The Medical Research Council Committee concludes that, despite these shortcomings, the protection measures were essentially right and, once brought into play, were applied decisively, and were adequate. It is convinced that it is in the highest degree unlikely that any harm has been done to anybody.

The chairman of the Atomic Energy Authority has accepted full responsibility for the accident, and at his request further inquiries are in hand to undertake a technical evaluation of information arising from the accident, and to review organization problems concerned with reactor operation.

A short, but convincing, note by the Authority gives several reasons why this accident could not happen with the Calder Hall or the new Electricity Authority reactors.

Much experience and information have been gained from the accident, without, so far as can be judged, any ill effects on humanity. We are fortunate in that the cause and history of the accident have almost certainly been traced, and we can be especially thankful for those much-criticized excrescences at the top of the ventilation stacks, the radioactivity filters.

W. Murgatroyd

OBITUARIES

Dr. Gerty T. Cori

Dr. Gerty T. Cori, who died at St. Louis, Mo., on October 26, was a most distinguished biochemist. In 1947, Prof. Carl F. Cori, her husband, and she shared with Prof. B. A. Houssay, of Argentina, the Nobel Prize for Medicine and Physiology.

Gerty Cori was born in Prague, Czechoslovakia, graduating in medicine from the German University in that city in 1920. In the year she graduated she married a fellow medical student, Carl Cori, by whom she later had one son. In 1922, Carl and Gerty Cori moved to the United States, becoming American citizens in 1928. Until 1931 they worked at the State Institute for the Study of Malignant Diseases at Buffalo, N.Y., and in 1931 they moved to St. Louis, where ultimately they both held professorships of biochemistry in the School of Medicine of Washington University.

Their principal researches have been in the field of carbohydrate metabolism, with particular reference to the mechanism of breakdown and building up of glycogen and the influence of hormones on the processes. In their early researches at Buffalo they discovered the 'Cori cycle', whereby lactic acid produced in mammalian muscle is converted to liver glycogen and thence can go via blood sugar to muscle glycogen and so back again to lactic acid. Their characterization of phosphorylase and their identification of the then unknown glucose-1-phosphate as the product of the action of the enzyme on glycogen under suitable conditions were of outstanding importance in the elucidation of pathways whereby glycogen is broken down and built up in muscle and liver. This discovery led to the first *in vitro* production of glycogen, which took place in their laboratory. Before this could be done, they characterized a branching enzyme (amylo-1 : 4-1 : 6-transglucosidase) in muscle which converts some 1 : 4 links of the amylose formed from glucose-1-phosphate, under the influence of phosphorylase, into 1 : 6 linkages, and thus produces a branched polysaccharide—in this instance glycogen—from a straight-chain one, namely amylose. In conjunction with her pupils during the past few years, Gerty Cori has, despite a rapidly growing illness, developed an enzymic method for assessing the molecular architecture of glycogen. Using such methods, she has differentiated several types of glycogen-storage disease according to differences in the enzymes and abnormalities of the structure of the stored glycogen.

The researches of Gerty Cori and her colleagues concerning the influence of insulin on the enzyme hexokinase are still a matter for discussion, but undoubtedly they have given rise to much fruitful investigation regarding the fundamental action of insulin all over the world.

Gerty Cori was a charming hostess as well as an outstanding scientist, being a woman of wide general culture and interests. A brave woman, outstanding as a scientist among scientists, she has left a permanent record of herself in numerous laboratories, not only in publications but also in the wide influence she exerted on research in the difficult field of carbohydrate metabolism

F. G. Young

Prof. J. A. S. Ritson, O.B.E.

John Anthony Sydney Ritson, emeritus professor of mining in the University of London, died on October 16 at the age of seventy. He was born at Pelton, Co. Durham, on August 18, 1887, and was educated at Uppingham and the University of Durham.

As a Rugby player he was capped several times for England between 1910 and 1913 and never in later life lost his love for the game which so appealed to the 'Geordie' side of his temperament. In the First World War his crisp and firm appraisal of men and situations won him the command of the 12th Royal Scots, a regiment he led with dash and distinction from 1916 until 1919. His battle honours included the D.S.O. and bar, the M.C. and four 'mentions'. After a post-war period as H.M. Inspector of Mines, during which he served successively in Scotland, Yorkshire and South Wales, he was appointed to the chair of mining in the University of Leeds in 1923.

In 1935 he was made O.B.E., and in the following year took over the chair of mining at the Royal School of Mines (one of the three associated Colleges which form the Imperial College of Science and Technology, London). Here his love of manly sports, his directness of approach and the whole-hearted way in which he embraced the cause of his students won him a host of friends. His long memory for names and faces was a valuable asset in this connexion, since metal miners go out from the Royal School of Mines all over the world and international social contacts are important. In addition to his academic activities, he did valuable work on O.E.E.C., where he helped to generate post-war interests in the development and treatment of low-grade ore deposits. Part of the fruits of his work, in which he took an important role, was the institution of the first degree course in the world in mineral dressing, at the Imperial College.

