

OBITUARIES

Professor V. Vand

AFTER a long illness, Professor Vladimir Vand died in Centre County Hospital on April 4, aged 57.

Vand was born of Czech parents in Sumy, Russia, where he also spent his boyhood. The family later settled in Czechoslovakia where he attended the Charles University of Prague, gaining the degree of doctor rerum naturalium in experimental, applied and astrophysics. After serving as a research physicist in the Skoda works, he moved to England in 1940 where, in the research department of Lever Brothers and Unilever Ltd, he began his work on crystallography, rheology and the physical properties of long-chain compounds. In 1950, he was awarded an Imperial Chemical Industries research fellowship by the University of Glasgow, and there, during the next three years, his interests extended to the crystallography of organic compounds, phase identification by X-ray analysis, molecular orbital calculations, the theory of crystal growth and electron microscopy. He was also one of the pioneers of computer techniques. In recognition of his work, he was later (in 1954) awarded a DSc in chemistry by the University of Glasgow. In 1953, he joined the department of physics of the Pennsylvania State University as a research associate and was made an associate professor of physics in the following year. He became professor of crystallography in 1961 and a member of the materials research laboratory in 1962. His recent activities included research on light scattering, polytypism, planetary materials, tektites, information retrieval and the structure of water.

As this list shows, Vand was schooled in many fields, self-trained in some and a brilliant practitioner in them all. Never willing to recognize inhibiting boundaries between subjects, he regarded the entire world of science as his oyster. He had the pleasure of seeing many of his discoveries and theories applied in practice and he had a keen sense of professional comradeship with scientists all over the world. He was a fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, of the (London) Institute of Physics and of the American Crystallographic Association, and he served as a consultant to numerous government departments and industries.

His distinguished researches in crystallography contributed to the discovery of the structure of DNA and the results of his work on water are now being applied in biology and medicine. For every scientific achievement directly associated with his name, there must be a dozen which he helped to inspire. He was a man of great modesty, and was unstinting in his support for those in need of encouragement and assistance. His love of nature found outlet in his hobby of photography, which he practised with skill and good taste. He was at one time president of the Color Slide Club and, with his wife, Molly, who died last August, one of the founders of the Junior Museum of central Pennsylvania. Vladimir Vand will be sadly missed and mourned by all who knew him, as a friend and family man.

Dr Helge Volsøe

WITH the sudden death of Dr Helge Volsøe, the zoological museum of the University of Copenhagen has lost a most efficient director.

Svend Helge Volsøe was born in 1908 in Copenhagen and studied natural history at the university there from

1927 to 1936, taking a degree for college teaching, and then another as a specialist in comparative anatomy. He was awarded his DSc in 1944 for a paper dealing with the structure and seasonal variation in male reproductive organs of the common viper. During 1947 he spent several months in the Canary Islands, and the material which he collected formed the basis of his well known papers on the birds of those islands. For several months during 1950 he took part in the Galathea expedition, and in 1959 he went on an expedition to Nigeria—unfortunately his many other duties prevented him from publishing reports of his collections. He had a great talent for administration and the duties with which he was entrusted forced him to set aside his scientific work on snakes and birds—his two favourite subjects.

In 1937 he became a lecturer at the zoological laboratory of the University of Copenhagen under Professor Spärck, who at that time held the chair of zoology and was director of the zoological museum. Spärck had always worked hard to provide better facilities for the overcrowded museum, for a long time without any success. In the early 1950s, however, the government appropriated funds for a completely new complex of buildings for the zoological laboratory and museum, to include related institutes. The buildings were to be erected on the new campus in Universitetsparken. While still officially serving under Spärck, Volsøe presented detailed plans for the laboratory and museum. In 1960 he was appointed director of the museum, and as such was responsible for organizing the transfer of the scientific collections to the new site. In a very short time the scientific part of the museum was working well in the new buildings. His colleagues soon realized that Volsøe had created a museum of a very high standard—perhaps a prototype institute in which the laboratories, libraries and collections of each department are situated very close together.

The exhibits, however, remained in the old museum. They contained little that was suitable for the illustration of contemporary ideas, and so Volsøe set out to modernize this part of the museum. He found the right people and saw the work well started, but did not live long enough to see even the first part of it finished.

Volsøe also served in many different organizations where his administrative skill was always useful. He will be remembered as a talented scientist and an excellent teacher. The zoological museum in Copenhagen bears witness to his skilful planning.

University News

Dr B. L. Moiseiwitsch has been appointed to a personal chair of applied mathematics in the **University of Belfast**.

Dr J. Landon, St Mary's Hospital, London, has been appointed to the chair of chemical pathology tenable at **St Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College**, and **Dr E. J. Burge**, King's College, London, has been appointed to the chair of physics tenable at the **Chelsea College of Science and Technology**.

Dr A. M. Smith, director and chief scientist of Rolls-Royce and Associates Ltd, has been appointed Goldsmiths' professor of metallurgy in the **University of Nottingham** for a period of three years.

Appointments

Professor D. H. Wilkinson, head of the Department of Nuclear Physics in the University of Oxford, has been appointed chairman of the **Science Research Council's Nuclear Physics Board** following the retirement of **Professor C. F. Powell**.