prehistoric Europe in "The Growth of Civilisation" (1924) and of cosmological ideas among Oceanian and other peoples in "The Primordial Ocean" (1935).

It is now generally held that Perry, like Elliot Smith with whom he worked so closely in this field, over-simplified the processes of cultural diffusion, and sometimes too readily assumed that similarities of a general or formal kind, such as the practice of similar crafts or beliefs in sky beings, were indubitable evidence of particular connexions and unitary origins. The insistence on an exclusively Egyptian source for archaic cultural features also unfortunately rendered many of his generalizations unacceptable to specialists on the early cultures of the ancient East, on which new excavations and comparative studies were accumulating a wealth of fresh material. Controversies as to Egyptian versus Sumerian or Babylonian origins often side-tracked the opportunity for collaboration between prehistorians and ethnologists in the comparative study of relations between prehistoric and living civilizations in southern Asia. But the late A. M. Hocart brought strong support for some of Perry's contentions in his comparative studies based on field research on coronation rites and other archaic ceremonials in India, Ceylon and Oceania.

Even though it be held that he claimed too much, Perry's studies established the importance of early centres of higher civilizations as factors in shaping the form and symbolism of human cult and belief over wide areas of so-called primitive culture. In the years that have followed, interest in cultural anthropology in Britain has moved strongly in other directions; but Perry will be remembered for his passionate convictions, his amazing industry, his vigour as a controversialist and not least for his warm humanity as a colleague. DARYLL FORDE

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Dr. Norman R. Campbell, formerly of the Research Laboratories of the General Electric Co., Ltd., Wembley, on May 18, aged sixty-nine.

Mrs. Nernst, widow of Prof. Walther Nernst, For.Mem.R.S., who had been living with her daughter for the past three years in Wimbledon, Surrey, on May 4.

NEWS and VIEWS

Physical Society's Duddell Medal: Dr. E. H. Land

THE Duddell Medal for 1949 of the Physical Society was presented on June 2 to Dr. Edwin Herbert Land, inventor of the polarizing material 'Polaroid'. Though attempts had been made by previous workers to replace the costly and limited Nicol prism with dichroic substances in the form of thin laminæ, Land was the first to demonstrate the possibility of manufacturing such laminæ with sub-microscopic dichroic crystals of quinine iodosulphate correctly oriented to simulate a single crystal extended to a superficial area previously considered impossible. This method is now being superseded as the result of two stages of further development. In the first, a plastic medium is stretched to cause orientation of the micelles. It is then soaked in a solution of the iodonium compound, which is precipitated on the oriented micelles to produce a polarizing medium. In the final method, a stretched plastic medium is treated in a way which converts about 1 per cent of its bulk to a polyvinylene compound, a straight-chain polymer in which the double-bonded oxygen gives the necessary intense directional light absorption. It is claimed that this material is extremely heat-stable and very efficient. The light transmission of the single sheet is about 40 per cent, and is reduced to 0·02 per cent for two sheets in the crossed position. This is a very remarkable development of the original idea. First, Land has succeeded in eliminating the step of orienting sub-microscopic crystals of the iodonium compound; secondly, he has eliminated the compound altogether.

Land has also described an ingenious system of stereoscopic photography in which the two images are formed in two layers of polarizing crystals crossed with respect to each other and mounted on an aluminium background. Stereoscopic pictures on this principle were developed by the Polaroid Corporation under the name of 'vectographs' (*J. Opt. Soc. Amer.*, **30**, 230; 1940). A further novel development described by Land is a one-step photographic process, in which the positive print can be produced in about one minute from the time the photograph is taken. In this system, the processing is carried out by feeding the negative and the printing paper between pressure rollers, the reagent being spread in the form of a viscous liquid between the negative and positive emulsions (*J. Opt. Soc. Amer.*, **37**, 61; 1947).

National Geographic Magazine and Dr. Gilbert Grosvenor

DR. GILBERT GROSVENOR, president of the National Geographic Society of Washington, D.C., was presented with a medal named after him at a ceremony on May 17, to mark his completing half a century as editor of the *National Geographic Magazine*. The *Magazine*, which is really of his making, now has a circulation of about two million copies a month. It was in 1899 that the President of the Society at the time was concerned about its official organ, which had only a trivial circulation and no funds behind it. The president in those days, who was A. Graham Bell, of telephone fame, appointed as editor of the *Magazine* a young, untried, but not untravelled, man. Since then Dr. Grosvenor has built up the reputation and circulation of this finely illustrated journal, which is known throughout the world for the excellence of its photographic illustrations and its colour plates. After five or six precarious years, the corner was turned about 1905 and the circulation steadily grew. Dr. Grosvenor has collected photographs from every corner of the globe and articles by many eminent travellers. He has also edited a series of large-scale detailed political maps issued with the *Magazine* from time to time, which have a wide circulation and use, and are notable for their accuracy. The profits of this successful publication have been largely devoted to exploration and research in various lands and seas.