

we hear that

The Coblentz Society, a molecular-spectroscopy group, has announced the election of **James R. Durig**, Dean of the College of Science and Mathematics at the University of South Carolina, Columbia, as president.

The University of Dublin (Trinity College) has announced the appointment of **Brian Henderson**, formerly a Reader at the University of Keele, to its Erasmus Smith's professorship of natural and experimental philosophy and headship of the department of physics, effective October.

Among those newly elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences are **Stephen L. Adler**, Institute for Advanced Study; **Clarence Roderic Allen**, California Institute of Technology; **James D. Bjorken**, Stanford University; **Alastair George W. Cameron**, Harvard University; **Owen Chamberlain**, University of California, Berkeley; **Leon Nathan Cooper**, Brown University; **Frank Donald Drake**, Cornell University; **Mildred S. Dresselhaus**, Massachusetts

Institute of Technology; **Leo Esaki**, IBM Corporation; **Ivar Giaever**, General Electric Research Laboratories; **Sheldon Lee Glashow**, Harvard University; **Rudolf Kompfner**, Stanford University; **Robert Paul Kraft**, University of California, Santa Cruz; **Malvin Avram Ruderman**, Columbia University. Foreign honorary members include **Anatole Abragam**, Collège de France; **Brian David Josephson**, University of Cambridge; **James Hardy Wilkinson**, National Physical Laboratory (UK).

Anthony J. Dos Santos has joined Ditrac Optics Inc, as vice-president and general manager of the new west-coast facility, which will specialize in laser coatings and visible-band pass filters.

C. Gilbert Young, director of special-product development at the American Optical Corp, has been named to the board of directors of Laser Inc.

Robert Street, chairman of the physics department at Monash University is the new director of the Research School of Physical Sciences at the Institute of Advanced Studies, Australian National University.

obituaries

Lord Blackett

Patrick Blackett died on 13 July at the age of 76. He was a man of great distinction, not only a brilliant physicist, but an intellectual with wide ranging interests in social, strategic and political problems.

During World War I he served in the Royal Navy and always retained an interest in naval affairs. After the war he entered the academic world, carrying him into research work in Franck's laboratory at Göttingen before returning to the Cavendish Laboratory at Cambridge. Before long he had obtained the first cloud chamber pictures, which are now classical, of the disintegration of nitrogen by alpha-particles. He combined his experience with cloud chambers with an expanding interest in cosmic rays which led, in cooperation with Constance Occhialini, to the development of the counter-controlled chamber and provided independent, confirmatory evidence of the existence of positrons.

During World War II Blackett realized the importance of an analytical approach to tactical and strategical problems of defense and built up around him a powerful group that could be regarded as the pioneers of operational



BLACKETT

research. This farsighted influence on the postwar world of science and affairs was immense.

As Langworthy Professor of Physics at Manchester, he was largely responsible for the establishment of Jodrell Bank as a center for research in meteor physics and in radio astronomy. His continued interest in cosmic rays encouraged George Rochester and Clifford

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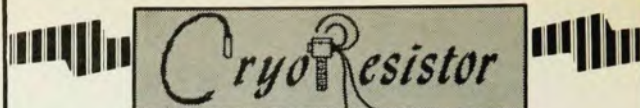
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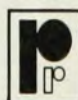
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obituaries

Butler in their observation of V particles while over the period he took up the subject of rock magnetism which has proved so very fruitful for geophysics. In addition to these great achievements, Blackett made major contributions to science policy in Britain and must be given a great deal of credit for the level of financial support achieved. The great development of Imperial College, London over the last 20 years owes much to Blackett, who always saw beyond the immediate future.

His scientific research was recognized by the award of a Nobel Prize and it was also fitting that he should have been elected President of the Royal Society, an office which he took up just after retirement from his university chair in London and while he was playing an active and enthusiastic role advising the new Ministry of Technology.

Blackett was as charming as he was distinguished. He was exceptionally good at inspiring research students and, indeed, scientists in general. This brief account can do no more than touch on some of the high spots of his outstanding career. Few men have achieved so much success in so many different directions.

H. S. W. MASSEY
University College London

Vannevar Bush

With the passing of Vannevar Bush on 28 June, the nation has lost its most eminent and influential scientist-engi-

neer leader of the 20th century. He was 84 years old.

Although he will be chiefly remembered for his leadership of the Office of Scientific Research and Development during World War II, he had for 20 years prior to 1938 attained great distinction as a professor of electrical engineering at MIT. His imagination, insight and inventiveness enabled him to obtain analytical solutions for many difficult problems in the emerging area of electric power transmission. This led him to the development of his differential analyzer—the forerunner of the modern electronic analog computer.

As president of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, after 1938, he stimulated new and important work in that institution's laboratories. He skillfully participated in the agreement between Carnegie and Caltech for the joint operation of the Mt Wilson and Palomar Observatories from whence emerged the age of modern astronomy.

When he received from President Roosevelt in 1940 authority to organize the National Defense Research Committee—and later the OSRD—he initiated a whole new era in the collaboration of civilian scientists and engineers with the military services and also in the government support of research and development in universities and other private institutions.

The brilliant achievements of OSRD in providing the United States with new weapons of war are too well known to need review here. Sufficient to say that during the war a large fraction of the physicists of the country worked either directly or indirectly under Van Bush's leadership in developing radar, radar counter-measures, military rockets, sonar, new torpedoes and finally the

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