we hear that

and **Lawrence M. Scherr**, from the University of Illinois at Urbana, has joined the theoretical-design division.

Charles H. Townes, professor in the department of physics at the University of California at Berkeley, has been awarded the Remsen Award of the Maryland Section of the American Chemical Society.

The new chairman of the department of physics at the University of Southern California is **John Marburger**.

Formerly IBM Professor of Engineering at Cornell University, **Norman Rostoker** has joined the University of California, Irvine, as professor of physics.

Roland C. M. Beeh has been promoted to vice-president for research and engineering at Packard Instrument Company, Inc in Downer's Grove, Illinois.

obituaries

Reed Hobart Ellis, Jr

Reed Hobart Ellis Jr, who was Editor of PHYSICS TODAY from 1965 to 1969, died on 23 October 1972. Ellis was a physicist by training, having done his undergraduate work at Bowdoin College, served as a radar officer during World War II, and taken his MA and doctorate in physics at Columbia University. However, Hoby chose to use his physics as an editor, writer and teacher. He was, by turns, Assistant, Associate and then Managing Editor of *Nucleonics*, founding editor of *Nuclear Fusion*, the International Atomic Energy Agency magazine, Executive Editor and then Editor of PHYSICS TODAY, a founding editor of *Smithsonian* magazine, head of the Information Office of the Population Council, and most recently a senior scientist at George Washington University.

According to those closest to him, it was his accomplishments with PHYSICS TODAY that he found most fulfilling. During his four years as editor of PHYSICS TODAY the magazine grew from what many regarded as merely a house organ for AIP to become a highly respected news magazine.

Hoby had a deep passion for simplicity and directness in scientific communication. It led him more than once to lively disputes with authors and with those who worked for him. But even in the heat of those disputes one had to marvel at the concern, the conviction that led him to express his views with force where others might compromise.

Here is a story Hoby used to tell to emphasize the need for clarity from writers submitting work to him during his years as an editor. During the local campaign of a New England politician running for a minor office, a group has gathered on the village green and is straining to understand the rhetoric of the speaker. A passerby squeezes into the rear ranks, turns to one of the crowd and asks, "What's he talking about?" to which the member of the crowd responds, "He don't say!" It was always Hoby's feeling that an article could be learned—and still comprehensible. Non-physicists were often surprised to be able to understand highly technical articles in physics that he had edited.

One of the most popular innovations he brought to PHYSICS TODAY was the column attributed to Phimsy. Phimsy

ELLIS

was a mystical character who had a boss called Hoby. Phimsy poked fun at life and overly serious physicists and fellow editors. For example, in March 1969 Phimsy says: "My monthly mission is a simple one: to frustrate the efforts of the editors who try to take back the little corner from which I talk to my friends."

Although the authorship of the column was never officially revealed "Phimsy" was, of course, written by his boss Hoby.

we hear that

His third professional interest—that of a teacher—lead to a textbook "Nuclear Technology for Engineers" published by McGraw-Hill in 1959. A series of lectures based on the textbook was given in Vienna in 1963–64, the year before he came to the American Institute of Physics to serve as editor.

One of his long-cherished goals was to write a book that would make physics readily understandable and interesting to children. Last year after much writing and rewriting he completed a manuscript that satisfied him. The work is titled "Knowing the Atomic Nucleus" and will be published in the spring of 1973 by Lothrop, Lee and Shephard. In it he has attained his lifetime goal of interesting young minds in a field to which he had dedicated a large portion of his life.

In the nonprofessional part of his life Hoby was equally as active and pursued many interests with his characteristic enthusiasm. Sailing, riding, piloting his own plane, climbing mountains, music and the opera, traveling the world—these are only a few of the activities which he enjoyed and at which he excelled. The popular New England magazine *Down East* just last year carried an article by Hoby entitled "Horses I Remember."

His wife, Susanne Deutsch Ellis, is supervisor of Manpower Statistics at the American Institute of Physics and his brother William Ellis is science adviser to the Governor of Maine.

HAROLD L. DAVIS
Editor

Sir Basil Schonland

Sir Basil Schonland, a British physicist well-known for his work on lightning and a scientific adviser to General Dwight D. Eisenhower during World War II, died on 24 November. He was 76 years old.

Schonland culminated his career as the director of the Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Harwell, UK (1954–60), in 1958 becoming the director of the entire Research Group of the Atomic Energy Authority. He retired in 1960.

According to Walter Marshall, the present director at Harwell, Schonland "guided the fortunes of the Research Group through the years of most rapid expansion, when the demands of the power programme multiplied and when the effort on high-energy nuclear physics, on nuclear fusion, on reactor physics and engineering, and on radioisotope application grew to the point