

Dr. Ashworth was unmarried. He is survived by his elder brother, the Rev. G. H. Ashworth, of Cleadon, Sunderland, and his sister, Miss M. L. Ashworth, of Hindhead, Surrey.

#### Mr. Thomas Lewis

MR. THOMAS LEWIS, head of the Department of Applied Mathematics in the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, died suddenly on July 6, at the early age of fifty-two. He had not been in good health for some time, but had appeared to be improving. His passing was a great shock to his colleagues at Aberystwyth, who had enjoyed his society only the day before.

Lewis was born at Newport, Pem., and attended the Cardigan County School. After service in the First World War, he entered the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, in 1919, where he gained first-class honours in applied mathematics, and various University prizes and scholarships. He studied mathematics abroad at Cologne, Bonn and Zurich, coming under the influence of Weyl, and returned to Aberystwyth in 1925 to become assistant lecturer in, and in 1933 head of, the Department of Applied Mathematics. I first met Lewis when giving

a course of lectures at Aberystwyth in 1933 on "World-Structure". He took a great interest in the subject of kinematic relativity, and in 1935 published (in the *Phil. Mag.*) a paper in which he suggested that the then unknown form of the acceleration function  $G(\xi)$  in the equation of motion of a free particle in the presence of the substratum was probably  $G(\xi) \equiv -1$ ; and he integrated the equations of motion on that hypothesis. Ever since then, he maintained an intermittent correspondence with me on these problems; and only in April last he sent me some notes on the dynamics of the photon and the secular variation of Planck's 'constant'  $h$ , which were of considerable interest though incomplete. Lewis also wrote on more conventional electro-dynamics, in particular on Dirac's theory of the world-line of an electron. He was also interested in fluid motion. In all his publications he showed great independence of outlook and fertility of invention. He was also interested in the philosophical implications of modern science, and wrote thereon in Welsh publications.

He is survived by his wife, three sons and two daughters. He will be greatly missed by the Bethel Welsh Baptist Church, and other circles of Welsh culture.

E. A. MILNE

## NEWS and VIEWS

### National Research Council (Canada):

Dr. E. W. R. Steacie, O.B.E., F.R.S.

DR. E. W. R. STEACIE, director of the Division of Chemistry of the National Research Council of Canada, has been appointed vice-president (scientific) of the Council. In this new post, Dr. Steacie will be responsible for all scientific activities in the Council to ensure that the work of the several divisions proceeds according to a general plan and to maintain the closest integration of research throughout the laboratories. Dr. Steacie will continue as director of the Division of Chemistry, an appointment which he has held since 1939. During the Second World War he was deputy director of the British-Canadian Atomic Energy Project. He is forty-nine years of age.

### Philosophy at Birmingham: Prof. A. B. Gibson

PROF. A. BOYCE GIBSON, of the University of Melbourne, has been appointed to the chair of philosophy in the University of Birmingham. He is already well known in Birmingham, having been a member of the philosophy staff from 1927 until 1935, and his many friends will welcome his return. The son of Prof. W. R. Boyce Gibson, whom he succeeded in the chair in Melbourne, he was educated in the University of Melbourne and in Balliol College, Oxford. He was temporary assistant in philosophy in the University of Glasgow during 1923-25, and staff tutor to the Joint Tutorial Classes Committee of Oxford in North Staffordshire during 1925-27, where he threw himself wholeheartedly into the movement for adult education. His book on the "Philosophy of Descartes" was published in 1932. Other publications include "Should Philosophers be Kings?" (1939) and (with A. A. Phillips), "Thinkers at Work" (1946). A 'Greats' man and an idealist, he has a deep admiration for Plato. His special interests include political theory, aesthetics and philosophy of religion. The honorary degree of D.Litt. was conferred on him by the University of

Cambridge in 1948, when he was in Great Britain as a delegate to the Conference of the Universities of the Empire.

### Soil Survey of Great Britain

SOIL surveys were started in Great Britain nearly forty years ago; but not until after the First World War, when their use to the agricultural advisory services was realized, were any definite plans made for their development, or soil mapping put on a systematic basis. Since then, standard methods have been gradually built up, activities have been co-ordinated, and in 1939 the Soil Survey of England and Wales attained formal recognition. The general scientific supervision of the work is carried out by the Soil Survey Research Board, which has now issued its first report under the ægis of the Agricultural Research Council (pp. 27; London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1950; 1s. 6d.). This publication includes some account of the methods used and details of the areas surveyed during 1946 in England and Wales, and Scotland. Mapping is normally made on the scale of 6 inches to the mile; but a considerable amount of reconnaissance work has been done on the 2½- or 1-inch scale. The soils are classified into series, that is, those showing the same general profile characters and developed from the same or similar parent materials. So far, surveys have been almost entirely confined to agricultural soils, as the work is closely linked with the advisory service; but the general value of the work is evident, for, besides being of interest in itself, a knowledge of soils is also important for forestry and in all matters pertaining to land use.

### Marihuana in Latin America

DR. PABLO OSVALDO WOLFF, a member of the Expert Committee of the World Health Organisation on Habit-forming Drugs, has written a valuable pamphlet entitled "Marihuana in Latin America, the