

Huntington followed up these ideas in great detail in a series of articles and books—"World Power and Evolution", "The Pulse of Progress", "Weather and Health", "Season of Birth", "Mainsprings of Civilization", etc. He believed that the origin of climatic variations was to be sought in the sun, and especially in shifts of the storm belts associated with changes in sunspot activity. This hypothesis fits well enough with historical changes of climate; but he stretched it too far when, in conjunction with S. S. Visher, he based a theory of ice ages on increases in the number of sunspots. His rather wild hypothesis of the electro-magnetic influence of the fixed stars on solar radiation found no favour with astronomers. In his later years Huntington became interested in the study of weather cycles, and he was one of the originators of the Foundation for the Study of Cycles which was established in the United States.

Huntington's books were all eminently readable and full of ideas, but at times his claims were exaggerated; for this reason his books had less influence than they might have done had they been phrased

more cautiously. On the other hand, he did much to arouse interest in historical variations of climate. In the early 1900's, climate was generally believed to have remained static for thousands of years; "The Pulse of Asia" shattered this calm and began a controversy which has added much to our knowledge.

C. E. P. BROOKS

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Mr. William Densham, who assisted Marconi in his early experiments in the Isle of Wight, at Poldhu, Clifden and in America, on October 25, aged seventy.

Prof. Henryk Hoyer, emeritus professor of comparative anatomy of the Jagiellonian University, Cracow, widely known by his work on the comparative anatomy of blood and lymph vessels of vertebrates, on October 17, aged eighty-three.

Sir Leonard Pearce, C.B.E., engineer-in-chief to the London Power Company, who was responsible for the engineering design of the Battersea Power Station, on October 20, aged seventy-four.

## NEWS and VIEWS

### The Royal Wedding

SINCE attaining her twenty-first birthday in April of this year, during the tour of the Royal Family in South Africa, Princess Elizabeth has been taking a prominent part in many public functions. Thus apart from the general affection among the public which has been inspired by the sympathetic understanding and devotion to duty of the Royal Family, the people at large have had increased opportunities of learning to know Princess Elizabeth. In these pages it is appropriate to refer particularly to her association with, and interest in, scientific and similar bodies. Early this year, she was elected an honorary member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, and shortly afterwards she became a Royal fellow of the Royal Society. She has also accepted the office of president of the Royal Society of Arts, the activities of which were of deep concern to Prince Albert and in memory of whom the Society's premier award, the Albert Medal, was founded. In her address from the chair at the opening meeting of the present session of the Society, she stressed the importance of design, not only from the point of view of usefulness, but also from that of aesthetics. The industrial revolution, she said, had left a legacy of squalor, misery and ugliness, which was followed by a fall in standards of taste accompanying mass production methods. It is our duty to lead the world in finding a remedy and "to establish that beauty is as essential to utility as it proverbially is to truth". Scientific workers will wish to be associated with the good wishes which are being conveyed to Princess Elizabeth and Lieut. Philip Mountbatten from every part of the world on the occasion of their marriage.

### Scientific Adviser to the Ministry of Food: Dr. N. C. Wright

DR. N. C. WRIGHT, director since 1928 of the Hannah Dairy Research Institute, Ayr, has recently been appointed to succeed Sir Jack Drummond as scientific adviser to the Ministry of Food, being seconded during the period of this appointment from

the directorship of the Institute. Dr. Wright is a graduate of Oxford, and during his post-graduate training, carried out research in biochemistry at Cambridge, at the National Institute for Research in Dairying, Shinfield, and in the United States, where he held a Commonwealth Fund Fellowship during 1926-28. While at Shinfield, he investigated, with Mr. W. L. Little, the etiology of milk fever in cattle. These investigators were the first to point out the fall in blood calcium accompanying this disease, a discovery which laid the foundation for the modern method of treatment. Dr. Wright was appointed first director of the Hannah Institute in 1928, and the noteworthy progress of that Institute has been largely due to his efforts. He and his collaborators have, among other researches, examined the influence of heat on the behaviour of milk proteins, the mechanism of the secretion of calcium, phosphorus and other milk constituents by the mammary gland, the differences in biological value for milk secretion of various mixtures of food proteins in common use in the rations of dairy cows, and they have made valuable contributions to knowledge in each of these fields.

Dr. Wright has also in recent years studied the questions, at present of great national importance, of the feeding-stuffs requirement of farm animals in relation to home and overseas supplies, and the rival claims, under war-time conditions in Britain, of animals and man for food. His appointment at the Ministry coincides in time with the agricultural expansion programme for greater home production of food, a programme which largely depends for its implementation on the increased importation from overseas of animal feeding stuffs. Dr. Wright's recent studies will doubtless be of especial value in relation to this importation, which is a function of the Ministry of Food. Since 1936 he has paid several advisory visits overseas: to India, the Middle East, Ceylon, and recently to Greece with a mission of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, mainly in connexion with food production and livestock problems.