activities of the Imperial College of Science and Technology. At an earlier period of its history, instrumentation had been represented there by the chair of instrument design held by the late Prof. A. F. C. Pollard; but on his retirement no successor was appointed. Prof. McGee's particular interests lie in the field of photoelectric, electronic and television techniques rather than in the mechanical design of instruments, and as head of the new post-graduate Section of Instrument Technology in the College, he will be responsible for the development and application of these and similar devices to physical problems.

Educated at the University of Sydney, and awarded in 1928 an 1851 Exhibition travelling scholarship, he worked for three years under Lord Rutherford at the Cavendish Laboratory. From there, he went to the research laboratories of Electric and Musical Industries, Ltd., where he first worked on the development of high-vacuum cathode-ray tubes for television picture reception and later directed the research group which had been given the task of developing the pick-up tubes used in television cameras. During the War he was especially concerned with infra-red image converter tubes, not only with their development in the laboratory, but also with their factory production and with their military application. After the War, Prof. McGee was in charge of the group at Electric and Musical Industries, Ltd., responsible for striking developments in television camera pick-up tubes, charge storage tubes and photoelectric electron multipliers. These techniques are likely to be exploited to great advantage in the new Instrument Technology Section of the College. A staff of wide experience is being recruited and will help to establish a senior school of instrument technology that can be expected to make major advanced contributions to science and industry.

Jacques Dubois (Jacobus Sylvius) (1478–1555)

JACQUES DUBOIS, who died in Paris four centuries ago on January 13, 1555, was a humanist who made many original contributions to anatomy and helped to reform its teaching. The son of a weaver, he was born in 1478 at Louville near Amiens, from which town he derived his Latin cognomen Jacobus Sylvius Ambianus. As a student at the college of Tournay near Paris, he excelled in Latin, Greek, Hebrew and mathematics, invented machines for transporting water and wrote a popular French grammar. After studying medicine in Paris, he travelled widely to improve his knowledge of pharmacy. Despite his lack of a degree, which he was too poor to obtain, his success as a teacher was so great that the Paris medical faculty stopped his courses because they interfered with the regular schools. Sylvius then went to Montpellier, where he graduated in medicine on June 28, 1531, and on his return to Paris taught anatomy at the Collège de Tréguier, insisting that this subject can only be studied from the human body by eye and touch, and not by reading and description. Though he often followed Galen blindly, he succeeded in clarifying many of the garrulous and obscure passages. He frequently had five hundred pupils, who included Vesalius, Servetus, Conrad Gesner and Charles Estienne. He gave specific names, some of which are still in use, to the muscles which Galen had designated by numbers, described the valves in the veins, and the sphenoid bone, and was a pioneer in practising the art of injection. At the age of seventy-two he was appointed professor of surgery at the Royal College of Paris. The aqueduct and the fissure of Sylvius were described by another Sylvius (François de la Boë) a century later.

Zoological Society and B.B.C. Expedition to West Africa

THE expedition organized jointly by the Zoological Society of London and the British Broadcasting Corporation returned to Britain just before Christmas from ten weeks field-work in Sierra Leone, bringing a large collection of animals and a considerable quantity of cinematograph films and sound recordings. The animals are for the Society's collection at Regent's Park, London, and the films and recordings are for the B.B.C.'s television service—some programmes have already been broadcast. One of the main objects of the expedition was to find the nesting habitat of *Picathartes gymnocephala*, a rare passerine bird the systematic position of which is obscure; this bird has seldom been seen alive by Europeans. The habitat was found in difficult hilly bush country, and in spite of the dense shade cast by the forest successful films were made of the birds on and near the nests, of the eggs and of the parents feeding the young by regurgitation. Sound records were also obtained of the voices of the birds in their natural surroundings, and a living specimen was captured and brought to London. Another species never before exhibited in captivity that was successfully sought and found is the brilliantly iridescent emerald starling *Coccycolius iris*. Small flocks of this bird were discovered in the open savannah country of the highlands in the north near the French border. Much interesting film was made of various invertebrates, including several species of ants such as the driver, fire and Matabele ants, mantids, nest-building Hymenoptera and termites, as well as many subjects among the vertebrates. A further series is of particular anthropological interest as it shows some of the ritual dances used in connexion with the initiation ceremonies of the secret societies that have such a powerful influence over the lives of the pagan natives. Lengthy sound-recordings of the music and songs accompanying these dances were also made. The Zoological Society and the B.B.C. hope that the results of this joint venture will justify the organization of further field-expeditions to other parts of the world in the future.

Pool of Spraying and Dusting Equipment

A POOL of spraying and dusting machinery for use in the Colonial territories is being established by the Colonial Office, in co-operation with the Imperial College of Science and Technology and the machinery manufacturers, at the Imperial College of Science and Technology Field Station, Silwood Park, Sunninghill, Berks. Manufacturers of spraying and dusting machinery have been approached through the Agricultural Engineers Association and are co-operating in the establishment of the pool by the loan of suitable equipment. The College has for some years maintained a representative collection of spraying and dusting machinery for teaching and experimental purposes, and this collection will be incorporated into the pool, which will include equipment designed for agricultural, stored products and public health work. The pool will fulfil three purposes: (1) the instruction of students (especially students preparing to undertake work in the Colonies) of agriculture, entomology,