

NEWS and VIEWS

Molecular Biology at Cambridge

H.M. THE QUEEN opened the Medical Research Council's Laboratory of Molecular Biology, Cambridge, on May 28. The Laboratory, which is situated about two miles from the centre of Cambridge, has been built in association with the new accommodation for the University Department of Radiotherapeutics on the site of the new Addenbrooke's Hospital in Hills Road, and these buildings also were opened by the Queen. The Medical Research Council were represented at the ceremony by its chairman, the Right Hon. Lord Shawcross, and secretary, Sir Harold Himsworth.

The Council's Laboratory provides new permanent accommodation for the staff of the former Molecular Biology Research Unit, which was set up in 1947 in the Cavendish Laboratory at Cambridge, and has made outstanding contributions to knowledge about the structure of proteins and nucleic acids and in the field of molecular genetics. In the new Laboratory, the Unit's research workers will be joined by others who have been working in the same field. These will include the team led by Dr. F. Sanger, whose work on the chemical structure of insulin gained him a Nobel Prize in 1958, and who has until now been a member of the Council's staff at the School of Biochemistry, Cambridge, and by another member of its staff, Dr. H. E. Huxley, formerly at University College, London, who is well known for his discovery of the mechanism of muscular contraction. Dr. J. D. Smith, at present at the Biological Division of the Californian Institute of Technology, distinguished for his work on the chemistry of nucleic acids, and Dr. A. Klug and his virus research group from the Physics Department at Birkbeck College, London, will also be joining the Laboratory. The Laboratory will be under the general direction of a small committee, composed of the heads of divisions, under the chairmanship of Dr. M. F. Perutz. There will be three main divisions: (a) Structural Studies under Dr. J. C. Kendrew; (b) Molecular Genetics under Dr. F. H. C. Crick; (c) Protein Chemistry under Dr. F. Sanger.

U.S. National Bureau of Standards :

Dr. J. A. Simpson

DR. JOHN A. SIMPSON has been appointed chief of the Electron Physics Section at the National Bureau of Standards, U.S. Department of Commerce, in succession to Dr. L. L. Marton, new chief of international relations. Born in Toronto, Ontario, in 1923, Dr. Simpson received his secondary education in Stratford, Conn. He attended Lehigh University in 1940 under the New England Regional Scholarship. After serving in the Army Signal Corps during the War, he returned to Lehigh, receiving his B.S. in engineering physics in 1946 and his M.S. in physics in 1948. He then joined the staff of the National Bureau of Standards, where he has conducted research in electron physics with special emphasis on instrumentation. His dissertation for Ph.D. at Lehigh University in 1953 was based on his work on the electron interferometer. He has also published on electron optical schlieren problems and on the characteristic energy-losses of electrons in metals.

Nuclear Tests and the World Federation of Scientific Workers

THE president of the World Federation of Scientific Workers, Prof. C. F. Powell, has issued a statement calling for the stopping of all nuclear tests and for further expert assessment of the possibility of identifying tests. The Federation, which links 200,000 scientists in 32 countries, expresses grave concern at the resumption of nuclear tests in the atmosphere and does not understand how the possibility which still remains of concealing the smallest underground nuclear tests can be rationally used to justify the resumption of atmospheric tests on the largest scale which undoubtedly cannot be concealed. The statement asserts that the resumption of atmospheric tests gravely prejudices the possibility of progress in general disarmament; facilitates the acquisition of nuclear weapons by powers not at present possessing them; constitutes a biological hazard through dangers from fall-out; and is likely to lead to a further deterioration in international relations and an intensification of the cold war.

The Federation welcomes the initiative of the representatives of the neutral powers at the Geneva Conference in suggesting a compromise solution to the differences between the Anglo-American and Soviet positions on nuclear tests. In view of recent advances claimed in the identification of small underground explosions, the Federation calls, as an urgent measure, for the establishment at Geneva of another conference of scientific experts to assess the present position with regard to the detection of nuclear tests, using only national detection systems supplemented by international monitoring stations on the territories of uncommitted powers willing to accommodate them. Pending the presentation of the report of such a conference, the statement urges all nations to refrain from further nuclear tests of any description. The statement has been sent to heads of States already possessing nuclear weapons, to the United Nations, and to the heads of all Delegations to the Geneva Conference on Disarmament.

U.S. Projects on Economic and Social Implications of Science and Technology

Current Projects on Economic and Social Implications of Science and Technology, 1961, issued by the National Science Foundation, is the third in a series of annual surveys of projects relating to some aspect of social science research on science and technology (NSF-62-4. Pp. vii+116. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1962. 40 cents). The surveys, which are based on investigators' reports of their projects, supplement the Foundation's programme of statistical studies. Of the 262 projects listed, only 40 are financed solely by the investigator and more than 200 have full or partial financial support outside the Foundation. The projects are classified under 14 subject headings and there are indexes of authors and of institutions.

Industry in Katanga

A COLLECTION of papers on the industries of Katanga has recently been published in French by