

NEWS and VIEWS

**Physical Chemistry in the University of Cambridge :
Prof. R. G. W. Norrish, F.R.S.**

ON September 30, Prof. R. G. W. Norrish will retire from the chair of physical chemistry in the University of Cambridge, a post which he has held with distinction for the past twenty-eight years. There can be few whose careers have been so completely linked with one city and its institutions. Norrish attended the Perse Grammar School in Cambridge, from which he entered Emmanuel College as a Scholar in 1915. He has since held a fellowship of that College for many years. Following war service, he took a double first in the Natural Sciences Tripos. He gained a Ph.D. in 1924 and an Sc.D. in 1936. He was appointed a demonstrator in physical chemistry in Cambridge in 1926, and later became Humphrey Owen Jones lecturer—a post which has been held by several physical chemists now occupying distinguished positions. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1936 and in the following year became professor of physical chemistry at Cambridge. The great bulk of Norrish's work has been in reaction kinetics, much of it with a strong photochemical emphasis, and has been notable for a pronounced flair for clear experiments. Another interesting feature is the way it has taken the impact of the application of quantum mechanics in its stride. Norrish's attachment to photochemistry showed itself in early papers (1923) on potassium permanganate, and was followed by distinguished work on the effects of light on nitrogen dioxide and on chlorine. This led him into the fields of photosensitization and of chain reactions, in which he made outstanding investigations. His classical series of papers in the late 1930's on photolysis of aldehydes and ketones must also be mentioned.

All these lines have been pursued more recently, but the early 1950's saw the introduction of a remarkable new phase of activity based on flash photolysis and high-speed spectroscopic techniques, which enabled very rapid reactions and the details of exchange of molecular energy to be elucidated. This has been one of the most fruitful fields in which Norrish has worked, and to which, at the moment of retirement, he is contributing with distinction. Norrish's work has been recognized by foreign honours, among them an honorary doctorate of the University of Paris (Sorbonne), foreign membership of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and corresponding membership of the Academy of Sciences of Göttingen and of the Royal Society of Sciences of Liège. He has been president of the Faraday Society and vice-president of the Royal Institute of Chemistry. The quality of his research was recognized very early with the Meldola Medal of the Royal Institute of Chemistry in 1926, and confirmed by the awards of the Davy Medal of the Royal Society (1953) and the Faraday Medal of the Chemical Society (1964). He will be wished a long and active retirement by past members of his Department, who include eleven Fellows of the Royal Society, and by an enormous number of colleagues all over the world.

Prof. J. W. Linnett, F.R.S.

DR. J. W. LINNETT, reader in inorganic chemistry in the University of Oxford, who succeeds Prof. R. G. W. Norrish as professor of physical chemistry in the University of Cambridge in October, was educated at King Henry VIII School, Coventry, and at St. John's College, Oxford, where he was a pupil of Prof. H. W. Thompson.

After graduating in 1935 with first-class honours in chemistry he spent two further years in Oxford on research work for a D.Phil., and then went to Harvard for a year as a Henry Fellow. He returned to Oxford as a Junior Research Fellow of Balliol, and in 1945 was elected to a fellowship at The Queen's College. His first research interests were infra-red spectroscopy and molecular force fields, and later he turned to the application of quantum mechanics to problems of molecular structure. But although the author of numerous theoretical papers, he has also been actively involved in the experimental study of chemical kinetics, first of gaseous chain reactions by conventional methods, then of reactions in flames, and more recently of atom-recombination reactions. He has been prominent in administration, both in Oxford and elsewhere, being a vice-president of the Faraday Society and a secretary of the Chemical Society, and he has travelled and lectured widely. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1955. Cambridge therefore gains, at Oxford's expense, a very talented physical chemist of wide interests and considerable experience.

**Materials Technology in the College of Advanced
Technology, Birmingham : Prof. H. J. Pick**

DR. H. J. PICK has been appointed professor of materials technology in the Department of Metallurgy in the College of Advanced Technology, Birmingham (University of Aston in Birmingham designate), and will take up his new duties on September 1. On leaving Torquay Grammar School, Dr. Pick attended the University of Liverpool where, after a break of three years during the Second World War when he served as a pilot in the Royal Air Force, he obtained in 1949 a B.Sc. degree in engineering with honours in metallurgy. After a further two years at the University of Birmingham he was awarded a Ph.D. for research on industrial metallurgy. Dr. Pick is at present chief metallurgist with Joseph Lucas (Electrical), Ltd., Birmingham, and he previously held appointments as Research Fellow and as lecturer in industrial metallurgy at the University of Birmingham. He has carried out a considerable amount of research on casting and electro-deposition.

Social Anthropology in the University of Hull :**Prof. I. G. Cunnison**

PROF. I. G. CUNNISON has been appointed to the newly established chair of social anthropology in the University of Hull from January 1, 1966. Prof. Cunnison read for Part I of the Modern Languages Tripos at Cambridge before serving with the Royal Artillery during 1942-45. When he returned to Cambridge he took Part II of the Anthropology and Archaeology Tripos, graduating with first class honours. In 1952 he was awarded a D.Phil. degree by the University of Oxford, where he had been a research assistant in the Institute of Social Anthropology. After three years as research officer at the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, Northern Rhodesia, he became an assistant lecturer in social anthropology in the University of Manchester. In 1952 he was appointed social anthropologist to the Sudan Government, and returned in 1955 to the University of Manchester, where he was Simon Research Fellow and later lecturer in social anthropology. He became head of the Department of Social Anthropology and Sociology in the University of Khartoum in 1959, where since 1964 he has been professor of social anthropology.