

Soil Science in Western Australia :

Prof. J. Quirk

DR. JAMES QUIRK has been appointed to the newly created chair of soil science and head of the Department of Soil Science and Plant Nutrition within the Institute of Agriculture of the University of Western Australia. This is the first full chair in soil science and department of this name within any Australian university. Dr. Quirk is aged thirty-seven and expects to take up duties early in 1963. He graduated from the University of Sydney in 1947 with honours in agricultural chemistry and obtained his Ph.D. in soil physics from the University of London in 1952 while working with the late Dr. R. K. Schofield, head of the Soil Physics Department of the Rothamsted Agricultural Experimental Station. For the following four years he worked with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization Division of Soils in Adelaide and was appointed to his present position as reader in soil science at the Waite Agricultural Research Institute of the University of Adelaide in 1956. Dr. Quirk has travelled and lectured extensively in Europe and the United States and has an impressive research record in soil physics. He has specialized particularly in soil structure problems, the clay-water systems of soils and the relation of water stress to nutrient uptake by crop plants.

Magnanimity

SIR CHARLES P. SNOW'S rectorial address on "Magnanimity" to the University of St. Andrews on April 13 has been issued as a pamphlet together with the laureation address of Prof. A. J. McDonald in presenting Sir Charles, Prof. P. M. S. Blackett and Mikhail A. Sholokov for honorary degrees on that occasion (Pp. 23. St. Andrews, Fife : Students' Representative Council, The University, 1962. 2s.). Sir Charles thought that Britain was in danger of losing this major virtue, and that while her society was in some respects more tolerant than the American, it was far and away less magnanimous. Integrity had taken on a new meaning and no longer bore the quality of oneness encountered in characters like Einstein, Rutherford or Hardy; moral was coming to mean censorious, and there was a real danger of people forgetting what it is like to be generous to one another. This was happening at a time when the major social task—that of meeting the needs of the under-developed countries—demanded every scrap of courage and magnanimity that could be found. The roots of magnanimity were complicated: they included love, compassion, charity or brotherhood—whatever one called the 'binding glue' of society—that sense of reality which was also part of humour and a kind of vanity. Nor did Sir Charles think we would show social or political virtue if we failed to make the most of ourselves as individuals in our human relations.

The National Council for Technological Awards

THE report of the National Council for Technological Awards for the period April 1961–March 1962 records 6,201 students as now following courses recognized by the Council and 1,092 diplomas have already been awarded, 620 being conferred during the period under review (Pp. 51. London : The National Council for Technological Awards, 1962). Of this latter total, 207 were in electrical and 158 in mechanical engineering, 70 in applied physics,

49 in production engineering and 47 in applied chemistry and chemical technology. A list of 111 courses at 28 colleges which are now recognized by the Council is included in the report, and appendixes include extracts from written evidence submitted to the Robbins Committee on Higher Education. During the period, 17 applications for registration as candidates for membership were received by the College of Technologists, making a total of 51 since the College, in November 1959, issued its memorandum outlining the method of application, and of these 40 have been accepted and a further 4 are under consideration.

Political and Economic Planning

THE annual report 1961–62 of Political and Economic Planning covers the year ended March 31, 1962, in which the sales of reports were still at the second highest figure in PEP's history, although below the level of 1960–61. The six projects in the present research programme may be grouped under two broad themes: (1) change and adaptation to change in economic and social policy, including Britain and the European Common Market, attitudes in British industry, Trade Unions in a changing society, and education and training programmes for developing countries; (2) social policy and family life, including community mental health services and prisoners' families. The first project was started in September 1958 and will continue for a further three years from November 1961; a report on Atlantic Tariff and Trade is in the press and an examination of the consequences for industry of setting up the Common Market has commenced. Three principal inquiries are being made into community mental health services, covering the collection of data on turnover and interchange of mental patients, on interview survey of psychiatric patients living in the community and of members of their families, and a survey of social work in mental health. The three-year project on prisoners and their families is in two main parts: an interview sample on a national basis, and a more intensive study of up to a hundred prisoners' families in the London area. The study of education and training programmes for developing areas now envisaged is in four parts. This comprises: compilation of an inventory and analysis of training facilities in the United Kingdom for overseas students wishing to qualify as technicians, technologists, scientists or professional workers; an examination of the types of social facilities available to students; a review of problems which may deter members of the staff of United Kingdom teaching institutions from taking up overseas posts; and a study on the spot in a selected developing area of the provisions for higher technical and scientific training in relation to the level of development of the area and to existing attitudes to change.

International Antarctic Analysis Centre

THE southern hemisphere is an empty waste, meteorologically speaking. The proportion of land mass is comparatively small while the water areas are infrequently traversed by ships. The lack of data greatly restricts research. Yet the geography of this hemisphere closely approximates the ideal general circulation models which are studied in the laboratory, on the charting bench and by the theoreticians. The International Antarctic Analysis Centre was established in Melbourne by the Commonwealth Bureau