

University of Cambridge; Sir Rudolph Peters, professor emeritus of biochemistry in the University of Oxford; Prof. J. M. Robertson, Gardiner professor of chemistry in the University of Glasgow; Dr. B. F. J. Schonland, deputy director, Atomic Energy Research Establishment; Prof. M. Stacey, professor of chemistry, in charge of organic and biological chemistry, in the University of Birmingham.

Sir Cyril Hinshelwood, F.R.S., President of the Royal Society

THE election of Sir Cyril Hinshelwood as president of the Royal Society will be acclaimed not only by his scientific colleagues, but also by the host of his past students, now dispersed in the chemical industry and elsewhere. As a fellow and tutor of Trinity College, and afterwards Dr. Lee's professor of chemistry at Oxford, his influence and inspiration have been profound. The dominant theme of his research has been the elucidation of chemical processes by kinetic methods, and much of it is characterized by a design which enabled him to obtain answers to questions of great complexity using relatively simple experimental technique. He first clarified the processes of molecular activation in homogeneous gas reactions, and made vital contributions to our understanding of thermal chain reactions. Similar considerations were then applied to reactions in the liquid phase. More recently, he has used the same systematic analytical approach in exploring the problems of bacterial growth, a method at first received with some scepticism by more professional biologists, but which has now led to results of fundamental value in connexion with processes of bacterial adaptation. His several authoritative books on these subjects are recognized by their eloquent clarity, and reveal his vividly philosophical approach towards the underlying unity and pattern of natural phenomena.

Sir Cyril's previous distinctions include the Davy and Royal Medals of the Royal Society, of which he has been foreign secretary for five years past, and others of the Chemical Society, of which he is a former president, as well as many other honours bestowed by foreign scientific academies. He has served on many government advisory bodies, was recently chairman of the Fuel Research Board, and is a member of the Advisory Council on Scientific Policy. To all these scientific qualities, Sir Cyril also adds a remarkable command of foreign languages, much achievement as a connoisseur of art and as a painter in oils, and a conversance with classical and modern literature in many tongues. Through his pursuit of natural knowledge and through his distinctive qualities, Sir Cyril is eminently fitted to uphold the high traditions of his new office.

Genetics at Glasgow: Prof. G. Pontecorvo, F.R.S.

THE establishment of a chair and the appointment of Dr. G. Pontecorvo as its first occupant complete the administrative arrangements for genetics at the University of Glasgow. A lectureship established in 1945, to which Dr. Pontecorvo was appointed, developed into a Department of readership status with increasing teaching commitments and with an active research school supported by the three Research Councils, the Nuffield and the Rockefeller Foundations and industry. The readership is now raised to the status of chair.

After graduating at Pisa—his birthplace—in 1928, Dr. Pontecorvo was engaged for about nine years in

Florence in research on the applications of genetics to animal breeding. In 1938 he had to leave Italy as a consequence of political conditions, and found hospitality at the Institute of Animal Genetics, University of Edinburgh, then directed by Prof. F. A. E. Crew. There the opportunity of working on the genetic effects of radiations under the inspired leadership of Dr. H. J. Muller shifted his interests from applied to fundamental genetics. Since then Dr. Pontecorvo has held successive research and staff positions in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and finally in Glasgow again. His contributions to genetics are in several directions. He was one of the early investigators of the lethal effects of radiations in the first generation of irradiated individuals. With Muller he designed an ingenious method to investigate genetic differences between species the hybrids between which are sterile. With Prof. E. Hindle, he investigated the cytology of the human louse and the genetic mechanisms underlying its sex-ratios. In 1943 the demand for penicillin led him to work on the genetics of *Penicillium*. This marked the beginning of his interest in the genetics of fungi, both *per se* and as a powerful tool in investigating the ultra-microscopic organization of the gene. These two lines of interest have been pursued side by side for the past ten years by the research team led by Dr. Pontecorvo and including, among others, Dr. J. A. Roper. The work on the genetics of fungi has led to the discovery of alternatives to sexual reproduction in fungi in which this does not occur. The work on the gene has led to the view that it is a compound structure with many sites of mutation which crossing-over can distinguish from one another.

Colonial Section of the Road Research Laboratory : Dr. R. S. Millard

DR. R. S. MILLARD has been appointed head of the newly formed Colonial Section of the Road Research Laboratory with the rank of deputy chief scientific officer. Dr. Millard was educated at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Ashbourne, and at University College, London, where he obtained first-class honours in civil engineering in 1941. After experience with a civil engineering contractor, he joined the Bituminous Materials Section of the Road Research Laboratory, Harmondsworth, in 1944. In 1949 he was appointed officer-in-charge of the newly formed Scottish Branch of the Laboratory. In March 1951 he returned to Harmondsworth as head of the Bituminous Materials Section, and he has served in this capacity up to the present time. The tasks of the Colonial Section will be to apply the basic knowledge already available at the Road Research Laboratory to problems of road design and construction in the Colonies, and to extend this knowledge by research. The Section is being established at the Road Research Laboratory, Harmondsworth, where most of the laboratory work will be done. Field-work and full-scale road experiments in collaboration with the Colonies themselves will form an important part of the work of the Section.

Textile Institute : Supplemental Royal Charter

THE authority of H.M. the Queen has been given for the granting to the Textile Institute of a supplemental royal charter, extending the powers granted to it by the original charter of 1925. The supplemental charter authorizes fellows and associates of the Institute to practise and describe themselves as chartered textile technologists, and new by-laws