He took a serious operation in his stride in 1950. After he retired in 1952 he continued with a busy consulting practice in addition to his work with the Institution of Mining and Metallurgy and the Institution of Mining Engineers, in each of which he had been president. During the Second World War he did much work for the Ministry of Mines, but was never too busy to find time to see an old student. Other bodies which he served included the Geological Survey of Great Britain, the Coal Commission and the Natural Resources Commission. He was, until his death, the Crown mineral agent.

In addition, his consulting practice took him to many foreign countries and Dominions. We who worked under him learned to value his small human weaknesses not less than his qualities of leadership. He leaves a widow and two sons.

E. J. PRYOR

NEWS and VIEWS

Royal Medals of the Royal Society

H.M. THE QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve recommendations made by the Council of the Royal Society for the award of the two Royal Medals for the current year as follows: Prof. W. V. D. Hodge, Lowndean professor of astronomy and geometry in the University of Cambridge, for his distinguished work on algebraic geometry; Prof. F. G. Gregory, professor of plant physiology at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, London, for his distinguished studies in plant physiology.

The New Scientist

THE first anniversary issue of *The New Scientist* appeared on November 21. As H.R.H. Prince Philip says in a congratulatory letter, its birth could not have been more opportune. The accident at the Windscale factory, nuclear power and space travel have further stimulated the layman's interest in the activities and achievements of scientists. *The New Scientist*, as especially shown in its articles on the artificial Earth satellites, is admirably suited to satisfy their curiosity. It is one of the few realistic attempts to bridge the gulf between the scientists and non-scientists. Besides Prince Philip's letter, this issue, which marks the beginning of the journal's second year (vol. 3, No. 53), includes articles on "The Present Golden Age", by Sir Charles Darwin; "X-Ray Analysis", by Sir Lawrence Bragg; "Submarine Oil Tankers", by Nigel Calder; "Progress of Quick Freezing", by Dr. J. Hawthorn; and "Ragworms and Caviar", by Dr. R. P. Dales; there is also a Christmas book section. We offer *The New Scientist* our congratulations and best wishes, and feel sure that there will be many more anniversary issues.

500,000th Leitz Microscope: Dr. Paul A. Weiss

PROF. PAUL A. WEISS, head of the laboratory of developmental biology of the Rockefeller Institute, received the 500,000th microscope made by the firm of Ernst Leitz at a brief ceremony in his laboratory. The presentation of the microscope to Dr. Weiss is in the tradition of special recognition given by the Leitz organization to famous scientists for their fundamental contributions to the knowledge of living structures and their development and pathology. He is the first American to be so honoured. Robert Koch, discoverer of the tubercle bacillus, received the 100,000th Leitz microscope in 1907; Paul Ehrlich, pioneer in chemotherapy, the 150,00th in 1912; Martin Heidenhain, the histologist, the 200,000th in 1921; Ludwig Aschoff, the pathologist, the 300,000th in 1930; and Gerhard Domagk, Nobel prizeman for his work for chemotherapy, the 400,000th in 1949. Dr. Weiss, whose biological researches have covered a wide field, is known for his work on the analysis of the development and growth of living structures.

Royal Aircraft Establishment Appointments: Mr. R. W. Pye

MR. R. W. PYE has been promoted deputy chief scientific officer as head of the Trials Department of the Royal Aircraft Establishment. Mr. Pye graduated in mathematics at Cambridge in 1933 and joined the Royal Aircraft Establishment in 1936, when he worked on problems of airborne gunnery and the aerodynamics of winged torpedoes. During the War he was responsible in the London Headquarters for a range of armament research. At the beginning of 1947 he went to Australia in the team led by Lieut.-General Evetts to initiate the setting-up of the rocket range at Woomera. For the past eighteen months of his stay in Australia he was acting chief superintendent of the Long Range Weapons Establishment (now Weapons Research Establishment) at Salisbury and made important contributions to the planning and installation of the range facilities. Since his return to England in mid-1950, Mr. Pye has been intimately concerned with the extension of the guided weapon ranges in the United Kingdom and the introduction of new and advanced trials instrumentation techniques.

Mr. P. A. Hufton

MR. P. A. HUFTON has been appointed to the new post of head of the Bedford Divisions, Aerodynamics Department. In this post, which carries the rank of deputy chief scientific officer, he will take charge of the aerodynamic flight testing and wind tunnel testing at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Bedford. Mr. Hufton took his M.Sc. at the University of Manchester in 1934 and then joined the staff of the Royal Aircraft Establishment where he worked throughout the period 1934–46 on various aerodynamic research problems, specializing in research on aircraft in flight. In 1946 he moved to the A. & A.E.E., Boscombe Down, as superintendent of performance and in 1953 returned to the Royal Aircraft Establishment to take charge of the Supersonic Division, Aerodynamics Department, a post which he has held until his present appointment. He rapidly became expert in the expanding field of hypersonic aerodynamics, and under his leadership a strong research team was built up. During this period he was promoted to deputy chief scientific officer and acted as head of the Aerodynamics Department throughout 1956 while Mr. L. F. Nicholson was at the Imperial Defence College.