

105,000, as compared with 50,000 before the Second World War and 80,000 now. The universities cannot easily absorb the peak numbers if they are concentrated heavily in science and technology, nor place them in employment unless they are so concentrated. But elaborate plans are not needed to meet the brief and passing phase of the peak. What is essential is that careful but generous plans should be laid during 1957-62 to provide for a university population at least 10-15 per cent higher than now, rising slowly and steadily during the late 1960's and 1970's as the trend towards more seventeen-year-olds at school operates. Prof. Allen also stressed the importance of maintaining the proportion of women (now about one-quarter) in the university population, and in this he was supported by Dr. C. M. Rigby (University College, London). The risk is that any strain in the universities, and the inevitable concentration on science and technology, will result in smaller numbers of women students.

Lord Simon of Wythenshawe, Prof. J. F. Allen (St. Andrews) and others stressed the extreme urgency of problems created by shortages of scientists and technologists in industry. Large numbers are reported as being trained in the U.S.S.R., and there is a growing scarcity in the United States, where British technologists are already being used. It is essential that in Britain we should not fall behind in the provision of technologists. Lord Simon noted that the universities have been able to achieve a large expansion since the Second World War, and he said that another increase, particularly of university-trained technologists, is now required.

Prof. A. V. Judges (King's College, London) asked the conference not to overlook the human side of the problem. The extra children of the post-war generation have already had a raw deal, through shortages of facilities, equipment and teachers, and they must not be barred from university education. They constitute an asset the country can ill afford to waste. Dr. G. B. Jeffery (director, Institute of Education, University of London) asked whether we are not failing to make best use of our population of university students. Jobs in industry are increasingly requiring a higher level of ability, and we are not turning out enough scientists and technologists even for teaching.

Two vice-chancellors, Sir James Mountford (Liverpool) and Sir Philip Morris (Bristol), expressed very strongly the view that the estimate of an expansion of 10-15 per cent is far too low. They would compound the effect of the higher birth-rate after 1944 with that of the recent trend towards larger sixth-forms in schools, the argument of the opening speakers providing the line from which to deviate—in an upward direction. Unless the estimate is raised, the plans of the universities will be too small, and too slow, to meet the real situation. The urgent need is for a large and immediate increase in capital grants to universities, and in this the Governments of the past decade have failed to provide what had been necessary, and indeed promised, for the expansion since the Second World War. Not only must the deficiency be made up, but there must also be full provision in capital grants for the expansion to come.

R. G. D. ALLEN

## NEWS and VIEWS

### Sir Edward B. Poulton, F.R.S. (1856-1943)

THE son of an architect, Edward Bagnall Poulton was born at Reading a century ago on January 27, 1856. After taking first-class honours in natural science at Oxford in 1876, he became demonstrator of zoology under George Rolleston. Rolleston's successor, H. N. Moseley, supplied him with material from the *Challenger* Expedition, and in 1883 Poulton published three papers on the tongues of Australian mammals; five years later he discovered that *Ornithorhynchus* possesses true teeth which cut through the gums, but are replaced by horny plates. His real scientific interest lay in living insects, and he showed "a lifelong delight" in the coloration of animals and in mimicry. During 1884-88 he wrote several papers on the colours of larvæ and pupæ and on the factors influencing their survival value, and these studies led to his election to the Royal Society in 1889; in 1890 he published his classic book, "The Colours of Animals", which placed him in the front rank of protagonists of natural selection. Poulton's early interest in heredity is shown by an article in *Nature* (29, 20; 1883) on the inheritance of abnormal toes in cats. In 1893 he succeeded the first Hope professor of zoology, J. O. Westwood, and he occupied this Oxford chair of entomology for forty years. Recipient of many honours, he was vice-president of the Royal Society (1909-10) and Darwin Medallist (1914), president of the Linnean Society (1912-16) and Linnean Medallist (1922), and president of the second International Entomological Congress (1912). He was knighted in 1935. Poulton was a big man with penetrating blue eyes and a vigorous, friendly

personality, and his fondness for making the title of a communication summarize all the contents sorely tried the patience of bibliographers. He died on November 20, 1943, at the age of eighty-seven.

### Vice-chancellorship of Hull: Prof. Brynmor Jones

PROF. BRYNMOR JONES has been elected to be vice-chancellor of the University of Hull as from October next, in succession to Dr. J. H. Nicholson who is retiring. Prof. Brynmor Jones has held the G. F. Grant chair of chemistry in the University College (now University) of Hull since 1947. He has also acted as pro-vice-chancellor of the University since 1954 and prior to that was vice-principal of the College. Prof. Brynmor Jones was at the University College of North Wales prior to proceeding to St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1929. He was thereafter on the staff of the Chemistry Department of the University of Sheffield during 1931-46.

### Theoretical Physics in the Australian National University: Prof. K. J. LeCouteur

THE development of research in physics in Australia has been greatly strengthened by the appointment of Dr. K. J. LeCouteur to the chair of theoretical physics at the Australian National University, Canberra. Dr. LeCouteur, who at present holds a readership in theoretical physics in the University of Liverpool, has made important contributions to a variety of subjects. In recent years he has developed the theory of the emission of particles from excited nuclei to such an extent that it has become possible