NEWS and VIEWS

Physics at the Imperial College of Science and Technology: Dr. S. Devons

DR. S. DEVONS, who has been appointed to the recently instituted University chair of physics tenable at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, London, graduated at Cambridge in 1935 and started research in the Cavendish Laboratory, under Lord Rutherford, on the radioactivity of radium C″ and on the scattering of alpha-particles by light nuclei. In 1939 he began experiments in the Cavendish High Tension Laboratory on nuclear resonance-levels, and had already obtained a number of interesting results on the transmutation of fluorine by protons when the War broke out. In the late summer of 1939 Devons was one of a team of Cavendish physicists under Dee who were attached to the Royal Aircraft Establishment, and worked at Exeter on rocket defence problems. In 1942 he was transferred to the Telecommunications Research Establishment at Swanage and made important advances in the development of magnetrons and of very short-wave radar systems. He spent a period at the Radiation Laboratory of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and later, at the end of the War, worked on atomic problems for a short while under Sir John Cockcroft in the Montreal laboratories of the Canadian National Research Council.

Returning to Cambridge at the end of 1945, Devons was appointed University demonstrator and then lecturer in physics; he was also elected to a fellowship and appointed lecturer at Trinity College. In addition to his extensive and successful programme of research in nuclear physics, including the spectacular feat of measuring a nuclear life-time of 10^{-10} sec. (see *Nature*, 164, 586; 1949), he has been engaged in high-power magnetron development for the Ministry of Supply. He also took an active part in teaching and initiated several important changes in the Tripos courses at Cambridge. The whole of his work is exemplary of a happy combination of theoretical and experimental skill; imaginative and quick-witted, he has always focused his attention on problems of real importance. His recent book, "Excited States of Atomic Nuclei", has put on record some of the service which he rendered to nuclear physics while in Cambridge; his stimulating personality will be missed at the Cavendish.

American Geographical Society of New York: Dr. G. H. T Kimble

DR. GEORGE H. T. KIMBLE, chairman of the Department of Geography at McGill University, Montreal, and secretary of the International Geographical Union, has been appointed director of the American Geographical Society of New York and will assume his new duties in June. He succeeds Dr. John K. Wright, who after eleven years as director has resigned his administrative tasks to return to the research staff of the Society. Dr. Kimble was born in England, attended Eastbourne Grammar School and took a degree in geography in the University of London (King's College). Thereafter, he held the post of lecturer in geography at the University College of Hull for five years and at the University of Reading for three years. In 1939 he became an officer in the British Naval Meteorological Service and during the War was engaged mainly in investigating the climatic feasibility of the various invasion projects. Early in 1945 he was released by the Admiralty to begin work at McGill, where he organised the new Department of Geography and took charge of the meteorological observatory of the University. As part of this work, he was also instrumental in establishing the McGill summer school in geography at Stanstead, Quebec, to which a number of well-known British and American geographers have contributed. Under his guidance, and with the collaboration of the Arctic Institute of North America, an Arctic research centre has been built up at McGill, and in this connexion Dr. Kimble is editing a co-operative work on the geography of the Northlands.

Terminology in Industry

AT the fifth sectional meeting of the Conference of the British Institute of Management which took place at Cheltenham in May 1949, the question of whether there is need for standard terminology and nomenclature in management was discussed. In the opening paper Mr. Winston Rogers, head of the Department of Management at Acton Technical College, stressed the need for te inology to be standardized as soon as possible although, at the same time, he recognized that the freezing of terminology at too early a stage in the development of scientific management would lead to difficulties. Among the people who would immediately benefit by this standardization would be authors, technical editors of publishing houses, industrial education officers and lecturers in management subjects. Once the need for standardized terminology had been admitted, it would be necessary to consider the five following points: the criteria which any term must fulfil; the nature of the contemplated standardization; the most desirable province for preliminary exploitation; the composition of the team of investigators; the authority responsible for the enforcement of the standardized terminology. Mr. Rogers examined each point in turn, and after considerable discussion it was agreed that the British Institute of Management should be asked to examine existing terms, to publish their current meanings and to encourage standard usage whenever possible. Efforts should be made to extend this work to the international field, after initial attempts in the English-speaking countries.

Co-ordination of British Geological Surveys

CORRESPONDENCE prompted by an article in the *Petroleum Times* of January 1, entitled "A Modern Geological Survey" by "A Petroleum Geologist", revealed a desire on the part of many geologists in industry and Civil servants in British and Colonial government institutions for reform of the existing survey organisation. A second article (*Petroleum Times*, April 8) by the same writer outlines a plan for co-ordination and expansion of survey facilities throughout the Empire. The suggestion is made that a permanent authoritative committee of twelve be appointed to represent geology and its related sciences. One member would be co-opted from each of the learned societies concerned: Geological Society, Institution of Mining and Metallurgy and Institute of Petroleum; three members from government institutions; three from the universities; and three from industry. A parallel organisation, the Institute of Geology, representing eleven national societies and about ten thousand professional geologists, has recently been formed in the United States; although the size of the profession in the British Empire may