

Books. He served as British delegate at various international congresses dealing with African affairs, and for his great services he was created G.C.M.G. in 1935. In his retirement he continued to take a great interest in public matters, becoming chairman of the Executive Committee of the Imperial College of Science and Technology. In spite of the appearance of natural shyness, Read had a lovable nature and his associates were deeply attached to him.

PHILIP MANSON-BAHR

WE regret to announce the following deaths :

Mr. J. E. Barnard F.R.S., formerly head of the Department of Applied Optics, National Institute for Medical Research, on October 25, aged eighty.

PROF. T. SLATER PRICE, O.B.E., F.R.S., emeritus professor of chemistry at the Heriot-Watt College, Edinburgh, formerly director of research to the British Photographic Research Association, on October 29, aged seventy-four.

## NEWS and VIEWS

### Proposed Institute of Biology

THE following have accepted invitations to join the provisional council of the Institute of Biology under the chairmanship of Dr. E. Hindle : Prof. E. Ashby, Prof. T. A. Bennet-Clark, Prof. G. E. Blackman, Mr. L. J. F. Brimble, Prof. J. F. Danielli (hon. secretary), Dr. D. G. Davey, Captain C. Diver, Dr. J. W. Evans, Prof. W. Graham, Prof. J. Gray, Prof. A. Haddow, Dr. J. Hammond, Dr. C. Horton-Smith, Prof. W. H. Pearsall, Mr. N. W. Pirie and Dr. F. S. Russell. The first general meeting of the Institute will be held in London on January 6, 1950, at 6 p.m. Agenda papers will be sent to all those who have already indicated their willingness to support the new Institute. Biologists who may not have received a copy of the memorandum outlining the proposed form of this Institute are invited to obtain it from Dr. R. J. C. Harris, Assistant Secretary, Institute of Biology, at the temporary office, Chester Beatty Research Institute, Royal Cancer Hospital, Fulham Road, London, S.W.3.

### Zoology at Belfast : Prof. R. A. R. Gresson

THE vacancy in the chair of zoology at Queen's University, Belfast, created by the retirement of Prof. T. T. Myer (see *Nature*, July 24, 1948, p. 135), has been filled by the appointment of Dr. R. A. R. Gresson, who took over the duties of the chair at the opening of the present session. Since 1931, Dr. Gresson had been lecturer in cytology in the Department of Zoology, University of Edinburgh, where he had risen to the grade of senior lecturer and deputy head of the Department. Previously he had been assistant lecturer in the Department of Natural History, University College, Dundee, whither he proceeded after preliminary training in the Royal College of Science and Trinity College, Dublin, and graduation at the University of Edinburgh. Dr. Gresson's cytological research has been concentrated upon the description of the changes which take place in the extra-nuclear components of cells, and the elucidation of these changes, particularly in relation to developing germ cells and induced changes in secretory activity. His recent volume, "Essentials of General Cytology", published by the Edinburgh University Press (1948), is a text-book the conciseness and the illustrations of which will be appreciated by university teachers and their students.

### Long-distance Test Flight of Jet-Propelled Air Liner

A DE HAVILLAND 'Comet' jet-propelled air liner recently carried out a long-distance flight, as part of its trials, from London to Castel Benito, Tripoli, a

distance of 2,980 miles in a total flying time of six hours thirty-eight minutes—an average speed of just over 450 miles an hour. This is more than 100 miles an hour faster than the authenticated speed of any established air liner at present in use. It left London at 6.30 a.m. and, after a two-hour period in Tripoli for refuelling, it arrived back in London at 4 p.m. A performance such as this suggests that this type of machine should be taken up immediately by air transport concerns everywhere. Quantity production is already in hand by Messrs. De Havilland ; but it is not expected that they will be operating on the trunk services of the British Overseas Airways Corporation until 1952-53.

The reason for this delay is twofold, neither cause being within the scope of the aircraft designer to alter. The high fuel consumption of the internal combustion turbine means that only a small margin of fuel can be carried in reserve for these long-distance flights. Upon arrival at a crowded airfield, they are consequently unable to cruise around waiting for their turn to land, as is quite normal practice on popular routes to-day. The technique of airfield control will have to be altered to suit these different conditions, and as such changes will need to be international, there must be a period of investigation and discussion before agreement will be reached. Further, unless these machines, or others of similar performance, are available to foreign air lines, they are not likely to be interested in the immediate changing of their airfield control. The second problem is a meteorological one. Jet-propelled aircraft must fly at considerable heights to ensure economical flight conditions, and there is still a lack of precise knowledge of the wind speeds and directions in the upper atmosphere. It is known that these winds are strong enough to produce serious navigational errors if not allowed for, and apart from the question of difficulty of time-keeping to a schedule in such circumstances, the small fuel reserve carried means that a dangerous situation would arise if the machine was blown far off its intended course.

### Reindeer Council of the United Kingdom

THE Reindeer Council of the United Kingdom came into existence recently in response to the interest aroused, both in Scotland and in England, in a proposal to introduce reindeer in some suitable area of the United Kingdom. The founders of the Council include travellers, explorers and arctic experts who are concerned to develop national and Commonwealth resources to the full at this critical time, an addition to the present inadequate supply of meat and hides being one of their aims ; the chairman of the Council is Sir Frederick Whyte. The Council is pledged to