

ating in the publication by the World Meteorological Organization of a lengthy report on the advancement of atmospheric sciences and their application in the light of developments in outer space. The essence of this report is a comprehensive scheme for a 'world weather watch' which, if constituted, might well revolutionize meteorology. Wexler was undoubtedly the driving force behind these ambitious proposals.

The lasting impression left by Wexler is that of an enthusiast whose cheerfulness, colourful speech and general friendliness remain as a cherished memory for his friends. In his own country his achievements were widely recognized. In 1945 he received the Robert M. Losey Award of the Institute of Aeronautical Sciences, in 1956 the U.S. Air Force Award for Exceptional Services, and his work for the International Geophysical Year and antarctic meteorology gained him the Department of Commerce Exceptional Service Medal and the U.S. Navy Public Service Award. He leaves a widow and two daughters.

GRAHAM SUTTON

Dr. F. R. Irvine

DR. FREDERICK ROBERT IRVINE, who died suddenly on August 20 in Ghana, at the age of sixty-four, was well known in West African agricultural and botanical circles. His long association, from 1924, with Achimota College in the Gold Coast and later with the University, at Legon, Ghana, earned him many African friends. He taught botany and agriculture at Achimota for sixteen years and his *West African Botany* (1931) met a great need as it was the first text-book on the subject.

Irvine was an assiduous collector and compiler of information on plants, especially as to their uses and vernacular names. His agricultural training at the then Armstrong College, the Newcastle Division of the University of Durham, naturally gave him a bias towards crops and food plants. His *Plants of the*

Gold Coast (1930) dealt principally with their uses, and in 1934 he published *West African Agriculture* which he was revising at the time of his death. However, he regretted that he was no taxonomist and this lack of a background in plant systematics was something of a handicap to him, especially during the compilation of his recent volume on the *Woody Plants of Ghana* (1961). He had recently accepted a research fellowship in Ghana to complete the companion volume on the herbs, but this remains unfinished. A further work, his *Vocabularies of Plant Names in the Nigerian Languages*, also remains unpublished.

His tall, slim, rather stooping figure was a familiar sight in the Kew Herbarium, where he would seek some obscure publication on food plants or ask advice on the taxonomy of the group in which he was then interested. Any further information was usually added to an already copiously annotated manuscript or inserted in a black pocket-book with the comment that he would now have to change half a dozen indexes. His interest in food plants ranged far and wide, especially those of the more primitive peoples such as the Australian Aborigines and the North American Indians. Besides his botanical activities, he also collected zoological information. Thus, he collaborated with J. R. Norman in *The Fishes and Fisheries of the Gold Coast* (1947).

He was keenly interested in the welfare of overseas students in the United Kingdom, and his work with the Society of Friends, notably as warden of their International Centre at Tavistock Square after the Second World War, brought him into contact with a large number of them.

While staying for a year in the United States, in 1959, under Quaker auspices, he became seriously ill, but he made a remarkable recovery on his return to Britain, though he quickly aged and did not enjoy good health thereafter. He is survived by his wife, a son and two daughters.

F. N. HEPPEL

NEWS and VIEWS

Nobel Laureates in Medicine: Drs. F. H. C. Crick, F.R.S., M. H. F. Wilkins, F.R.S., and Prof. W. Watson

READERS of *Nature* will be pleased to learn of the award jointly of the Nobel Prize for Medicine to Dr. F. H. C. Crick, research worker for the Medical Research Council in the Council's Laboratory for Molecular Biology, Cambridge; Dr. M. H. F. Wilkins, deputy director of the Medical Research Council Biophysics Research Unit, Department of Biophysics, King's College, University of London; and Prof. James Watson, professor of biology in Harvard University, especially since the work of these three scientists has become well known through the columns of *Nature* and elsewhere. The official announcement cites the recipients for their achievement of a "most fundamental biological problem", the discovery of the molecular structure of deoxyribonucleic acid. The establishment of the 'biological code' especially for the formation of enzymes is now well known, and is exerting a profound influence on biochemical and biological research, especially in the fields of molecular biology and heredity. Recently, Dr. Crick was awarded the Gairdner Foundation Prize, and, among

other awards, he was the first to receive the Charles-Léopold Mayer Prize of the Paris Academy of Sciences (*Nature*, 193, 223; 1962).

History of Science and Technology at Imperial College: Prof. A. R. and Mrs. Hall

SIMULTANEOUSLY with the announcement by the University of London of the appointment of Prof. A. Rupert Hall to the chair of the history of science and technology in the Imperial College of Science and Technology, the College announces the appointment of Prof. Marie Boas Hall, his wife, to a senior lectureship in the same Department. Prof. Hall and his wife are at present professors of history and logic of science in the University of Indiana. They take up their new duties in the summer of 1963. The study of the history of science and technology in its own right presents both a challenge and an opportunity. The new Department will be headed by distinguished scholars who, both individually and in collaboration, have made an important contribution in this field. *Unpublished Scientific Papers of Isaac Newton* appeared under their joint authorship as did various articles on the man himself. Prof. Rupert Hall's