

NEWS and VIEWS

The Royal Society : Vice-Presidents

THE president of the Royal Society, Prof. P. M. S. Blackett, has appointed the following vice-presidents for the year ending November 30, 1966: Lord Fleck, treasurer of the Royal Society, formerly chairman of Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd.; Prof. A. A. Miles, biological secretary of the Royal Society, director of the Lister Institute and professor of experimental pathology in the University of London; Prof. M. J. Lighthill, physical secretary of the Royal Society and Royal Society research professor at the Imperial College of Science and Technology in the University of London; Prof. H. W. Thompson, foreign secretary of the Royal Society and professor of chemistry in the Physical Chemistry Laboratory, University of Oxford.

Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh :

Prof. C. KEMBALL, F.R.S.

PROF. C. KEMBALL, at present professor of physical chemistry at the Queen's University of Belfast, has been appointed to the chair of chemistry in the University of Edinburgh in succession to Prof. T. L. Cottrell, who has been appointed first Principal of the University of Stirling. Prof. Kemball will take up his appointment on August 1, 1966. He was educated at Edinburgh Academy and at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he graduated in 1943 with first-class honours in the Natural Sciences Tripos. After war-time employment by the Ministry of Aircraft Production in the Department of Colloid Science in Cambridge, he was elected a Fellow of Trinity College in 1946, holding, in addition, a demonstratorship in physical chemistry from 1951. In 1954 he was appointed to the chair of physical chemistry at the Queen's University of Belfast, where he has also served as dean of the Faculty of Science and, from 1962 until 1965, as vice-president of the University. Prof. Kemball is distinguished for his work on the mechanism of heterogeneous catalytic reactions, leading to new knowledge of the nature and reactivity of adsorbed radicals on metal film. He has been a pioneer in developing new techniques for the study of absorption phenomena and catalytic activity. His interest in these fields was aroused and stimulated by his association with Sir Eric Rideal at Cambridge and with Sir Hugh Taylor at Princeton, where he spent the academic year 1946-47 as a Commonwealth Fund Fellow. Awarded in 1951 the Meldola Medal of the Royal Institute of Chemistry as the most outstanding British chemist under the age of thirty, he won the Corday-Morgan Medal and Prize of the Chemical Society for 1958, and, in 1962, was the first non-American to receive the Ipatieff Prize of the American Chemical Society. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1965.

Headship of the Plant Pathology Division, Ministry of Agriculture, and the Chair of Mycology and Plant Pathology in the University of Belfast :

Prof. R. K. McKee

DR. MCKEE, principal scientific officer at the John Innes Institute, Hertford, has been appointed to the headship of the Plant Pathology Division, Ministry of Agriculture, and the chair of mycology and plant pathology in the University of Belfast. He takes up this joint post in January 1966. Robert K. McKee, a native of Northern Ireland, was educated at Campbell College, Belfast, and at Cambridge, where he was an exhibitioner of Emmanuel College. After gaining his B.A. in 1938, he went to Trinidad to the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, where

he carried out research on witches' broom disease in cacao, and lectured in mycology until 1943. After serving 3 years in the Royal Navy as a radar officer, he was appointed to the Agricultural Research Council potato storage station, Nottingham, to investigate the control of dry rot and common scab. Here, he discovered the toxicity of solanine to micro-organisms and the influence of solanine content on disease resistance in potato tubers. While at Nottingham, he was awarded a Ph.D. by the University and, in 1956, moved to the John Innes Institute to become the pathologist in the Potato Genetics Department. He first studied the inheritance of resistance to potato virus Y and potato blight in wild *Solanum* species and then carried out selection experiments towards breeding new scab- and blight-resistant potato varieties. While surveying some recent collections of South American potatoes, he discovered a new virus, Andean potato latent, which is unusual among potato viruses in having spherical particles. Dr. McKee has made valuable contributions to the methodology of his subject and has also been actively interested in the biochemical basis of disease resistance and the systematic distribution of steroidal alkaloids in *Solanum*.

Ministry of Power : Advisory Council on Research and Development

THE Minister of Power, Mr. F. Lee, has appointed Dr. H. M. Finnieston, managing director of the International Research and Development Co., Ltd., and technical director of C. A. Parsons and Co., Ltd., to be a member of his Advisory Council on Research and Development. Also appointed to this Council is Mr. P. A. Lingard, a full-time member of the Electricity Council since March 1965.

Production Engineering Advisory Service

IN a written answer in the House of Commons on December 14, 1965, the Minister of Technology, Mr. F. Cousins, stated that he had decided to set up a Production Engineering Advisory Service to help the engineering and allied industries to increase their productive efficiency. This service would cover all aspects of engineering, from the improvement of engineering design to new and improved management and production techniques, including automation. It would be available to all engineering firms and would be operated on behalf of the Ministry by the Production Engineering Research Association in conjunction with the Ministry's regional offices. Mobile demonstration and advisory units would be stationed in each region and teams would be available to visit engineering works and show designers, foremen and production staff how to use the most modern production engineering techniques. The service would begin as soon as the mobile units could be prepared and staffed, and Mr. Cousins hoped it would be in operation in all regions within 12 months. Initially it would run for 4 years at an estimated net cost to the Exchequer of about £1 million.

Careers in Engineering

IN a written answer in the House of Commons on December 13, the Secretary of State for Education and Science, Mr. A. Crosland, stated that he and the Minister of Technology were aware of the desirability of encouraging more young people to enter the engineering profession. An interdepartmental Publicity Working Party on Technology and Engineering had recommended a special publicity programme which included films for exhibition in schools, a number of travelling exhibitions and a