

OBITUARIES

Mr. S. A. Moseley

THE death occurred on December 5, 1961, of Sydney Alexander Moseley, an author and journalist, who played an enthusiastic part in promoting the initial development of the Baird television system in Great Britain.

He was born in London in 1888, and joined the staff of the *Daily Express* in 1910. Later, he edited various newspapers in Egypt, and became the Cairo correspondent of the *New York Times* and the *Paris Daily Mail*. In 1914, after a period in the University of London Officers' Training Corps, he became the official correspondent to the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force. After the First World War, Moseley became a newspaper writer on radio both in Britain and in the United States. He was a founder and life member of the Overseas Press Club of America, and founder and first president of the Broadcast Critics' Circle.

It was as a journalist that Moseley first became interested in Baird's early experiments in television and his endeavours to raise money to support these. After witnessing a laboratory demonstration of the transmission of a visual image, he foresaw in this the beginnings of television; and he devoted time and energy to publicizing Baird's work in the Press. Later, he joined the Baird Television Company, and co-operated enthusiastically with the inventor in his struggles to obtain recognition and adequate support.

Sydney Moseley was the announcer on the occasion of the first experimental television broadcast made by the B.B.C. in September 1929, when a letter was read from the President of the Board of Trade, Sir William Graham, and speeches given by Sir Ambrose Fleming and Prof. E. N. da C. Andrade, followed by some entertainment. Moseley was also instrumental in arranging with the B.B.C. and the Postmaster-General for the Derby to be televised in May 1931, and a year later a large-screen demonstration of the finish of the Derby was given in a London cinema fifteen miles from the race-course at Epsom.

Many of his experiences and impressions during this pioneer work in television are described by Moseley in some half-dozen books, of which *Television Today and Tomorrow* (1930) and *Broadcasting in My Time* (1935) may be mentioned. He also wrote an interesting biography, *John Baird*, with the subtitle *The Romance and Tragedy of the Pioneer of Television*.

In addition to music, opera, swimming, tennis and golf, Moseley counted among his recreations "losing money made by writing by speculation on the Stock Exchange".

R. L. SMITH-ROSE

Prof. August Žáček

DR. AUGUST ŽÁČEK, late professor of experimental physics at the Charles University of Prague, died on October 26, 1961, at the age of seventy-five. He became director of the Department of Physics of that University in 1922 and acted in that capacity until 1940, when the University was taken over by the Germans during the occupation of Czechoslovakia and he was deprived of his post. He was re-instated to his former position at the end of the War, but, for

obscure reasons, was forced to retire prematurely after the new régime had been established in Czechoslovakia in 1948. From then on he was not able to make use of the laboratory and library facilities of the University and other scientific organizations, and lived in poverty and isolation, though still keenly interested in physics and trying to continue working.

His main field of research was alternating current, especially of high frequency, where his greatest achievement was the invention of the 'magnetron', a device for generating very short electromagnetic waves, consisting of a cylindrical diode placed in a magnetic field parallel to its axis. This device is now generally used for the determination in teaching laboratories of the specific charge of the electron, and it was, in greatly improved form, extensively used during the Second World War as a generator for radar waves. He also carried out important work on piezo-electric quartz oscillators. During 1921-22 he worked with Siegbahn in Sweden on X-ray spectra, especially on the *L*-series of the newly discovered hafnium.

He was an excellent and devoted teacher with a very wide experience in teaching experimental physics to students of physics, chemistry, medicine and pharmacy, and he published a number of text-books in the Czech language based on his lecture courses.

Žáček was a person of great charm and wit, with a wide and liberal outlook and the courage to express his opinions freely. The few of his personal friends who are still alive will remember him lovingly and deplore the cruel fate which cut short the working life of a distinguished scholar. R. H. FÜRTH

Mr. Cedric Dover

SOME men's lives mirror the intellectual movements of their generation. Cedric Dover, who died in London of a heart attack on December 9, 1961, was a writer of many talents. But all of them reflected the movement by which coloured people have asserted their political and cultural dignity.

Born in Calcutta of Eurasian parents, Dover was employed in the Zoological Survey of India and was then sent by Dr. N. Annandale to study zoology at Edinburgh. But after two years he returned to a series of appointments with the Malayan and Indian Governments as entomologist, osteoculturist and lecturer at the Indian Forest College. At the same time he studied contemporary attempts to develop a scientific study of minority problems and cultivated support for Congress among the Eurasian community.

In 1934 Dover put entomology on one side to concentrate on criticizing the current biological approach to problems of racial mixture. This he did in a scintillating and polished book, *Half-Caste* (1937), which embodied the results of his wide travels and a review of racial thought against a world perspective. It played an influential part in the subsequent re-evaluation of the nature and consequences of miscegenation.

After demobilization from the Royal Army Medical Corps, Dover spent two years lecturing in the United States before returning to live in London. Though his mind often returned to biological problems, especially to sub-speciation and the taxonomy of