advanced scientific works was never great; but to-day it is smaller than ever. Publishers try to share out their limited paper among the most needed titles, and the consequent small impressions mean correspondingly small royalties. The survey suggests that official encouragement should be given to the writing of new books by British specialists.

It is stated that a good case can be made out for the large percentage of book production which goes to export. It is emphasized, however, that this trade and, even more important, this reputation, are in danger unless our total volume of 'learned, scientific and technical' book production is increased both in number of copies of existing standard works and in new titles. The value of American exports of books (all types) to all countries had not in 1947 quite equalled Britain's; but 1947 was the year in which the import of America's books was artificially restricted by two of her best customers, Britain and Australia. In spite of that, American exports rose more steeply than our own. With British import restrictions relieved, American exports may be expected to surpass Britain's. Moreover, America can, as Britain cannot, increase the exported fraction of her total production without serious consequences for the home consumer. America's exported fraction was only 7 per cent of the total (in 1946) as against Britain's 25 per cent. The conclusion is drawn that it is essential that British scientific book production should be increased by giving priority in material allocation to the publication of such books, so that both the home and export markets may be better supplied.

This survey was carried out by the Cambridge Branch of the Association of Scientific Workers, and copies of the complete survey are available from the Head Office of the Association (15 Half Moon Street, Piccadilly, London, W.1). R. INNES

NEWS and VIEWS

Physiology at the London Hospital Medical College: Dr. John L. D'Silva

DR. JOHN L. D'SILVA, reader in physiology at St. Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College, who has been appointed to the chair of physiology at the London Hospital Medical College, was born and educated in southern India. He graduated with first-class honours in chemistry at King's College, London, in 1929, and remained there for a further three years doing research on the chemistry of disulphides. In 1932 he went over to physiology, still at King's College, carrying out investigations on the effect of adrenaline on the metabolism of potassium. After a short period with Messrs. British Drug Houses, Ltd., spent on research into the molecular distillation of fish oils in connexion with the study of vitamin A, he went in 1936 to St. Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College, where he was demonstrator in physiology and in biochemistry, and continued his work on the metabolism of adrenaline and potassium. He was awarded the degree of D.Sc. for his published work. During the Second World War, Dr. D'Silva qualified as a medical practitioner and also continued teaching. After work at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, in 1944 Dr. D'Silva was appointed to the Medical College again and has remained there since, lecturing and carrying out research on the physiology of the visual process.

Jöns Jakob Berzelius (1779–1848)

WHEN he died a century ago on August 7, 1848, Berzelius was not only the most famous chemist of the world, but also the autocrat of the world of chemistry. The son of a schoolmaster, he was born near Linköping on August 29, 1779. After studying medicine and chemistry at Uppsala, at the age of twenty-three he was appointed assistant professor of botany and pharmacy at Stockholm, and full professor in 1807. During 1815–32 he held the chair of chemistry in the Caroline Medico-Chirurgical Institution. In 1818 he became perpetual secretary of the Stockholm Academy of Sciences, and received a title of nobility, with permission to retain his name. Seventeen years later, on the occasion of his marriage, he was made *Freiherr*. Berzelius spent some ten years determining with great accuracy the atomic and molecular weights of more than two thousand chemical substances; he isolated selenium, thorium, silicon, titanium and zirconium, and also prepared and examined many organic compounds. He devised the present system of chemical symbols. His "Lehrbuch der Chemie", begun in 1808, went through five editions and, in various translations, spread his fame over Europe. His dualistic electrochemical theory exerted a profound influence on the progress of chemistry. Though Berzelius worked in the simplest of laboratories, his reputation attracted students from many countries. In his hands the blow-pipe became the symbol of qualitative dry analysis. Distinguished in appearance, inclined to be portly, neat in attire and habits, cordial and unassuming, Berzelius was vigorous in body and mind, though essentially conservative in his outlook. Of his characteristic sayings the following may serve as a sample: "The devil may write text-books of chemistry, for every few years the whole thing changes".

Australian Journal of Scientific Research

THE Australian Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, in collaboration with the Australian National Research Council, has decided to take responsibility for the establishment in Australia of a new scientific journal, the *Australian Journal of Scientific Research*, as a medium for the publication of research papers of outstanding merit. This journal is open to receive contributions from research workers, irrespective of country or of the organisation to which they are attached. Dr. N. S. Noble has been appointed as editor of the new journal. Editorial policy will be determined by an editorial board under the chairmanship of the editor and comprising as members: Prof. W. J. Dakin (Department of Zoology, University of Sydney), Prof. E. J. Hartung (Department of Chemistry, University of Melbourne), Prof. L. H. Martin (Department of Physics, University of Melbourne), and Prof. J. G. Wood (Department of Botany, University of Adelaide). The Board aims at achieving a high standard of quality in papers accepted and a strict refereeing system has been instituted. The *Journal* will be printed in two series: Series A (Physical Sciences) and Series B (Biological Sciences). Initially each series will be issued quarterly and will cost 30*s*. a year.