

from October 1. Dr. Perkins was born in Kingston upon Hull and attended the Malet Lambert High School. He took his degree in physics at the Imperial College of Science and Technology in 1945, and in 1947 was appointed demonstrator in physics. He held the 1851 Exhibition scholarship from 1948 until 1951, and was awarded a Ph.D. in the University of London in 1948. At this time, he was studying nuclear interactions produced by cosmic radiation in photographic emulsions exposed on the Jungfrau-joch. He was the first to observe the tracks due to the nuclear capture of  $\pi$ -mesons, and hence to demonstrate that there is a strongly interacting negative meson. In 1949 he moved to the University of Bristol, where in 1956 he was appointed lecturer in physics, and in 1960 reader in physics. During this period he played a leading part in the application of the photographic method to the physics of elementary particles; his most outstanding work was concerned with the study of the characteristics of nuclear interactions of very high energy, such as can be observed only in cosmic radiation. Recently he has been working in association with the bubble chamber group at CERN, in the interpretation of bubble chamber photographs recorded in the neutrino experiments. These experiments give most valuable confirmation of the earlier result from Brookhaven, suggesting the existence of two types of neutrino; they also showed that with the energy spectrum of the neutrinos in the beams at CERN,  $\pi$ -mesons were produced in more than 50 per cent of the neutrino interactions observed in the chamber. No evidence could be found for the expected intermediate boson in these interactions. In his new post at Oxford, he is likely to concentrate on bubble chamber experiments.

#### Second Chair of Pure Mathematics in the University of Liverpool : Prof. C. T. C. Wall

DR. C. T. C. WALL, at present reader in mathematics in the University of Oxford, and a Fellow of St. Catherine's College, has been appointed to a second chair of pure mathematics in the University of Liverpool from September 1. At the age of twenty-nine he will be the youngest professor in the University. Dr. Wall was an undergraduate and afterwards a Fellow at Trinity College, Cambridge, and he has spent a year as a Harkness Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. He has worked primarily in algebraic and differential topology and has made many important contributions in these rapidly developing subjects.

#### Land and Natural Resources

IN a written answer in the House of Commons on May 10, the Minister of Land and Natural Resources, Mr. F. Willey, stated that he had asked Sir Dudley Stamp's Committee (*Nature*, 206, 242; 1965) to study the evaluation of amenity and other social considerations, as against economic considerations, and would take its advice into account when considering the reports of the Water Resources Board on the feasibility of the Morecambe Bay and Solway Firth barrage schemes. In reply to further questions on May 10, Mr. Willey added that he intended to see that the potential of desalination for augmenting Britain's water resources was fully investigated. The Water Resources Board would be working on the problems associated with the distribution and use of desalted water, and its work and that of the Atomic Energy Authority and others in this field would be co-ordinated by a Committee established with the Director of the Board as chairman.

Again on May 10, replying to questions, Mr. Willey said that the Water Resources Board's terms of reference for studies of the Morecambe Bay and Solway barrage schemes were to examine and report on: (1) the feasibility and probable cost of construction; (2) the yields and qualities of water which would be made available; (3) the demand for water, and the rate of growth of that

demand in areas which might be supplied; (4) the arrangements necessary to distribute barrage water; (5) the delivered cost of treated or partly treated water; (6) other possible sources of supply in relation to the demand and the costs of their staged development.

Although the river authorities and the Water Resources Board assumed their full functions only on April 1, Mr. Willey stated that he had just received their preliminary assessment of the national situation for water conservation. An increase in the staff of the National Parks Commission had been authorized and he was also considering what increase should be made in the Commission's technical planning staff. Financial procedures were being reviewed to see whether they could be simplified so as to help the Commission and the Park Planning Authorities, and he hoped shortly to present a new countryside policy. Mr. Willey also announced that the Government was recommending to Parliament a contribution from the Exchequer of £500,000 to the "Enterprise Neptune" of the National Trust for safeguarding the beauty of the coastline.

#### New Steering Committee for Building Research in Britain

A STEERING COMMITTEE has been appointed by the Minister of Technology to be responsible, under the chairmanship of Dr. B. K. Blount, deputy secretary, Ministry of Technology, for the general supervision of the research programme and work of the Ministry's Building Research Station at Garston, Watford, Hertfordshire. The Steering Committee has appointed an Advisory Committee on Building Research, drawn mainly from the industry, to provide expert help and advice. It will act as a two-way channel of communication between the Building Research Station and the industry, professions and Government departments it serves. These changes come about because the previous arrangements, whereby the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research was advised by the Building Research Board on the work of the research station, automatically came to an end when the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research were dissolved on March 31. The terms of reference of the Steering Committee are: "To be responsible to the Minister of Technology for the general supervision of the work of the Building Research Station and for the allocation of effort thereon within the financial resources assigned to the Station and such other limits as the Minister may impose". Mr. R. M. Wynne Edwards (Constructors John Brown, Ltd.) will be chairman of the Advisory Committee.

#### Water Resources

IN reply to questions in the House of Commons on May 17, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Land and Natural Resources, Mr. A. Skeffington, said that the preliminary survey made by the Water Resources Board showed that on the available information, South-East England, North-West England, Northumbria, South Wales and the West Midlands areas were already facing water supply problems or would do so in the 1970's and 1980's. For South-East England, the Great Ouse, Thames and Hampshire areas had water resources surplus to their needs; for North-West England, the Cumberland and Lancashire areas; for the Northumbrian area, Cumberland, the Yorkshire area and Scotland; for South Wales there were abundant sources which needed to be redistributed; and for the West Midlands, the Severn and Wye.

#### Nuclear Disarmament

IN reply to a question in the House of Lords on May 11, Lord Chalfont said that he understood that the Swedish Government had appointed a committee to study the desirability and possibility of establishing in Sweden an