

he is well known for his views on fuel policy, on scientific and technological education, and on the correct use of scientific man-power.

Chemistry at Birmingham : Prof. M. Stacey, F.R.S.

PROF. M. STACEY, who succeeds Prof. H. W. Melville (see *Nature* of February 11, p. 260) at the end of the present academic year as Mason professor of chemistry in the University of Birmingham, is the most outstanding Birmingham graduate of his time. He graduated under the late Sir Norman Haworth and continued, with short breaks in London and in the United States, at Birmingham as research student, lecturer, reader, until in 1946 a special chair was created for him to give him further scope for all his activities. Since that time he has expanded enormously the organic work at Birmingham. For many years under Haworth, Birmingham was the centre for carbohydrate chemistry in Great Britain, and the great advances made in this period laid the foundations of much of the subsequent developments into wider fields. Stacey's work was interrupted by the Second World War; but under the auspices of the Tube Alloys' project in Britain, he became interested in the chemistry of uranium and also of fluorine. This gave him the opportunity to enter the field of the organic chemistry of fluorine compounds and this part of his activities has flourished just as much as the carbohydrate field; at various academic institutions in Britain he has developed unique methods of dealing with the synthesis of a great variety of fluorine compounds and in seeking new uses for them in every possible way. Under Stacey's leadership, organic chemistry has increasingly widened its scope in Birmingham, with emphasis, too, on the biological implications of these developments of organic chemistry. In all these developments full use has been made of the more specialized techniques that have been available in the laboratory, especially on the physical side. These have made progress possible which was undreamt of in pre-war years. With greater responsibilities, the Chemistry Department under Stacey's guidance will, without doubt, develop actively and broadly in the years to come.

Italian Honours for Sir Cyril Hinshelwood and Prof. E. B. Chain

ON June 5, the Italian Foreign Minister honoured two British men of science, Sir Cyril Hinshelwood, president of the Royal Society, and Prof. E. B. Chain, by bestowing on them the order of the Grande Ufficiale al Merito della Repubblica, one of the highest civil distinctions in Italy. Sir Cyril Hinshelwood has been a frequent visitor to Italy, and his work and personality are greatly appreciated in this country, the language of which he has mastered with perfection. He has done much to strengthen the ties between British and Italian scientists. Prof. Chain, formerly of the University of Oxford, has worked since 1949 in Rome, where he has built up a large and very active department for biochemical research at the Istituto Superiore di Sanità, the chief centre for medical research in Italy.

Expansion of Metallurgy at Oxford

At a meeting of Congregation on June 12, a statute was promulgated which added the science of metals to the list of subjects that may be offered at Oxford in the Honour School of Natural Science. This subject covers much of the ground that is covered

by those who offer chemistry in that Honour School. The amount of organic chemistry, however, has been reduced in order to provide room for the science of metals. The new course is divided into Parts I and II on the same lines as the chemistry course, and in Part II a candidate will submit a thesis on a metallurgical subject after spending a year on research. Classified honours will be awarded on the combined results of both parts.

The new course marks a further stage in the development of metallurgy at Oxford which follows the establishment of the George Kelley readership by the Pressed Steel Co. and the appeal for funds for the subject which was strongly supported by the late chairman of the Company, Major Albert Pam. Post-graduate research work in metallurgy has been carried out at Oxford for more than thirty years under Dr. W. Hume-Rothery in the Inorganic Chemistry Laboratory, where its development owes much to the interest of Sir Cyril Hinshelwood. An independent Department of Metallurgy under Dr. Hume-Rothery is now being set up in temporary accommodation, and it is hoped that a new laboratory will be built in the next few years. The new development is particularly welcome in view of the close association of Oxford with metal-using industries.

National Parks Commission

THERE are now eight national parks in Britain—the Lake District, the Peak District, Snowdonia, Dartmoor, the Pembrokeshire Coast, the North York Moors, the Yorkshire Dales and Exmoor, with a total area of 4,333 square miles—while two further areas have been designated as national parks—Northumberland and the Brecon Beacons. One of the duties of the National Parks Commission is to bring to the notice of the public the setting up of these parks and to explain why they have been set up. There is still much misunderstanding among the general public, and the Commission takes every opportunity to show that the designation of an area as a national park effects no change in the ownership of land. The land is not 'nationalized' nor does designation as a national park confer on the public any right of access. Users of national parks are asked to respect privately owned country inside the parks in the same way that they would outside. They are also asked to observe the "Country Code", a code of behaviour for visitors which has been set out in an attractive booklet by the Commission and which can be obtained from H.M. Stationery Office, price 4*s*.

Museum of English Rural Life, Reading

THE first annual report of the Museum of English Rural Life at Reading, although dated 1955, covers the first four years of the existence of this rapidly growing institution. This Museum had the great advantage of starting from scratch and thus was able to determine its policy and administration, both of which were based on orthodox museum practice in Great Britain. Contrary to traditional custom, however, the report, rather than being a record of month-by-month activities, includes the abbreviated text of a lecture delivered by Mr. Uldall, keeper of Frilandsmuseet, the open-air section of the National Museum of Denmark. This lecture details some of the principles which are now slowly emerging concerning folk museums and folk parks and stresses the fact that the material acquired should be regarded primarily as objects for the basis of scientific study rather than exhibition pieces.