

NEWS and VIEWS

Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture: Prof. A. B. Killick, C.M.G.

THE appointment of Mr. A. B. Killick to the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, Trinidad, as professor of agriculture, brings to the College a man whose wide experience in tropical agriculture will be of great value to its students. Mr. Killick was a postgraduate student at the College during the academic year 1923-24 and was appointed to the Department of Agriculture, Uganda, in 1924. He served in that Department until 1936, when he was appointed deputy director of agriculture, Trinidad. In 1939 he was promoted to the post of deputy director of agriculture, Tanganyika, and left there in 1942 to become deputy director of agriculture, Kenya. He was appointed director of agriculture, Uganda, in 1947, and is now retiring from that post. In 1950 he was awarded the C.M.G.

Mr. Killick's Colonial experience has covered a wide range of agricultural systems, from the primitive native tribal systems in Tanganyika to the partly mechanized European methods in the Kenya Highlands. In Uganda and Trinidad his work dealt with advanced peasant agriculture, which is approaching the freehold and leasehold farming methods, and he has also gained experience in plantation agriculture—sugarcane, coffee, pyrethrum, sisal and cacao. He will, therefore, be able to give his students an overall picture of the type of agricultural problems which they will meet when they leave the College in Trinidad for Colonial territories, and they will also have the benefit of his experience in the economics and agriculture of the cotton industry in Uganda, which is now undergoing economic reorganization in view of its financial importance to the Commonwealth as a whole.

Physical Society: Parsons Memorial Lecture

THE 1951 Parsons Memorial Lecture will be given under the auspices of the Physical Society by Mr. F. Twyman in the Anatomy Theatre of University College, Gower Street (not in the Science Museum as previously announced), on October 25, at 5.30 p.m. Mr. Twyman will take as his subject "Sir Charles Parsons and Optical Engineering". The Lecture was instituted in memory of Sir Charles Parsons, to be given in turn on the various subjects in which Sir Charles was interested. These included developments in optical instruments and engineering of all types, including naval. The lectures are thus arranged under the auspices of appropriate institutions, the Physical Society undertaking that concerned with optics. Sir Charles Parsons had a deep interest in the making of optical glass of fine quality, and Mr. Twyman has done much arduous and skilful work in improving methods of making high-quality glass and of testing glass and optical components. He was largely instrumental in the development of the Twyman-Green interferometer for the testing of optical flats and prisms for surface flatness and optical homogeneity, and he developed from it the camera-lens and microscope interferometer. In his book "Prism and Lens Making" are many instances of his ability to devise ingenious methods to improve the making and testing of optical parts. A further outstanding achievement was his making of echelon gratings of higher performance than those made by Michelson.

The Effigy of Robert Boyle

THE Hon. Robert Boyle, the famous natural philosopher who was one of the founders of the Royal Society, was born at Lismore Castle, in the south of Ireland, on January 25, 1627, and died at his house in Pall Mall, London, on December 30, 1691. His sister, Lady Ranelagh, with whom he had lived, had died a week previously and they were both buried in the chancel of the old church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, which was replaced in 1721 by the present building. In a letter in *Nature* of October 6, 1921, the late Sir William Tilden gave an account of his unsuccessful efforts to find any memorial to Boyle and concluded that "it seems probable that the last resting-place of the 'Father of Chemistry' will remain unknown to the end of time". Though this appears to be true, there is an effigy of Boyle as a very small boy in "the very famous, sumptuous, glorious tombe" of black marble and alabaster in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, erected by his father, the great Earl of Cork, in 1631 in memory of his second wife, who had died in 1629 when Robert Boyle was two years old. Richard Boyle, the first Earl of Cork, was born at Canterbury in 1566. After studying law, at the age of twenty-two he went to Ireland, where he held many important posts and became very wealthy. He was made an earl in 1620. His first wife having died in childbirth, in 1603 he married Katherine Fenton, the daughter of Sir Geoffrey Fenton (1530 ?-1608) and his wife Agnes Weston, and by her he had seven daughters and seven sons, of whom Robert was the youngest. The great monument, which now stands at the west end of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, has four tiers the highest of which has a recumbent figure of Robert Boyle's great-grandfather, Robert Weston (1515 ?-73), the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and also dean of St. Patrick's. In the next tier are the kneeling figures of Boyle's grandfather and grandmother, Sir Geoffrey Fenton and his wife, while the third tier contains the recumbent figures of the Earl and Countess of Cork, with some of their children kneeling, and the lowest tier of all has representations of the seven younger members of the family, the effigy of Robert Boyle occupying a central arch in this stage. "It is a curious circumstance," says the official work on St. Patrick's, "that it is the only memorial to a man of science in the Cathedral." Though the great Earl is represented in the monument, he died at Youghal and is buried and commemorated in the parish church there. His death took place on September 15, 1643, when his famous son was but sixteen.

Memorial to John Milne

A MOVEMENT is on foot to create a memorial to John Milne, who is commonly regarded as the 'father of seismology'. Space has been allotted in the Carisbrooke Museum, Isle of Wight, which is a mile from Shide, where Milne did the greater part of his life's work. Any seismological station having any discarded Milne or Milne-Shaw instrument, or parts, used prior to 1914 is invited to communicate with Mr. E. W. Pollard, Cliftonville, Dorking, Surrey.

Aeronautical Engineering Group of Aslib

APPROXIMATELY a hundred representatives of the aeronautical industry in Great Britain attended a meeting held at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough, on September 27 to inaugurate an Aeronautical Engineering Group of Aslib. This is