

density and temperature in fluids. An earlier interest in colour vision became dominant after about 1930 and culminated in two ingenious theoretical papers (*Phil. Mag.*, 1943 and 1946); but during the same period Shaxby was also much occupied with the physiology of hearing, and in particular with phenomena at the threshold of audition, and with the binaural localization of sounds. During 1932-35 he undertook long-range reception of gun-fire noises for the Air Ministry, and in 1937 he became interested in geomagnetic surveying, for which he invented a device for varying the sensitivity of the magnetometer.

This sketch by no means exhausts Shaxby's many interests even in the field of science. As a man, he was a most lovable and loyal colleague with whom it was a pleasure and a privilege to work.

T. GRAHAM BROWN

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Dr. S. C. Bradford, until 1938 chief librarian of the Science Library, South Kensington, and founder, with the late Prof. A. F. C. Pollard, of the British Society for International Bibliography, on November 13, aged seventy.

Mr. R. Elmhirst, director of the Scottish Marine Biological Laboratory at Millport, whose forthcoming retirement was announced in *Nature* of October 30, p. 688, on November 13, aged sixty-four.

Prof. Karel Kavina, director of the Botanical Institute of the Prague Technical University for many years and known for his "Atlas of Fungi" (1927), a second enlarged edition of which appeared this year, aged fifty-eight.

Mr. E. Platt, geologist and leader of the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey at Admiralty Bay, King George Island, South Shetlands, on November 9.

## NEWS and VIEWS

### Royal Society: Medal Awards

H.M. THE KING has been graciously pleased to approve the following recommendations made by the Council of the Royal Society for the award of the two Royal Medals for 1948:

Prof. Harold Jeffreys, for his distinguished work in geophysics and his important contributions to the astronomy of the solar system;

Prof. James Gray, for his distinguished researches in cytology, ciliary movement and particularly his anatomical and experimental studies of animal posture and locomotion.

The following awards of medals have been made by the president and council of the Royal Society:

Copley Medal to Prof. A. V. Hill, for his distinguished researches on myothermal problems and on biophysical phenomena in nerve and other tissues.

Rumford Medal to Prof. F. E. Simon, for his outstanding contributions to the attainment of low temperatures and to the study of the properties of substances at temperatures near the absolute zero.

Davy Medal to Prof. E. L. Hirst, for his outstanding work in the determination of the structure of sugars, starches, plant gums and especially of vitamin C.

Darwin Medal to Prof. R. A. Fisher, for his distinguished contributions to the theory of natural selection, the concept of the gene complex and the evolution of dominance.

Hughes Medal to Sir Robert Watson-Watt, for his distinguished work in atmospheric physics and in the development of radar.

### British Astronomical Association:

Dr. J. G. Porter

MR. F. M. HOLBORN retired from the presidency of the British Astronomical Association on October 27 and was succeeded by Dr. J. G. Porter. Dr. Porter is well known in astronomical circles, not only in connexion with his broadcast talks, but also for his work for the Computing Section of the Association, of which he has been director for many years. He has also carried out investigations on the speeds of meteors and has shown that these bodies are members of the solar system, none of the cases that he has dealt with showing hyperbolic velocities; this

would seem to dispose of the results of the Harvard College Observatory Expedition to Arizona some sixteen years ago.

### Los Angeles State and County Arboretum:

Dr. Frans Verdoorn

DR. FRANS VERDOORN, managing editor of *Chronica Botanica*, has been appointed director of the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum at Arcadia, California. He will assume the directorship of this new arboretum in the immediate future. It is planned to develop a modern arboretum and botanical garden at Arcadia with various educational and research departments. Dr. Verdoorn will continue to edit *Chronica Botanica* and other journals. Some of these will be published in the future by the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum, while others will be transferred to a commercial publisher.

Dr. Verdoorn, a native of the Netherlands, went to the United States in 1940. Formerly known for his work in cryptogamic botany, he has lately been occupied chiefly with historical studies and international relations work. He was an assistant at the Buitenzorg Botanic Gardens, Java, in the 1930's and has been a research fellow at Harvard University since 1940. During the war years he did much work on Latin America and South East Asia for various government agencies. He received the first Mary Soper Pope Medal in 1946, and has just been appointed chairman of the International Phytohistorical Committee.

### Control of Nationalized Industries

IN an address on "The Consumer in Relation to Non-Competitive Industry", delivered at the fifty-second Oxford Management Conference of the British Institute of Management held at Scarborough on October 16, Mr. Herbert Morrison said that increasing use of economists is being made in the work of government; but his address was chiefly concerned with the administrative policy pursued to protect the consumer in industries where full competition does not operate—a field which is not coterminous with that of public ownership. While under the competitive system the threat of withdrawal of custom could be a spur to efficiency, the corresponding safeguard with socialized industries should be their sensitiveness to