

His practical classes were a model and his technique impeccable. The untidy laboratory and slapdash experimenting were anathema to him. Among his scientific writings were the monographs: "Brief Outline of the History of Science" (1925) and "Rhenium" (1948).

To mention his scientific work alone would be to tell only half the story, for Druce was a man of letters as well as a man of science, a scholar and a traveller. During the past thirty years he and his wife, and later their son, visited most of the countries of Europe, and he became fluent in many languages, including Czech and the Slavonic tongues. He once remarked that he learned his languages the 'easy' way, by living with the people. Yet, of the countries on the Continent, Czechoslovakia was his first love, and his writings on that country and its people revealed the depth of his understanding of their problems; in 1937 he was invested with the Order of the White Lion for his cultural and scientific work. He was also an honorary foreign member of the Masaryk Academy of Work and a corresponding member of the Royal Bohemian Scientific Society. In 1943 he was awarded the London M.A. degree for a thesis on "The Role of Men of Science in the Czech National Revival Movement".

His passing is mourned here and abroad, and those of us who received from him our first intro-

duction to chemistry may indeed count ourselves fortunate.

KENNETH PANKHURST

#### Dr. H. Wambacher

ON April 25 Dr. H. Wambacher died in Vienna at the age of forty-eight after a long illness. Dr. Wambacher is mainly known for her work relating to scientific uses of photography, and especially for developing the method of detecting tracks in photographic emulsions of corpuscular rays due to atomic disintegrations and cosmic radiation. She worked at first together with Dr. M. Blau (now of New York). Her work is distinguished by the detection of the first multiple atomic disintegration ('star') in the emulsion of an Ilford plate, which was exposed for some months on the Hafelekar near Innsbruck (Tyrol). This discovery was followed by several publications concerning the occurrence of 'stars', their dependence on the number of tracks, the altitude, etc. The results of this work were not only of the greatest interest to scientific workers in this field, but also were of value to manufacturers producing special plates for nuclear research.

Dr. Wambacher's work was acknowledged by the award by the Vienna Academy of Sciences of the Jgnaz Lieben Prize for physics, 1938 (together with Dr. Blau).

G. ORTNER

## NEWS and VIEWS

### Prof. Egon Orowan, F.R.S.

THE Massachusetts Institute of Technology has recently announced that Dr. Egon Orowan has been appointed to a full professorship on the staff of its Mechanical Engineering Department. He will be taking up his new duties in October 1950. Dr. Orowan was born in Budapest in 1902, and studied at the Technical University of Berlin-Charlottenburg, where he continued for some years as a teacher and carried out research with Prof. Becker. On his return to Hungary he was for some time in charge of the krypton gas works of the United Incandescent Lamp and Electric Co. Eventually Dr. Orowan left Hungary, and in 1937 he resumed research on the mechanical properties of metals in the Physics Department of the University of Birmingham. In 1939 he went to the Cavendish Laboratory, where his researches were at first supported by the British Iron and Steel Federation and later by the Nuffield Foundation. He was given the title of reader by the University of Cambridge, and has had a group of about a dozen research students working under him for a number of years.

Dr. Orowan is well known in Great Britain for his work in metal physics. He combines an active and inquiring mind with an outstanding ability to design and construct ingenious apparatus. He has worked upon the deformation of single crystals, the theory of rolling, plasticity at high rates of deformation, the yield point of steel, and many other problems. He has been a member of many committees, and has taken part in numerous scientific gatherings, where his lively mind always stimulated the discussions. He has received a number of honours while in Great Britain, among them the Thomas Hawksley Gold Medal of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers in 1945 and the fellowship of the Royal Society in 1947.

### Royal Naval Scientific Service: Mr. W. R. J. Cook

Mr. W. R. J. Cook has been appointed chief of the Royal Naval Scientific Service in succession to Sir Frederick Brundrett, now deputy scientific adviser to the Ministry of Defence (see *Nature*, July 1, p. 17). Mr. Cook, who is forty-five years of age, was educated at Trowbridge High School and the University of Bristol, where he obtained the B.Sc. degree with first-class honours in applied mathematics in 1925. He followed this with two years fundamental research in theoretical physics at the same University, obtaining the M.Sc. degree in 1927 before taking up an appointment under the War Office in the Research Department at Woolwich. During 1927-35 he was engaged on research work in field of gunnery ballistics, the determination of shell velocities in flight and of pressures, temperatures and rates of heat transfer in guns. From 1935 he worked on gas dynamics and rocket development, and in 1939 was transferred to the Ministry of Supply Projectile Development Establishment. In 1940 he was appointed to the Ministry of Supply headquarters as an assistant director in the Directorate of Projectile Development, and was responsible for the assessment and planning of rocket requirements and research. In 1943 Mr. Cook returned to the Projectile Development Establishment as superintendent (R. and D.) in technical charge of all research and development; but in 1945 he was again recalled to the Ministry of Supply headquarters as deputy director of the Directorate of Guided Projectiles. He became chief superintendent of the G.P. Establishment at Westcott in 1946. In 1947 he transferred from the Ministry of Supply to Admiralty service as the director of physical research in the Royal Naval Scientific Service. In this post he has shown outstanding ability and great energy, gaining a very high reputation with both Naval and scientific staff in a comparatively short period.