioactivity at Glasgow, and in 1919 succeeded the late Prof. Letts as professor of chemistry at Belfast. Stewart did much to create the school from which many of his students at Belfast went to take up important

positions at home and abroad. Possessed of a fertile imagination, Stewart foresaw the dangers of early specialization, and was unceasing in his labours to provide a sound and fundamental training in all aspects of modern chemistry. Thus equipped, his students found themselves ready to undertake posts of responsibility in many spheres of academic and industrial chemistry. Stewart was catholic in his interests and was ever ready to give the benefit of his counsel and experience to the young research workers. Stimulated by his close association with Ramsay and Collie, he developed a keen interest in the application of physical chemistry to the elucidation of the structure and properties of organic compounds, and his work upon Tesla-luminescence spectra was especially noteworthy. By employing a fresh method of excitation, Stewart and his co-workers obtained a series of spectra, each of which is characteristic of the compound which emits it. Thus a new constitutional property was added to those previously known and a new field in spectroscopy was developed. His many books, notably his series on "Recent Advances"—which have now reached many editions—are testimony to his love of investigation and to his interest in the welfare of the undergraduate. It is of interest to note that Stewart suggested that elements which have identical atomic weights but differ in chemical properties should be named 'isobars'. He found pleasure in more recent years in detective fiction and, using the *nom de plume* of J. J. Connington, he has given pleasure to many all over the world. In spite of physical disabilities, Alfred W. Stewart never spared himself in the many interests of teaching, research and writing, and has won the admiration and sympathy of all.

Since February 23 of this year the "Letters to the Editors" of *Nature* have been printed in very small type. As was explained when the change was made, no other course was possible by which to accommodate the great number of "Letters" awaiting publication. However, it was never intended as more than a temporary measure, and it seems to have achieved its purpose in that arrears have been overtaken and it has become possible to publish communications more promptly. The number of "Letters" submitted by correspondents is still large, but the recent increased allowance of paper has made it possible to allocate additional space to this part of the journal without encroaching on the more general parts. It has therefore been decided to revert to the larger type for printing communications submitted as "Letters to the Editors". The additional space now available, however, will do no more than allow for the increase in size of type. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance that correspondents should restrict their communications to the minimum length consistent with clearness and accuracy; in the interests of prompt publication it is also desirable that manuscript or typescript submitted should be carefully read in order to avoid the need for extensive corrections on printed proofs.

Following the official suggestion that the additional allowance of paper might be used to increase both the size of the journal and also its circulation, more copies of *Nature* are being printed to meet the considerably increased demand from many parts of the world. Readers may like to know that, for the time being, it will be possible for the publishers to accept subscription orders once more.

Chemistry at University College, Hull: Prof. Brynmor Jones 716

DR. BRYNMOR JONES has been appointed to the chair of chemistry in University College, Hull. Dr. Jones took his B.Sc. degree with first-class honours in chemistry and his Ph.D. degree at Bangor. After a period of three years with the late Prof. T. M. Lowry at Cambridge, Dr. Jones went to Sheffield as assistant lecturer in chemistry in 1931 and was promoted lecturer and senior lecturer in 1934 and 1939 respectively. His researches have been mainly concerned with the kinetics of the halogenation of aromatic compounds; elegant and extensive developments from the earlier experiments of the late Prof. K. J. P. Orton and his school at Bangor

have been made, and the accurate velocity measurements have played an important part in the development of organic chemical theory. Dr. Jones has also published original work on a variety of topics including the rotary dispersion of organic compounds, liquid crystals, and aromatic substitution; during the War he carried out researches on behalf of the Ministry of Supply (Chemical Defence Research Department). As local representative at Sheffield and as a member of Council of the Chemical Society, Dr. Jones has given devoted services in the interests of chemistry in the Sheffield area. In addition, he has played an active part in numerous University activities, and recently he has compiled a valuable and interesting account of the contributions made by the University of Sheffield towards the war effort.

Botany at the University of Durham: 576

Prof. Meirion Thomas

MR. MEIRION THOMAS, who has just succeeded to the chair of botany, King's College, University of Durham (Newcastle upon Tyne), went directly from Cambridge to what was then Armstrong College, to a post as lecturer on botany. This post he held until 1944 when he was promoted to a readership in plant physiology in the same Department. Throughout his stay at King's College, he has conducted with marked vigour and success various researches on the catabolic processes in plants. Most of his results are embodied in a series of papers with the general title "Studies in Zymasis"; in general, these proceeded from the pen of Prof. Thomas himself, but occasionally they were written in collaboration with research students. In

these were described the effects of oxygen, carbon dioxide and hydrocyanic acid in various gas mixtures on the zymasic breakdown of hexose. In addition to anaerobic zymasis, he has demonstrated that other types exist produced by the gases just named, and by injury and senescence. Having come to definite conclusions as to the conditions of the various forms of zymasis, he has examined the relations between the phenomenon and the incidence of physiological diseases. Naturally, during the War, the whole of these researches were suspended, or at least slowed down, by Prof. Thomas's activities in the O.T.C., in which he held the rank of captain. However, during the past year, they have been recommenced along some of the more promising lines, so that there is every probability that his tenure of the professorship will be marked by a steady flow of research papers continuing the investigations which have been so productive of results in the past.

