

NEWS and VIEWS

Organic Chemistry at Sheffield : Prof. W. D. Ollis

DR. W. D. OLLIS, at present reader in organic chemistry at the University of Bristol, has been appointed to the chair of organic chemistry at the University of Sheffield in succession to Prof. R. D. Haworth (see *Nature*, 199, 21; 1963). Dr. Ollis graduated at the University of Bristol and was appointed to the academic staff in 1946. Dr. Ollis's earlier research work, in collaboration with Prof. W. Baker, was concerned with various aspects of organic chemistry, including the investigation and establishment of the novel aromatic structures of a widely varying group of heterocyclics now termed 'meso-ionic' compounds, of which the sydnones are representative, the study of the formation and stereochemistry of macrocyclic compounds of the salicylide, cresotide and thymotide types, and the synthesis of isoflavones. His continued research work on the chemistry of natural products has been widely based, including synthetic, structural and bio-synthetic studies on plant products and fungal metabolites. Structural investigations, involving extensive use of modern physical methods, have led to the recognition of several new groups, including the biflavonyls and the dalbergiones, as well as structural variants of the isoflavanoids. The results of his work on the Gymnosperms and members of the Leguminosae family are of considerable phytochemical interest. In 1952 and 1953, Dr. Ollis was a member of the group under Prof. R. B. Woodward, of Harvard University, who achieved the total synthesis of strychnine, and in 1962 he was visiting professor at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Chief Oceanographer, Marine Sciences, Canada:

Dr. N. J. Campbell

DR. NEIL J. CAMPBELL, oceanographer-in-charge, Atlantic Oceanographic Group, Fisheries Research Board, has been appointed chief oceanographer, Marine Sciences Branch, Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, Canada. A marine physicist, Dr. Campbell has had several years of experience in oceanography, particularly in the Arctic. Since 1959, he has directed the activities of the Atlantic Oceanographic Group's oceanographers and marine biologists in their investigations of Atlantic and sub-Arctic waters. Born in Los Angeles, he obtained his B.Sc. and M.Sc. from McMaster University in 1950 and 1951, respectively, and his Ph.D. in physics from the University of British Columbia in 1955, attending the Institute of Oceanography there. During this period he participated in a joint U.S.-Canadian Beaufort Sea Expedition in a study of the properties of western sub-Arctic waters off Canada's northern coast. On graduation, Dr. Campbell joined the staff of the Oceanographic Group of Fisheries Research Board in Nanaimo, British Columbia. Later, he was transferred to the Board's Biological Station at St. Andrews, New Brunswick, to take charge of an oceanographic programme of the Canadian Arctic. Under this programme he directed and participated in 1955 and 1956 in two Arctic cruises to Hudson Strait, Foxe Basin and Lancaster Sound. He remained in charge of this programme until 1958, during which time he directed one phase of the International Geophysical Year oceanographic project, 'Deep Water Circulation'. In 1960 and 1961 he acted as scientist-in-charge of joint cruises of the Atlantic Oceanographic Group with Dalhousie and Columbia Universities, which carried out geological investigations of the Earth's crust in the north-west Atlantic Ocean. Dr. Campbell is now a Canadian citizen.

The 1963 Soviet Antarctic Expedition

A BRITISH glaciologist, Dr. Charles Swithinbank, is to join the ninth Soviet Antarctic Expedition which is preparing to leave Leningrad in the autumn in the Diesel-electric ship *Ob* and motorship *Co-operatsiya*. This will be the first time a British scientist has participated in a Soviet Antarctic expedition. French scientists will also work with their Soviet colleagues in the Antarctic. They will be flown from Mirny to the *Vostok* station, where they will study the dynamics of the movement of ice. Pavel Haloupka (Czechoslovakia), well known for his work on cosmic rays, will be spending his second winter in Antarctica. There will also be an exchange of scientists between the expeditions of the U.S.S.R. and the United States.

The Building Research Station and the Road Research Laboratory

IN REPLY to questions in the House of Commons on July 30, the Parliamentary Secretary for Science, Mr. D. Freeth, said that the non-industrial staff of the Building Research Station would increase by about 6 per cent in 1964-65 and improved facilities would be available in the new physics laboratories opened earlier in July. The gross expenditure of the Station had risen from £781,000 in 1961-62 to an estimated £970,000 in the next financial year, and he fully agreed that there was an increasing volume of research for the Station. The Department of Scientific and Industrial Research expected to award up to 2,010 postgraduate studentships this year, an increase of 24 per cent on 1962, and the value of the awards was increased by an average of 23 per cent last year. Mr. Freeth also said that the Road Research Laboratory examined the specifications of all motorway and trunk road schemes costing more than £1 million, and monthly liaison meetings were held between the Laboratory and the Ministry of Transport to discuss problems arising from road schemes. When appropriate, visits were paid to schemes in progress. If questions arose on which the advice of geologists and pedologists elsewhere in Government service would be valuable, it could readily be obtained.

The National Centre for Scientific Research, Paris

IN THE year ended September 30, 1962, the budget of the National Centre for Scientific Research, Paris, exceeded 308,000,000 new francs—an increase of 54 million francs on 1960-61 (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris. Rapport d'Activité, Octobre 1961—Octobre 1962. Pp. 440+4 planches. Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1963.) Of this, some 211 million francs was for functional services, 85 million francs for equipment, and almost 6 million francs for grants for the institution of new activities. The number of research workers increased from 3,409 in 1961 to 3,773, and of these, 3,045 were working in the natural sciences and 762 in the human sciences, compared with 2,712 and 674, respectively, in 1960-61. The report for the year is in three parts. The first reviews briefly the general services given to scientific research, including the provision of equipment, assistance to publications, international exchanges, documentation, etc. The second reviews briefly the activities of the research groups which are not located in the research centres attached to the National Centre itself. These range over the mathematical, terrestrial, and human sciences, physics, chemistry, biology and medicine. The third part summarizes the work proceeding in the several laboratories of the