

NEWS and VIEWS

**Royal Society Research Professorship:
Prof. G. H. Beale, M.B.E., F.R.S.**

THE first of the Royal Society research professorships, for which the Government made provision in 1962, has been awarded to Dr. G. H. Beale, of the Department of Genetics, University of Edinburgh. G. H. Beale was born in London in 1913, and graduated in botany at the Imperial College of Science and Technology in 1935. From then until 1940 he worked on flower pigments at the John Innes Horticultural Garden, being one of the group of workers who, under the inspiration of J. B. S. Haldane, made the first successful attempt to describe gene effects in biochemical terms. During the Second World War he served in the Army, spending two years in northern U.S.S.R. and another two in Finland. During 1946-47 he worked on bacterial genetics in Demerec's laboratory in Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, and then moved to Indiana with a Rockefeller fellowship to study the genetics of *Paramecium* with Sonneborn. He returned to Great Britain in 1948, and joined the Institute of Animal Genetics at Edinburgh, where he has remained ever since, first as a lecturer and later as reader in the University Department of Genetics. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1959.

Since his return to Britain, Prof. Beale has devoted his attention to *Paramecium* and in particular to the complex and revealing interplay between cytoplasmic factors and nuclear genes in controlling the appearance of antigenic substances. By the time his monograph on *The Genetics of Paramecium aurelia* appeared in 1954, he had already shown that the antigens are controlled by several gene loci, at each of which a number of alleles exist, and that it is some condition or 'state' of the cytoplasm that decides which of the gene-loci shall be active and bring about the appearance of its characteristic antigen. This is a system of the greatest theoretical importance, since it is exactly of the kind that has often been postulated to explain the processes of embryonic development, but has the advantage of being much more accessible to analysis, both genetical and biochemical, than any known embryonic system. In recent years considerable progress has been made in characterizing the chemical nature of the antigens; they are proteins, of rather high molecular weight, but quite accessible to detailed study. The nature of the cytoplasmic 'states' is more obscure; but Beale and his associates have recently discovered a quite unexpected type of cytoplasmic entity, namely particulate elements, which they name 'metagons', capable of persistence but not of multiplication in the absence of a corresponding gene, and involved in the maintenance of the symbiotic 'killer' 'articles which may inhabit the cytoplasm of *Paramecium*.

Pure Mathematics at Monash: Prof. G. B. Preston

PROF. G. B. PRESTON, associate professor of mathematics at the Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham, has been appointed to the foundation chair of pure mathematics at Monash University. He was formerly a mathematical scholar of Magdalen College, Oxford, and has held an appointment at the Royal Military College of Science since 1949. During 1956-58 he was a visiting assistant professor at Tulane University, New Orleans, where he collaborated with Prof. A. H. Clifford on a monograph on the algebraic theory of semigroups. He was promoted to associate professor at Shrivenham in 1961 under the scheme whereby scientists in the Civil Service are rewarded for research work of special merit.

Scientists in Government Services

IN a written answer in the House of Commons on March 12 to a question regarding action on the recommendations of the Zuckerman report regarding transfer of research staff and interchange between posts in the Scientific Officer Class and in other Civil Service classes, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Mr. A. Barber, stated that these recommendations had been fully considered in the Interdepartmental Panel. There were already more than 500 posts in the scientific-officer class established at headquarters of the departments for scientific and general administration, and the use of scientists on this type of work was being extended. While the Committee's recommendations were unacceptable, experience provided little evidence that any significant number of scientists employed in the Civil Service who had a marked capacity for administrative work wished to be employed in this way.

The Parliamentary and Scientific Committee

THE annual report of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee for 1962 records that the Sub-Committee, confined to Parliamentary members, set up to consider the future of research associations, reported in July, and the report has been submitted to the Minister for Science (Pp. 22. London: Parliamentary and Scientific Committee, 1963). It is hoped that the issues raised may be discussed by representatives of the Committee with the Minister in due course. Discussions and talks during the year covered the Gibb-Zuckerman report; the future of water supplies, water conservation, etc., in Great Britain; technical considerations relating to the Channel tunnel and Channel bridge; problems of diseases arising out of the use of new materials and processes in industry and agriculture; nuclear energy in Great Britain; Soviet science; and recent developments in connexion with mechanical engineering research in Great Britain.

The Microchemical Journal

THE Academic Press will continue to publish *The Microchemical Journal*, under the auspices of the American Microchemical Society (formerly Metropolitan Microchemical Society). The first six volumes were published by Interscience Publishers. The new editor-in-chief is Dr. Al Steyermark, of Hoffmann-La Roche, Inc., Nutley, New Jersey. He is assisted by four editors: H. A. Flaschka, Howard J. Francis, jun., Keiichiro Hozumi and Wolfgang J. Kirsten, and an advisory board. Starting with Vol. 7, 1963, the *Journal* will cover a broader field. Research articles of all phases of chemistry involving small-scale manipulation are eligible for consideration. Manuscripts dealing with both organic and inorganic work relating to the preparation, purification, separation, detection, determination, trace analyses, clinical chemistry, and all types of instrumentation—microscopy, chromatography (thin-layer, paper, gas), spectroscopy (infra-red, ultra-violet, mass, X-ray), nuclear magnetic resonance, and neutron activation, may be submitted to the editor-in-chief. During 1963, four issues will be published. The price for Volume 7 is 16.00 dollars. Further information can be obtained from the Academic Press, 111 Fifth Avenue, New York 3, or Academic Press, Berkeley Square House, London, W.1.

The British Museum (Natural History)

THE British Museum (Natural History) has recently issued the tenth edition of its short *Guide to the Exhibition Galleries* (Pp. vi + 38. London: British Museum (Natural