

the bug inside that caused the swelling called a gall to grow. Or you might find him sitting on a log in the woods, counting the mosquitoes that alighted on him and on a quarter of beef beside him, to find out how they knew what to bite.

Dr. Whitney retired as director in 1932, becoming an honorary vice-president of the General Electric Co. But he still came to the laboratory every day, at first devoting his time to personal experiment, his first love, which he had missed during his directorship; and later to visiting the research workers, with interest and encouragement.

Dr. Whitney's success as a pioneer of industrial research is a lasting contribution. The secret of that success was a combination of remarkable personal qualities—friendliness, mental vigour, breadth of interest and knowledge, stimulating originality, delightful flashes of humour, modesty, courage, directness and simplicity. A. W. HULL

Dr. K. H. Barker

DR. K. H. BARKER, who died suddenly in London on March 3, was born in Manchester in 1925 and educated in the Department of Physics at the University of Manchester, graduating in 1948. His university education was interrupted between 1945 and 1947 when he worked on the Tube Alloys Project in the Department of Physics at the University of Liverpool.

In 1948 Barker started research work in cosmic-ray physics at Manchester, under the direction of Prof. P. M. S. Blackett. At the beginning of his research career he joined my group, then engaged in studying high-energy nuclear collisions using a cloud chamber equipped with an electromagnet. This collaboration lasted until his death, a period of almost ten years without a break. His death is a very great loss to the group and to the subject of high-energy nuclear physics in which he had achieved a world-wide reputation.

The Manchester electromagnet was moved to the Observatory on the Pic-du-Midi in the French

Pyrenees in the autumn of 1949. Barker was responsible for installing the magnet and cloud chamber in the mountain laboratory at an altitude of 9,500 ft. Altogether, he spent between two and three years of his life working with the apparatus. In the early years he often climbed to the mountain top during the winter months; but a cable railway has now been installed. Barker was a first-class experimental physicist able to operate and maintain efficiently a complicated piece of equipment in very difficult circumstances.

In 1950 Barker obtained a very valuable set of photographs showing many decays of V^0 -particles. From the analysis of these pictures the group demonstrated, for the first time, that the V^0 -particles, discovered by Rochester and myself in 1947, consisted of two kinds: neutral Λ -hyperons which are heavier than the proton and heavy mesons, with mass intermediate between the π -meson and the proton. Barker played a leading part in obtaining and interpreting these photographs. He also observed, in 1950, the first decay of a Ξ^- -hyperon.

In 1953 Prof. Blackett and a number of his staff moved from Manchester to the Imperial College of Science and Technology, London. Barker was at once appointed a lecturer in physics at the Imperial College and continued to spend part of his time at the Pic-du-Midi working on the same general research programme. During the past year or so the group has been studying the properties of nucleon-nucleon collisions with energies of 50 GeV. and upwards. In this work Barker collaborated very successfully and fruitfully with French physicists from Prof. Leprince-Ringuet's Laboratory at the École Polytechnique in Paris. At the time of his death he was enthusiastically planning new experiments in high-energy nuclear physics using an accelerator, instead of the cosmic-rays, as a source of particles.

Barker was a good teacher, both of undergraduates and research students, and, as a friendly and helpful colleague, will be sadly missed by the staff of the Department of Physics at the Imperial College.

C. C. BUTLER

NEWS and VIEWS

Mastership of Clare College, Cambridge:

Sir Henry Thirkill, C.B.E.

SIR HENRY THIRKILL retires from the mastership of Clare College, Cambridge, on September 30 next. Apart from the war years 1914-19, Sir Henry has been in residence since he entered the College as an undergraduate in 1905. He sat for the Natural Sciences Tripos, Part I, in 1907, and for Part II in the following year. He was elected a Fellow of Clare in 1910, having embarked on research at the Cavendish Laboratory under J. J. Thomson, being later one of his demonstrators in the somewhat precarious days when the professor was personally responsible for his assistant's stipends. During the First World War, Thirkill served in the Royal Engineers, being O.C. Wireless in East Africa, 1915-18, and receiving the Military Cross. On returning to Cambridge, he was appointed College lecturer and a University lecturer in experimental physics. It is, however, as tutor of Clare College from 1920 that he will best be remembered by many generations of Clare men—not only

for his gentle if determined guidance but also for his hospitality at breakfast or Sunday evening music and, for the more energetic, on the tennis or squash court. Though made president of the College in 1930, he retained the tutorship until he was elected master in 1939.

Always a great worker, Thirkill found time from an early date to serve the University as well as his College. He was elected a member of the Council of the Senate so far back as 1927, serving continuously for thirty years. This was only a beginning; for many years he was also a member of the General Board of the Faculties, of the Financial Board and of many other committees. It would be difficult to find a man in any age who has given longer or more devoted service in the sometimes thankless task of university administration. Thirkill was vice-chancellor in the particularly busy years 1945-47 when plans for post-war developments were being prepared on every hand. It fell to him to entertain the many war leaders on whom honorary degrees were conferred. His brilliant speeches at the