

few minutes later. The reproduced pictures were in all cases of high quality, and it is clear that this new British system has materially advanced the technique of television and will have important applications. No difficulty is foreseen in extending the technique to colour television when this is brought

into service. In the meantime, following these very successful demonstrations, one of these equipments is to be taken into use in the B.B.C. television studios for trial during normal programme transmissions, and some viewers may have already witnessed its inclusion in a recent 'Panorama' programme.

OBITUARIES

Lieut.-Colonel Mervyn O'Gorman, C.B.

MERVYN O'GORMAN, who died on March 16 at the age of eighty-six, should be recognized as one of the great pioneers of the application of science to aeronautics, but there are few now left who remember his outstanding work during 1909-16. In 1909 there was practically no science of aeronautics; no scientific principles of design; and there were no reliable British aircraft engines. Executive officers in high positions had no conviction that aeroplanes would ever be of real military value. But Haldane, who was then Secretary of State for War, made up his mind that "science should come first". He set up the Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, with Lord Rayleigh as chairman. His next step was to offer a part-time appointment as superintendent of the existing Army Balloon Factory to O'Gorman, who was by then a well-known consulting engineer, and a partner in the firm of Swinburne, O'Gorman and Baillie. Haldane made him a member of the Advisory Committee, directing him to act on their advice, and also gave him the right of direct access to himself. O'Gorman was directly responsible to the Master General of Ordnance, Sir Charles Hadden, who was also made a member of the Advisory Committee, where he came into contact with some of the most distinguished scientific men of the day. Hadden got infected with the scientific spirit, and became a warm supporter of O'Gorman in his endeavour to promote large-scale experimental work at Farnborough on aeroplanes and engines in order to supplement and extend the experiments on models at the National Physical Laboratory. So everything went swimmingly at first. The Balloon Factory was soon changed out of all recognition; it became the Army Aircraft Factory in 1911, and the Royal Aircraft Factory in 1912. The numbers employed rose from the original 100 to 2,000 at the beginning of the First World War in 1914. O'Gorman soon gathered around him an exceptionally able group of young men, many of whom have since become famous in industry and science. He inspired them with his energy, good judgment and boundless enthusiasm.

It was under O'Gorman that the long series of skilled researches on the safety of aircraft, which have set a standard to the world, was begun. It was at the Factory that the young Geoffrey de Havilland found the opportunity that led him to fame as a designer; it was there that E. T. Busk studied the stability of aircraft, and designed and flew, without touching the controls, the first stable aircraft in September 1913. It was at the Factory, too, that a young Cambridge physiologist, Keith Lucas, revolutionized compass design, at a time when the vagaries in cloud of the flat compass of naval design were attributed to mysterious magnetic forces. I only mention a few of the revolutions in the science of aeronautics the origin of which can be traced back

to the work of the Royal Aircraft Factory in O'Gorman's time.

After Haldane left the War Office, O'Gorman had no firm Ministerial backing. Criticisms of the Factory mounted. O'Gorman was accused of competing unfairly with private aircraft firms. There was no truth in this; all the results of experimental work were communicated freely to industry. The design of experimental aircraft, at that time, was a necessary final test of the soundness of conclusions reached by research. The Factory was not a factory in the real sense of the word; it was, as it now is, an experimental establishment. Thousands of the machines designed at the Factory were constructed by outside firms. But a fierce attack, made in the House of Commons in 1916, led to the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry. The Committee recommended that the Factory should cease to engage in the production even of prototype experimental aircraft, and that O'Gorman's appointment, which was originally for a term of seven years, should not be renewed. He was made consulting engineer to the Director-General of Military Aeronautics, a position of no authority and of little influence. No wonder he felt bitter about his treatment. He made mistakes and enemies, of course, as anyone might, in his position, who tried to make anything. It is sad that he never received the public recognition that was his due.

After the War, O'Gorman did not return to private practice. He busied himself with a variety of voluntary work. He retained his remarkable physical and mental energy to an advanced age. He was always interesting and interested, especially in the doings of his 'young men'. He had a marked artistic talent. He loved making lacquer, and engraving. He lived for some sixty years in the house which he had bought when he married Florence Catharine Rasch in 1897. She died in 1931. They had no children, so there is no one to follow him. But he will always be remembered with affection by the friends who knew him well, and worked with him.

H. T. TIZARD

Dr. Maxwell Garnett

DR. MAXWELL GARNETT, principal of the College of Technology, Manchester, during 1912-20, and secretary of the League of Nations Union during 1920-38, died at Seaview, Isle of Wight, on March 19 at the age of seventy-seven.

James Clerk Maxwell Garnett was born at Cambridge in 1880, the son of William Garnett, who had been a colleague of James Clerk Maxwell. Maxwell Garnett was educated at St. Paul's School and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was a major scholar, Smith's prizeman and Sheepshanks exhibitioner. He was placed in the first class of Division 1 of the