

NEWS and VIEWS

British Electrical and Allied Industries Research Association

Retirement of Mr. E. B. Wedmore, C.B.E.

WIDESPREAD regret will be felt throughout the electrical industry that, on account of ill-health, Mr. E. B. Wedmore will be relinquishing the directorship of the British Electrical and Allied Industries Research Association at the end of this year. Mr. Wedmore has been the guiding hand of the Association since its incorporation in 1921 from the Electrical Research Committee of 1918. The success the Association has met with has been due, in no small measure, to his personal efforts, which have always been typified by high administrative ability combined with a wide and thorough knowledge of scientific and practical engineering affairs. The work which has been done by the Association, under Mr. Wedmore's aegis, has embraced a particularly broad field, and in many of the most important branches he has himself been actively concerned. Prior to his association with the E.R.A., Mr. Wedmore's experience included the educational field and the electricity supply industry, and he was prominent as a switch-gear designer in the manufacturing industry, being interested very largely in automatic protective systems. His book "Switchgear for Electric Power Control" was published in 1924. He is a member of Council of the Institution of Electrical Engineers, a fellow of the Institute of Physics and has been a notable participant in many national and international conferences and technical assemblies. He was awarded the C.B.E. in 1938.

Mr. Wedmore's non-professional activities reflect the breadth of his interests. He is very well known in bee-keeping circles, and his book, "A Manual of Beekeeping for the English-speaking People", first published in 1932, is regarded as a standard work; bee-keepers throughout the country have long been indebted to him for the great interest he has taken in both the practical and the theoretical sides of their craft. In his own quiet way Mr. Wedmore has done a considerable amount of research work on honey bees and has spent a large part of his spare time lecturing to bee-keepers' associations and doing similar work. He is a member of the Apis Club, and of the Back to the Land Club. For many years Mr. Wedmore has been interested in craniology as applied to character study and in practical aspects of the work of the probation courts. He has also been active in the development of the theory of colour and in the geometry of four dimensions. Mr. Wedmore will take with him the very sincere wishes for a speedy restoration to good health, and a happy retirement, of a large circle of friends in the electrical and associated industries, which include the staff of the Association and the members of the large number of committees through which the Association functions. From January 1 next, Dr. S. Whitehead will take up the duties of acting director of the Association, and from July 1 Mr. R. A. McMahon will become secretary of the Association.

Astronomy: the Distaff Side

ROBERT S. RICHARDSON has an article with the above title in Leaflet 181 of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific, which shows the important part played by women in the advancement of science. Madame

Curie is cited first of all, but most of the examples are taken from astronomy. The writer recalls with amusement the bewildered expression of visitors to the Lick Observatory on some public nights, when, instead of being greeted by an elderly professor, as they expected, they were given a lecture by a young woman. Several examples of the valuable contributions of women to the advancement of astronomy are cited. Madame Jean André Lepaute assisted Clairaut and Lalande in the computations of the perturbations of Halley's Comet by Jupiter and Saturn, and as a result of the work Clairaut was able to announce that the comet would pass perihelion on April 13, 1759. It actually passed perihelion 32 days before the time set by Clairaut; but as Uranus and Neptune were unknown at the time no account was taken of perturbations by these planets. Among other women of distinction reference is made to Caroline Herschel, Lady Huggins and Maria Mitchell, who assisted her father until she was forty-seven with routine computations in connexion with Government surveys for latitude and longitude. She was then appointed professor of astronomy and director of the Observatory at Vassar College, a position which she held until her death. In more recent times we have Miss Annie J. Cannon, Miss Antonia C. Maury and Miss Henrietta S. Leavitt. Not only have women made astronomy their career; they have also acted as patronesses, and notable among these are Mrs. Henry Draper, Miss Helen Snow, Miss Catherine Wolfe Bruce, Mrs. Alexander F. Morrison. Although nearly as many women as men do postgraduate work in astronomy with quite as much success, yet the total number of women engaged in astronomical research is small, because most of them become astronomers' wives instead of astronomers.

U.S. Committee for Post-War Research for Army and Navy

A COMMITTEE on Post-War Research for the Armed Forces of the United States has been appointed. At the first meeting there were present Charles E. Wilson (*chairman*), vice-chairman of the U.S. War Production Board; Dr. F. B. Jewett, president of the National Academy of Sciences; Dr. J. C. Hunsaker, chairman of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics; Dr. K. T. Compton, president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Dr. M. A. Tuve, Carnegie Institute of Technology; Major-General O. P. Echols, assistant chief of Air Staff; Major-General A. W. Waldron, General Staff Corps, chief of Requirements Section, Army Ground Forces; Brig.-General W. F. Tompkins, director of Special Planning Division, War Department General Staff; Colonel R. M. Osborne, Army Services Forces; Admiral E. L. Cochrane, chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics. Other members of the Committee are Brig.-General T. D. Weaver, director of Industrial Demobilisation of the Army Service Forces; Rear Admiral G. F. Hussey, jun., chief of the Bureau of Ordnance, and Rear Admiral D. O. Ramsey, chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics. The purpose of the Committee is to prepare a plan and organizational procedure which will ensure the continued interest of civilian scientific workers after the War, in scientific research for the U.S. Army and Navy.