Prof. A. C. Offord

PROF. A. C. OFFORD, who has held the chair of pure mathematics at King's College in the University of Durham for three years, is succeeding Prof. Dienes at Birkbeck College. Prof. Offord graduated at University College, London, and then proceeded to St. John's College, Cambridge, of which College he was a fellow from 1937 until 1940. He held a lectureship at the University College of North Wales, Bangor, for one year and then proceeded to a similar post at King's College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Later he was elected to the vacant chair of pure mathematics at that College. Prof. Offord's work is in the region of mathematical analysis, on certain branches of which he has produced many papers. Among others in collaboration with Prof. J. E. Littlewood of Cambridge, he has investigated the distribution of the zero values of a random integral function. More recently, also with Prof. Littlewood, he has been occupied with work on other values of a random integral function. This investigation shows that such a function has an extraordinarily regular growth. A long paper on this subject is to appear shortly in the Annals of Mathematics.

Coal Tar Research Association

A NEW industrial research organisation, the Coal Tar Research Association, has been set up by the British Tar Confederation (which is fully representative of producers and distillers of tar) on the basis of a scheme originally proposed by the Association of Tar Distillers. Dr. E. V. Evans has been elected president of the Association, and Mr. Richard Robinson is chairman of the council. Dr. D. McNeil has been appointed director of research. Dr. McNeil, who takes up his duties in July, is a graduate of the University of Glasgow, taking his B.Sc. with firstclass honours in organic chemistry in 1935 and Ph.D. in 1938. After further postgraduate research at the Universities of Glasgow and Manchester as a Ramsay research fellow, he joined Imperial Chemical Industries (Billingham Division) in 1940 and has been engaged since then on research on petroleum and coal tar chemicals. The Coal Tar Research Association will set up its own laboratories as soon as circumstances permit; meanwhile, use will be made of such academic and industrial facilities as can be secured in various parts of the country. The present offices of the Association are at Gas Industry House, 1 Grosvenor Place, London, S.W.1.

George John Romanes (1848-94)

ONE of Darwin's most devoted disciples, George John Romanes, whose memory is kept green in the annual Romanes Lecture at Oxford, was born a century ago, on May 20, 1848, at Kingston, Canada. Fate was kind to him from the start, for his father inherited a fortune, so that the son, on leaving Cambridge, was able to devote himself to scientific research. At the age of twenty-five, a letter in this journal (Nature, 8, 101; 1873) on the "Permanent Variation of Colour in Fish" won him Darwin's friendship. From 1874 until 1876 Romanes studied under Burdon-Sanderson at University College, London. For his work on echinoderms he was elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 1879. His more important publications include "Candid Examination of Theism" (1878), "Animal Intelligence" (1881), "Mental Evolution in Animals" (1883), "Mental Evolution in Man" (1888), "Examination of Weismannism" (1892), and "Darwin and after Darwin"

(1892). During 1888–91 he was Fullerian professor of physiology at the Royal Institution, London. Early in life he thought of becoming a clergyman, and it is interesting to find that one of his last works, "Candid Examination of Religion", indicates a return to orthodoxy. A genial and versatile man, he was as fond of sport as of writing verse. His last years were spent in Oxford, where he died on May 23, 1894, after much ill-health. Two years after his death, his widow brought out the "Life and Letters of G. J. Romanes".

Enquiry

INCREASING interest in the phenomena investigated by psychical researchers appears to be the reason for the publication of a new periodical, Enquiry, of which the first number was issued in April (London: Horace Cox, Ltd. 1s. 3d.) The editors are Mr. Alfred Ridgway and Mr. Nigel Cox, and they are supported by an advisory panel of psychologists and others, among whom are Dr. William Brown, formerly Wilde reader in mental philosophy in Oxford, Dr. C. E. M. Joad, Prof. C. G. Jung and Dr. D. J. West, the research officer of the Society for Psychical Research. Although the editors do not themselves contribute an editorial introduction, a foreword is supplied by Prof. C. D. Broad, of Cambridge, who, after maintaining that telepathy is now an experimentally established fact and that there is excellent evidence to suggest that "in the case of some individuals" a part at least of the personality survives death, goes on to say that there is a strong unconscious resistance on the part of most men of science and philosophers to acceptance of these facts, and that he hopes that Enquiry may do its part in emphasizing them again and again. In the first issue of the new journal there are a number of interesting papers. Mr. J. W. Dunne contributes an article on "A Glimpse of the Real World"; the president of the Society for Psychical Research, Mr. W. H. Salter, has a paper on apparitions; the Dean of St. Paul's, Dr. W. R. Matthews, has a note on Dr. C. D. Kean's recently published "The Meaning of Existence"; and Dr. D. J. West describes some new methods for investigating physical mediumship and the lack of success in persuading any mediums to co-operate in using them. Finally, there is a long essay review by Martha Kneale of Mr. G. N. M. Tyrrell's recent book, "The Personality of Man", in which she stresses the need for clarity and the significance of psychical research for the human situation in general and more especially for ethics.

Greenkeeping Research

THE Journal of the Board of Greenkeeping Research (7, No. 23 (1947), St. Ives, Bingley, Yorks), last published in 1941, has made a welcome reappearance. The new number contains papers on moss in lawns and sports turf, the control of leatherjackets, maintenance of sea-washed bowling greens, and on earthworms; but perhaps the chief contribution is on experiments with selective weed-killers for sports turf by J. R. Escritt. 'Methoxone' can be used to control a number of common turf weeds if applied in fine sunny weather in spring or early summer. Suitable rates of application are 5 lb. of active principle per acre given as a spray, and slightly more (about 6 lb.) if used as dust. Daisy and clover are somewhat resistant, while yarrow, pearlwort, woodrush and moss are resistant to 'Methoxone'. 2:4-Dichlorophenoxyacetic acid (2:4 D) is also satisfactory as a weedkiller. It is best applied at 2 lb. per acre for