

Extracts from College Annual Report 1956/1957

DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW

Members of the Department were glad to hear that the title of Professor of Theoretical Physics in the University has been conferred on Dr. Eisenschitz. .

During the session academic and technical members of the Department have spent a good deal of time in working on the design of the proposed new Physics Building, in consultation with the architect. The general design and the arrangement of rooms are now agreed upon although very much detailed work still remains to be done.

Two major events of the session took place during the Christmas vacation. A four-day refresher course for physics masters, organised by Dr. Powles, was held just after the end of term. Thirty-nine physics masters attended the full course, and a number of headmasters and others were invited on the last day. The visitors were unexpectedly warm in their appreciation of the course. For the Department the most useful feature of the week was the opportunity it gave for informal discussions with physics masters on questions of mutual interest. It is intended to hold further courses of this kind, though not necessarily every year. The influence of these contacts with schoolmasters is being reflected in the number of applications for admission, which is now at least ten times as great as the number of places available in the Special Honours class.

Immediately after Christmas a very successful two-day conference of the Physical Society was organised by Professor Jones on the general subject of Crystal Dynamics. This is the first occasion on which the Physical Society has visited the College. An extremely distinguished gathering attended, with representatives from nearly every university in the country as well as a number of foreign visitors. Contributions to the programme were made by Professor Jones, Dr. Dobbs and Dr. Martin. The facilities of the Queens' Building proved extremely convenient for this conference, during which the Principal entertained Officers of the Physical Society and many of the visitors at a Dinner. The intense activity in the Department during this Christmas vacation could not have been so successful without the efficient and enthusiastic help of the technical staff.

Professor Eisenschitz was invited to a five-day international Colloquium on the Statistical Mechanics of Transport Processes, held at Brussels, and to a London discussion meeting of the Low-Temperature Group of the Physical Society on Liquid Helium.

Dr. Powles was invited to the annual meeting of the Colloque A.M.P.E.R.E. of which he is the only non-French committee member. The meeting this year was held at St. Malo. Dr. Powles also contributed to a two-day conference on Magnetic Resonance held at Bangor jointly by the Physical Society and the Institute of Physics.

Dr. Irons visited the University Colleges of Ghana and Nigeria as examiner for the B.Sc. Special and General degrees.

Dr. Leech has left on leave of absence for eighteen months to at the National Research Council's laboratory at Ottawa. Much of the work done there in the Division of Solid State and Low-Temperature Physics is of direct interest to the Department.

Dr. Davies was invited to the Gordon Research Conference, held at New Hampton, U.S.A., on the Chemistry and Physics of Liquids—Relaxation Phenomena.

An extended course of advanced lectures on Relativistic Quantum Theory was given by Dr. Leech during the session.

The Department has been able to expand its research accommodation as a result of the conversion of the former lower refectory into a teaching laboratory. A Philips liquid air machine, which will make the low-temperature laboratories more or less independent of industrial sources of refrigerant, has now been installed. A grant of over £6,000 has been made by the D.S.I.R. for the purchase of a Varian magnet for use by

Dr. Powles' research group on nuclear magnetic resonance. This group has also acquired a smaller magnet from Mullard's Ltd. Another grant of nearly £5,000 has been made by the D.S.I.R. to Professor Jones for the continuation by Dr. Dobbs and Dr. Figgins of their work on the solidified inert gases. The total number of research students is now twenty. This compares with the figure of two in 1950 and in relation to the size of the Honours schools is now at the over-all national average level for Physics Departments.

Professor Jones has served on the Board of the Faculty of Science and the Scholarships Committee in the University, on the Physics Selection Committee for D.S.I.R. studentships and on the Governing Body of the College.

The Q.M.C. Physical Society has again been active. A visit to Cumberland Lodge with members of the French and German Societies was much enjoyed. Unfortunately, as on previous occasions, physicists again out-numbered their Arts colleagues both among students and academic staff. At the Society's Annual Dinner the Principal, Professor and Mrs. Eisenschitz and Mr. and Mrs. Tong were the guests. The entertainment which followed included the first appearance of the Departmental string quartet.