NEWS and VIEWS

J. H. Plummer Professorship of Experimental Physics at Cambridge : Prof. A. B. Pippard, F.R.S.

Dr. A. B. Pippard, who has been elected to the John Humphrey Plummer professorship of experimental physics in the University of Cambridge, went to the Royal Society Mond Laboratory immediately after the Second World War, and in a series of elegant experiments on the high-frequency behaviour of metals at very low temperatures laid the foundations of much of his subsequent work. Observations on metals in the superconducting state led him to postulate a 'non-local' relation between superconducting current and magnetic field, which proved very suggestive in the later development of a fundamental theory by Bardeen, Cooper and Schrieffer. The study of normal metals brought not only a detailed understanding of the 'anomalous skin effect', first noticed by H. London, but also led Pippard to consider other aspects of the theory of metals, and he has recently been particularly concerned with the relation between the electronic structure of a metal and its physical properties. All his work has been distinguished by a remarkable combination of experimental skill with an ability to see his way through complicated theory in terms of simple physical concepts. This has enabled him not only to devise ingenious experiments but also to contribute effectively in fields which are usually regarded as the preserve of the professional theoretician. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1956 and was awarded the Hughes Medal of the Society in 1959 ; his election to the John Humphrey Plummer chair at Cambridge is a well-merited recognition of his outstanding position in metal physics.

Physics at Southampton : Prof. G. W. Hutchinson

Dr. Hutchinson, who has been appointed to a newly established second chair of physics in the University of Southampton, was educated at Abergele Grammar School and at St. John's College, Cambridge. After graduating in physics, he spent five years in industry and then, in 1947, started research in the Cavendish Laboratory under Prof. O. R. Frisch. He first investigated the properties of liquid argon as a conduction counter for nuclear particles, and, as a result, became interested in the analysis of pulse-height distributions. After trials of a number of systems Hutchinson realized the possibilities of computer techniques in this field, and working with G. G. Scarrott, devised in 1950 the pulse-height analyser which now bears their names. This elegant and powerful instrument represented a major advance in nuclear counting technique, and its widespread use was fitly recognized by the award of the Duddell Medal of the Physical Society to Hutchinson and Scarrott jointly in 1959.

Since 1952 Hutchinson has been Fellow and lecturer in the Department of Natural Philosophy, University of Glasgow, and lecturer and senior lecturer in the Department of Physics, University of Birmingham. His research interests have ranged widely, and include nuclear reactions at low energies, the proton–proton interaction at 1 GeV. and the origin of cosmic rays. Recently, he has been responsible for the experimental programme of the Birmingham proton synchrotron, and has developed techniques of fast counting and new forms of Čerenkov counter which have proved valuable for work with this machine. Hutchinson has always wished to extend his work through contact with the National Institute for Research in Nuclear Science, and his appointment to a chair in the University of Southampton at this time should help him to further his interests in high-energy physics.

The Advanced School of Automobile Engineering, Cranfield : Prof. J. R. Ellis

The governing body of the College of Aeronautics has appointed Mr. John Romaine Ellis as professor of automobile engineering and first director of the Advanced School of Automobile Engineering being established at Cranfield in Bedfordshire, in association with the College of Aeronautics. Mr. Ellis graduated in mechanical and aeronautical engineering in the University of London in 1947, and was awarded a master's degree in 1954. He became an associate member of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers in 1952 and of the Automobile Division in 1958. During the period January 1944 December 1948, Mr. Ellis was employed successively at the Royal Aircraft Establishment and the Fairey Aviation Co., Ltd. In 1949 he joined the lecturing staff of the Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham, first in the Materials and Structures Branch, and is at present principal lecturer in the Machines Branch. His published papers have dealt with wind-up in multi-axle drive vehicles, the effect of speed of rotation and torque on the effective rolling radius of a pneumatic tyre, and with torque converters. He is at present investigating the steering mechanics of the pneumatic tyre.

Chemistry at Queen Mary College, London : Prof. M. J. S. Dewar, F.R.S.

After eight years as head of the Department of Chemistry at Queen Mary College, London, Prof. M. J. S. Dewar was appointed to the chair of organic chemistry in the University of Chicago, in October 1959. His stimulating personality and exceptionally wide scientific interests, ranging from physical theory to organic synthesis, produced striking developments in both teaching and research at Queen Mary College. Outstanding among his achievements, which led to his election to the fellowship of the Royal Society earlier this year, are his contributions to the molecular orbital theory of conjugated molecules, the synthesis of tropylium salts and new hetero-aromatic boron compounds, and the development and use of radio-spectroscopic techniques for nuclear quadrupole, electron spin, and nuclear magnetic resonance. His departure is a great loss to chemistry in Great Britain, but every good wish goes with him for success and happiness in the United States.

Prof. B. C. L. Weedon

Dr. B. C. L. Weedon has been appointed to the chair of organic chemistry at Queen Mary College, where he will take up his duties in October 1960. Dr. Weedon graduated with first-class honours at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, London, in 1942 and, after a year's research, joined the Dyestuffs Division of Imperial Chemical Indus-