

to St. Mary's as senior demonstrator in pathological chemistry, he was made head of the Department in 1926 and continued so until he retired in 1954. Willcox had him appointed junior to him as Home Office analyst in 1924 and he succeeded to the senior appointment four years later.

Roche Lynch was undoubtedly happiest at work in his somewhat untidy-looking laboratory at St. Mary's where, surrounded by the stalagmitic accumulation of what seems years of specimens, he never failed to find room for another 'most interesting case', to display a penetrating grasp of its nature and to keep orderly hand-written notes which were good enough to survive defending counsel's scrutiny on many an occasion. It was from this laboratory that he made literally thousands of appearances in coroners' and assize courts between 1924 and 1954 to give his findings in evidence. In this he was superb, for he had mastered the art of extraction without loss of accuracy, and, though precise, he gave sufficient hint of thoroughness of method and of painstaking laboratory care to deter defending counsel from pressing him far. He was a fine

analytical chemist of the older school whose work in cases like that of Duff and Sydney, Violette Kaye, Vera Page and Sidney Fox was so sound that it acquired a remarkable reputation and gained him the respect of both the Bench and the Bar. Affection he did not encourage, and the Savage Club was virtually his sole excursion into social life.

He examined for Branch E for the fellowship of the Royal Institute of Chemistry—of which he was president during 1946–49, and he also examined for the London M.B. and the D.P.H. He became president of what is now the Society for Analytical Chemistry in 1936–37, of the Medico-Legal Society in 1939–41, and master of the Society of Apothecaries in 1950–1, filling these distinguished posts with a strong practical authority and with disarming humility. He was both liked and respected, and his long era of service to medicine and science, to the field of chemistry—in which he wrote many papers—and to university life in London will mark him as one of the distinguished figures of twentieth century medical science.

KEITH SIMPSON

NEWS and VIEWS

Civil Engineering in Trinity College, Dublin :

Prof. John Purser

PROF. JOHN PURSER, a member of a family whose name has been synonymous with that of Trinity College for many years, will retire from the chair of civil engineering in the University of Dublin on September 21. Prof. Purser graduated in engineering in Dublin in 1907, and decided to make his career as a teacher. He joined the Navy in the First World War, serving first in motor torpedo boats and later with a team working on paravanes. After the War he taught in the City and Guilds College in London, and later in the University of Birmingham. His research interests were the deterioration of structures in sea water, and the flow of rivers. He returned to Dublin in 1933, and devoted himself to teaching and to guiding the growth of the School of Engineering. After the Second World War, the premises of the School were reconstructed and enlarged, and a fourth year has recently been added to the course. The School is for civil engineering only, and Prof. Purser has had the satisfaction of seeing his graduates sought for by works departments all over the world. He has given freely of his time to the general affairs of the College, to the Institution of Civil Engineers in Ireland and to the Commission of Irish Lights, and all these bodies look forward to continuing to draw on his experience and advice.

Prof. W. Wright

DR. W. WRIGHT, who is succeeding Prof. John Purser, has been senior lecturer and head of the Civil Engineering Department in the University of Southampton since 1954. His main fields of interest have been structural engineering and hydraulics. In structures he has been particularly concerned with applications of the relaxation method. In hydraulics

he will be remembered at Southampton for the design and commissioning of a large tidal model of the Solent and Southampton Water. Because of the need for two separate tidal generators at the two entrances to the Solent, this model proved exceptionally difficult to bring under control, so that the complex local tides could be correctly reproduced. Dr. Wright was successful in overcoming these difficulties in the short time available to provide the necessary information for a proposed dredging project.

Nuclear Physics at Oxford :

Prof. D. H. Wilkinson, F.R.S.

DR. D. H. WILKINSON has been appointed to the professorship of nuclear physics (established with the late Sir Francis Simon's support after he had succeeded Lord Cherwell as Dr. Lee's professor of experimental philosophy) at the Clarendon Laboratory, Oxford. Dr. Wilkinson graduated at Cambridge in 1943 and became a Fellow of Jesus College in 1945. For a short time he worked with the first heavy-water reactor at Chalk River in Canada; however, in the course of this or his previous work he had become exposed to more radiation than was good for him, and back in Cambridge after the War he accepted, for a time, a medical injunction to keep away from penetrating radiations and hence from nuclear physics. It was during that time that he started to work on how homing birds find their way, and he made some valuable contributions by exploding some untenable hypotheses and by inventing a simple radioactive clock for measuring the time a bird spends on the wing (*Nature*, 161, 997; 1948, and 165, 188; 1950). Fortunately, his health fully recovered and soon he was back in nuclear physics. His numerous contributions range from the development of ingenious new measuring techniques to the