

During 1907–11 Dr. Clay was the secretary for the Association of Technical Institutions, and in 1936 he joined the board of directors of the United Kingdom Optical Co. at Mill Hill, with happy results for the firm. From 1942 he served the Company as technical consultant on many problems. He was a founder fellow of the Institute of Physics (1918), served on its Board during 1920–33, and in recent years helped to promote the education and training of laboratory technicians. For many years he did admirable work for the *Journal of Scientific Instruments*, was at one time chairman of the Advisory Committee and was himself a frequent contributor.

Throughout his life, Dr. Clay's chief interest and hobby lay in optics. He was a member of the Council of the Optical Society and its president in 1927. Having been a Fellow of the Royal Microscopical Society for some years, he became its president in 1937 and was made an honorary Fellow shortly before his death. He was also a member of the Physical Society, in the activities of which he took a keen interest.

In 1911 Dr. Clay published a "Treatise on Practical Light" which remained the standard text-book for many years. It describes many ingenious pieces of apparatus for demonstrating optical principles. He gathered a unique collection of microscopes, containing an almost complete series from 1670 to 1850. This collection, bearing his name, is now in the Museum of the History of Science, in Oxford, and is described in detail in a book published in collaboration with T. H. Court in 1932, on the "History of the Microscope"; this remains the standard work on the subject.

From 1904 to the end of his life he was closely associated with what is now the National Council for

Domestic Studies, being its first treasurer and chairman of the Examination Board. During thirty-seven years he was only absent from the chair on three occasions, and he personally signed nearly thirty thousand certificates. He was particularly interested in training girls in a scientific approach to home life. One of Dr. Clay's major interests was the North London Collegiate School for Girls, now at Canons Park, where he became a governor, representing the Worshipful Company of Clothworkers, in 1929, and chairman of the governors from 1938 until his death.

During both World Wars, Dr. Clay played a part in supplying the Services with optical instruments, and during the second he was attached to the Admiralty Establishment at Teddington, acting as liaison officer between it and various aircraft depots.

On retiring from the Northern Polytechnic, he took an active interest in the Islington Antiquarian and Historical Society, becoming its president in 1948. His interests also extended to the Organ Club, the Newcomen Society, the British Society for the History of Science and the Cactus and Succulent Society. For many years he was an honorary member of the British Acetylene Association.

Dr. Clay married Theodora Tilley, and in 1947 they celebrated their golden wedding.

Dr. Clay's great gifts were consecrated to great ends. He sought to help others and to make life easier and happier for them. He had the power of inspiring respect and affection in others by his cheerful and friendly personality. To all who genuinely sought his guidance he gave freely of his time and knowledge, and he leavened his many activities with a graciousness that endeared him to all.

W. L. DOUGHTY

NEWS and VIEWS

G. S. Ohm (1787–1854)

THE German physicist, Georg Simon Ohm, whose name is immortalized in the ohm, Ohm's law and the ohmmeter, died a century ago, on July 7, 1854. Son of a master locksmith, he was born at Erlangen in Bavaria on March 16, 1787, and entered the local University at the age of sixteen, but left after eighteen months because of lack of means. After holding teaching posts in Switzerland, he returned to Erlangen in 1811, graduated and taught as *Privatdozent*. In 1817 he was appointed professor of mathematics at the Jesuit's *Gymnasium* in Cologne, where by means of experiments made with great skill and care, though with poor and deficient apparatus, he established his law of the theory of the voltaic current, which he published at Berlin in 1827 under the title "Die galvanische Kette mathematisch bearbeitet". Ohm's law, which to-day is regarded as a commonplace, was far in advance of its time, and its announcement fell on deaf ears. Deeply hurt, Ohm resigned his post and led a precarious existence until after many petitions addressed to the King of Bavaria he was made professor of mathematics at the Nuremberg Polytechnic in 1833. The Royal Society of London was the first to appreciate his work, awarding him its Copley Medal in 1841 and in the following year electing him a foreign member. In 1843 Ohm announced his law on the production of complex tones by the composition of simple

vibrations. In 1852 he became professor of physics at the High School in Munich, where he died of apoplexy two years later. Small in stature, feeble in body, simple in taste, he never married and lived solely for his work.

Geography at University College, Leicester:

Prof. Patrick W. Bryan

PROF. PATRICK W. BRYAN retires from the chair of geography and the vice-principalship of University College, Leicester, at the end of the present session, and has been appointed the first professor emeritus of the College. He received his early training in geography and economics at the London School of Economics under the late Sir Halford Mackinder; early in his career he spent a year at the University of Chicago, where he came under the influence of the school of geography then developing—the 'human ecology' school. The advanced text-book on North America, which was the joint work of the late Prof. Rodwell Jones and Prof. Bryan, was the first in the now well-known Methuen series, and his studies on the corn belt in particular illustrate Bryan's meticulous attention to relevant detail. He will always be associated with the development of the concept of the 'cultural landscape', elaborated in his book "Man's Adaptation of Nature". He was criticized by some for seeking an easy correlation between the features of the landscape and present