Patterson Medal in Meteorology

THE inauguration has been announced of a Patterson Medal to be awarded annually to a resident of Canada or Newfoundland for achievement in meteorology. The Medal has been founded by the friends and professional associates of Dr. John Patterson, the retiring controller of the Meteorological Service of Canada and honorary professor of meteorology in the University of Toronto. After graduating from the University of Toronto in 1900, Dr. Patterson went to the Cavendish Laboratory, Cambridge, with an 1851 Exhibition Science Research Scholarship. In 1902 he became professor of physics at the University of Allahabad, and soon afterwards he was appointed Imperial meteorologist to the Government of India. He joined the Meteorological Service of Canada in 1910 and became director in 1929. During the First World War, Dr. Patterson worked with the British Admiralty to develop a commercial process for the extraction of helium from natural gas. After the War, to meet the demands of aviation, he trained young graduates for the Canadian Meteorological Service, and when the Second World War broke out, he had already laid the foundation of a great meteorological service which was able to meet the demands of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan. He is best known for his pioneering work in the exploration of the upper atmosphere by means of balloon meteorographs and for improvements to the cup anemometer and mercury barometer.

The announcement of the Patterson Medal was made by the Hon. C. D. Howe, Minister of Reconstruction and Supply in Canada, at a reception and dinner given to Dr. Patterson on September 28. Commander C. P. Edwards, Deputy Minister of Transport, presented him with a portrait which Dr. Patterson requested should be hung at the headquarters of the Meteorological Office along with the portraits of the six preceding directors. Commander Edwards then presented a silver platter with an inscription expressing the esteem in which Dr. Patterson is held by colleagues and other friends. In reply, Dr. Patterson said he was deeply gratified that his friends had chosen to honour him by the foundation of the Medal, since it would foster the advancement of meteorological science. Nations have founded great institutions for the development of other sciences, and scholarships and awards have been set up, yet this science, which bears upon the

life of every human being, had not received the attention it merited. This was the first time in Canada that there had been any award for meteorology. The building of a good meteorological service depends, he said, on two essentials: the obtaining of basic data and the provision of technical staff capable of making the most of the data. Surface meteorological observations are only obtainable regularly from one fifth of the surface of the globe. The augmentation of basic data is taking place to-day from the upper air. This data has become very expensive, by pre-war standards. The provision of a technical staff competent to make the most of this data would only add a few per cent to the total cost of the service; failure to provide this staff would be false economy.

Principles of Rheological Measurement

A CONFERENCE and exhibition of rheological research apparatus were arranged by the British Rheologists' Club during October 3-5 at Bedford College, University of London. Prof. E. N. da C. Andrade, in a presidential address, gave a survey of modern theory with special reference to metals and hard materials in general. Three sessions were devoted to the principles of rheological measurement for (a) soft materials under conditions of large strain, (b) materials of intermediate consistency, such as doughs, pastes, rubber, etc., and (c) steel and hard materials. Dr. L. R. G. Treloar spoke on "Technical Terms and Definitions". Mr. E. G. Ellis, chairman of the Grease Rheology Panel of the Institute of Petroleum, spoke on the measurement of the consistency of lubricating greases. Dr. K. Weissenberg with Mr. G. M. Freeman, of the British Cotton Industry Research Association, dealt with the geometry of rheological phenomena and demonstrated the practical application of the Weissenberg rheogoniometer. Dr. G. W. Scott Blair read a paper on the consistency of doughs and pastes, and Mr. J. M. Buist on the hardness testing of rubbers. In the session on hard materials, Dr. W. W. Barkas discussed the anisotropic elastic properties of wood, and Dr. E. Orowan dealt with steel and metals. The discussions were lively and well sustained: new views and an interchange of ideas were rendered possible by the presence of distinguished overseas rheologists.

The research apparatus used by members were exhibited and demonstrated during the conference. Models and graphs, such as, for example, a model illustrating tractions and composition of stress and strain tensors in a unit cube, graphs showing the flow characteristics of a grease at medium rates of shear (plunger viscometer) and at high rates of shear (pendulum viscometer) were displayed. Apparatus developed for special industrial purposes were shown: these included instruments for the measurement of creep of dielectrics, the consistency of curd in cheese-making, a rotational viscometer for fabric-printing thickeners, oil viscometer with a high range of shear rate, etc. On October 5 visits were made to the science laboratory of Mr. F. I. G. Rawlins at the National Gallery, to the G. E. C.-Osram glass works, Wembley, and the Building Research Station, Gars-ton, where members were able to observe how rheological methods are being used in the arts and industry. Publication of the proceedings of the conference is being arranged, and it is hoped that copies also of "Essays in Rheology" (Oxford Conference) will be available in the new year.