

## NEWS and VIEWS

## Electrical Engineering at Saskatchewan:

Prof. W. E. Lovell

PROF. W. EDWARD LOVELL, who will retire as head of the Department of Electrical Engineering in the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, on June 30, 1960, graduated at the University of Manitoba. He joined the staff of the University of Saskatchewan as a lecturer in 1923, and was appointed professor and head of the Department of Electrical Engineering in 1924. Prof. Lovell has been closely concerned with problems of electric power generation and distribution in the prairie provinces of Canada. He has been widely acclaimed as an outstanding teacher in the field of electric power production, and he has been responsible for introducing many innovations in the undergraduate laboratories.

Prof. Lovell was president of the Association of Professional Engineers of Saskatchewan in 1937, and has been chairman of the Saskatoon Community Planning Commission since 1940. He was a member of the Street Railway Commission in 1932.

Prof. N. F. Moody

MR. N. F. MOODY, head of the Basic Circuit Research Division of the Canadian Defence Research Board, Ottawa, has been appointed professor of electrical engineering in the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, from July 1, 1959.

During the Second World War, he was at the Telecommunications Research Establishment, Malvern, and, in collaboration with Prof. F. C. Williams, he worked on various aspects of radar research, including automatic range gates, guidance of aircraft by means of radar techniques, and aircraft blind-landing systems. Mr. Moody was head of the Electronics Branch of the National Research Council Atomic Energy Project at Chalk River, Canada, during 1947-51. In 1951 he was appointed superintendent of electronics in the High Explosive Research Establishment of the Ministry of Supply, Fort Halstead, and he was responsible for the elaborate telemetering equipment used in the tests of the first British atomic bomb. Mr. Moody returned to Canada in 1953 and became the first head of the Basic Circuit Research Division at the Defence Research Board, Ottawa.

During the past six years he has established one of the leading laboratories in Canada for the study of semi-conductor devices, and his personal contributions in the field of ultra-high-speed transistor circuits have been notable. Prof. Moody will be associated at Saskatoon with Prof. Arthur Porter, who left the Imperial College of Science and Technology in 1958 to become dean of engineering at the University of Saskatchewan (see *Nature*, 181, 1178; 1958).

## Space Research in Britain

IN replying to further questions in the House of Commons on April 27 regarding space research, the Minister of Supply, Mr. A. Jones, declined to add to

his previous statement (see *Nature*, May 2, p. 1231) and asked members to await the promised statement of policy. Nevertheless, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Supply, Mr. W. J. Taylor, welcomed an adjournment debate on this subject on April 29 and outlined briefly what Britain had already done in this field, assuring Mr. de Freitas, who opened the debate, that the Government is giving active consideration to the question of Britain engaging in an Earth satellite programme. British activity in this field began to take shape in the autumn of 1953, when the Royal Society considered the value and practicability of research into the upper atmosphere, extending roughly to about 150 miles from the Earth's surface. In April 1955 five university groups started experimental work and they have since been joined by a sixth. The Royal Aircraft Establishment undertook to develop rocket vehicles suitable for these experiments and, by agreement with the Australian Department of Supply, arrangements were made for the rockets to be launched at Woomera. The first trial flight of the rocket developed for this purpose, *Skylark*, took place early in 1957, and a series of twelve fully instrumented firings began in the spring of 1958.

Mr. Taylor stressed the magnitude of Britain's effort in tracking the Earth satellites launched by the Americans and the Russians and in analysing the data received from them, referring to the international recognition of the very fine work of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research stations

The Editors regret that, due to difficulties in the printing industry, some sections of this issue of "Nature" have had to be curtailed

at Slough and Singapore, the Jodrell Bank radio-telescope and of some Ministry of Supply establishments. New information had been obtained about the shape of the Earth and a contribution made to the study of air-drag on satellites and its interpretation in terms of air density. While, however, the Government is considering the possible use of the *Black Knight* research vehicle and the *Blue Streak* ballistic vehicle in an Earth satellite programme, it could not allow any such use to interfere with the place *Blue Streak* took in the military programme of deterrence. It had sought the considered views of the best scientific opinion in Britain, and Mr. Taylor repeated that an announcement as to whether and in what way the United Kingdom should extend its research activities into outer space would be made very shortly. Replying to specific points raised by Mr. de Freitas, Mr. Taylor thought that Mr. de Freitas's estimate of £10 million to £20 million as the cost of a satellite research programme over the next five years might be too modest; further design studies would be needed before reliable estimates could be made. He welcomed, however, the suggestion that the satellites should be designed as laboratories in space, working in a definite scientific field, but he did not think that a satellite programme was so crucially important that the scientific well-being of the country stood or fell by it. He also thought that the dangers of scientific emigration should not be exaggerated, nor the effect