

matters as the iron industry, the steam engine, fire engines, the work of Savery, Newcomen, Jonathan Hornblower, Arthur Wolff, and others. At nearly every summer meeting of the Society in its earlier days he was able to review the industries of the district visited. A major work was his "James Watt and the Steam Engine" (1927), written in collaboration with the late Dr. H. W. Dickinson. The esteem with which he was held by his fellow members was shown by the re-publication by the Council in 1936 of his miscellaneous papers which had appeared before 1920.

E. C. SMITH

We regret to announce the following deaths:

Father A. Gatterer, *S.J.*, director of the Astrophysical Laboratory, Specola Vaticana, Castel Gandolfo, on February 17, aged sixty-seven.

Prof. Justin Jolly, professor of histophysiology in the Collège de France and *académicien libre* of the Paris Academy of Sciences, on February 1, aged eighty-two.

Prof. N. A. V. Piercy, professor of aeronautical engineering in the University of London (Queen Mary College), on February 1, aged sixty-one.

## NEWS and VIEWS

### Botany at Oxford:

#### Prof. T. G. B. Osborn

PROF. T. G. B. OSBORN, who has been Sherardian professor of botany in the University of Oxford since 1937, is retiring from that chair. He went to Oxford from the University of Sydney, Australia, where his researches in the ecology of natural and semi-natural vegetation laid a firm foundation for later work. Under his guidance the Department of Botany remained happy during a period when botany in Oxford was expanding in the cramped surroundings of the old building. It was owing to his initiative that the Department moved to the new laboratory in the Museum, and there close co-operation with the Botanic Gardens, first begun by him, is still maintained. Indeed the great improvements in the Gardens which have occurred in recent years owe much to his expert supervision and advice. Prof. Osborn has been active in University business and, especially during the War, in advisory work for the Agricultural Research Council and other public bodies. These calls upon his time and especially those associated with the design of the new laboratory were so great that his own researches inevitably suffered. The solid achievement of causing the new laboratory to be built will be found, perhaps, to be a greater contribution to botany than any series of laboratory experiments. Oxford will regret the departure of a professor who has advised and guided his colleagues with tact and forbearance.

#### Prof. C. D. Darlington, F.R.S.

PROF. C. D. DARLINGTON, who is to succeed Prof. T. G. B. Osborn, was born in 1903 and educated at St. Paul's School and Wye College. On graduating he joined the staff of the John Innes Horticultural Institution, of which William Bateson was then director. A year or so earlier Bateson had returned from a visit to the United States, where he had seen evidence which convinced him that the proper study of genetics required also study of the chromosomes. He then appointed W. C. F. Newton to his staff as a cytologist, and when Darlington went to the Institution he also joined in this new line of work. Newton's early death in 1927 put an end to their collaboration and left Darlington to continue, at first virtually alone. Soon aided, however, by a growing body of research students he then began that remarkable series of advances which turned cytology from a descriptive into an analytical study, with its own principles, and taking its place as an essential part of the greater structure of genetical science. The new cytology was expounded in the now famous "Recent Advances in Cytology", and it reached its zenith with

the smaller though no less important book "The Evolution of Genetic Systems", which discussed and presented the chromosome mechanism, in all its great variety of forms, as the product of evolution by natural selection.

During this period Darlington had been appointed first head of the Cytology Department and later, when Sir Daniel Hall retired in 1939, director of the 'John Innes'. He saw the Institution through the difficult period of the War, during which the old buildings at Merton suffered serious damage, and then through its removal to a new and very much larger home at Bayfordbury. He was elected to the Royal Society in 1941 and received a Royal Medal in 1946. At the same time his interests extended to cover genetics as an even wider discipline, well exemplified by his writings on cytoplasmic heredity, viruses and cancer which he presented as part of the broader picture in which heredity, development and infection were all joined together for the first time. Prof. Darlington takes a wide knowledge and understanding of plants, horticultural as well as botanical, to his new appointment at Oxford, which will provide opportunity for presenting, in a broader field, genetical science as the firm base from which so much in modern biology can be seen to spring.

### Society for Visiting Scientists

Prof. A. V. Hill and Sir Harold Spencer Jones, president and past-president respectively of the Society for Visiting Scientists, have issued an appeal for funds to enable the Society not only to extend but even to maintain its activities. In 1944, when many Allied scientists were working in Britain, the Society was established in London, on the initiative of the British Council and in consultation with the Royal Society, as a centre where overseas and British scientists could meet. The Society has expanded rapidly; it has become widely known abroad, and considerable goodwill towards science in Britain has been built up and fostered through its 1,730 overseas members—a number which is constantly increasing. It enjoys the esteem and encouragement of organized international science, as represented by Unesco and the International Scientific Unions, as well as of Government science in Britain and of many learned societies. It is on friendly and co-operative terms with the scientific liaison officers of the Commonwealth countries and with the science representatives of other countries. At the Society's House, there is at the disposal of scientific institutions and of individual scientists a body of information about science and scientists not easily available elsewhere, and this is drawn on by many at home and overseas. The