

little about the second coefficient of viscosity when we realize how little we know about the first. We appear to be at the beginning of a very important study of the internal vibrations of molecules, leading, it is hoped, to a clarification of the fundamental concepts of fluid dynamics. Prof. Andrade stressed the importance of choosing the best fluids for experimental and theoretical work; water is most unsuitable, as it has a wide variety of abnormal characteristics.

A full report of the meeting will appear in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society* in due course.

R. O. DAVIES
L. ROSENHEAD

¹ Eckart, C., *Phys. Rev.*, **73**, 68 (1948).

² Liebermann, L. N., *Phys. Rev.*, **75**, 1415 (1949).

³ Dvořák, V., *Pogg. Ann.*, **157**, 61 (1876).

⁴ Rayleigh, Lord, *Phil. Trans. Roy. Soc.*, **175**, 1 (1884).

⁵ Andrade, E. N. da C., *Proc. Roy. Soc., A*, **134**, 445 (1932).

⁶ Schlichting, H., *Phys. Z.*, **33**, 327 (1932).

⁷ Mandelstam, L. I., and Leontovich, M. A., *J. Exp. Theor. Phys. USSR*, **7**, 438 (1937).

OBITUARIES

Dr. E. M. Elderton

ETHEL MARY ELDERTON was born on December 31, 1878, and died on May 5, 1954. She entered Bedford College for Women in 1895 in the Faculty of Arts and went down in 1899 without having sat for a degree. University was followed by a period of teaching; but the real pattern of her life-work did not emerge until about 1905, when through Alice Lee she worked first for Leonard Darwin and then for Francis Galton, being made secretary of the Eugenics Record Office in 1906. From this modest beginning she became successively Galton Scholar, Galton Fellow, assistant professor and reader in eugenics in University College, London (1931). She retired in 1935.

During the whole of the period in which she was either attached to, or a member of, University College she was actively engaged in both teaching and research. At the College she was a member of a research team headed by Karl Pearson, and as such much of the work she did was contained in the co-operative effort; but evidence that she was capable of a sustained piece of individual research will be found in such a memoir as "Report on the English Birth Rate 1914", to quote only one of a number of publications with a eugenic flavour.

As a person she was delightful, as an expositor she was unrivalled for clarity of thought and lucidity of

expression, and as a teacher she had the rare gift of enthusiasm and the ability to impart it to others. There must be many to-day who owe to her their first steps in statistics and the knowledge and self-confidence that things were not so difficult as more mathematically minded teachers had made them appear. Her essential modesty hid an ability which caused the first Galton Fellow to write in 1906: "Miss Elderton has certainly been a remarkable success at the Eugenics Office; but I think her marvellous energy and quickness to learn anything new would have enabled her to succeed at anything she undertook".

Her work was recognized by the award of the Weldon Medal in 1919, and in December 1931 the University of London conferred on her the degree of D.Sc.

F. N. DAVID

Dr. W. T. Mathias

WILLIAM T. MATHIAS, lecturer in botany in the University of Liverpool, suffered a heart attack in his laboratory on May 19, and died in hospital an hour or so later. This was a severe blow and shock to his family and friends, for only the previous day he had taken the senior students on a field excursion to North Wales.

He was born in Cardigan, South Wales, in 1900, and graduated in agriculture from the University College, Aberystwyth, in 1922. He then specialized in botany. Although offered a scholarship for research at Oxford, he chose to go to Bangor as an assistant lecturer under Prof. D. Thoday; but a year later, in 1924, he moved to the Botany Department of the University of Liverpool. His early training under Prof. Lloyd Williams led to an interest in the problems associated with the life-cycles of marine algae, and Mathias's published researches on *Callithamnion* and *Phloeospora* were in this field. For some years past he had been making a similar study of *Chordaria*.

Mathias was an enthusiastic and willing teacher, and always carried a large share of the teaching load of the Department. He took an active part in extra-mural work and in school examining, still finding time to help and encourage amateurs in their field collecting. He was for some years secretary of the University Military Education Committee, and took a very keen interest in the welfare and progress of the units associated with the University.

He is survived by a widow and two children; in 1931 he had married Miss Jane Evans, who was one of his former students at Bangor.

ALAN BURGESS

NEWS and VIEWS

The Kalinga Prize: Mr. Waldemar Kaempffert

THIS year the Kalinga Prize, which is awarded annually by a panel of judges appointed by Unesco, has gone to Waldemar Kaempffert, who has been science editor of the *New York Times* since 1927 except for the short spell which he spent as director of Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry. Born in New York City in 1877, he is universally regarded as the dean of American science writers. His long and distinguished career has included the editorship of *Scientific American* and *Popular Science Monthly*.

He has written a number of books; but by far the most important part of his life's work has been his writing for the *New York Times*, his regular articles in the *Sunday New York Times Magazine* being particularly popular among laymen and scientists alike. "Current Biography" has justly summed up his career in these words: "No one has done more to bridge the gap between the abstract hypotheses of the laboratory and the mind of the common man". The award will be accepted everywhere as an excellent choice and as a tribute to the great importance of the profession of science writing nowadays. It reflects