

as 61.4 per cent. 1966-67 was in fact the first year in which the proportion of doctorates fell to less than half of the total number of higher degree graduates. Except for the applied scientists, higher degree winners in all the other fields chose careers in education rather than industry, public service or anything else. In the arts, for example, 84.4 per cent of men with higher degrees went into education compared with a derisory two per cent in industry.

#### PUBLISHING

### All Human Life is There

AT first sight, there is little similarity between *Progress in Material Science* and the *News of the World*, or, indeed, between Chambers's Encyclopaedia and the Walton Heath Golf Club. But if Mr Robert Maxwell, Britain's most energetic publisher, has his way, they will find themselves under the same management quite soon. Last week, Pergamon Press, Mr Maxwell's scientific publishing house, made a bid for the *News of the World* organization, which, as well as publishing a weekly saga of unoriginal sin, also owns a golf club, several provincial papers, book and directory publishing interests and printing, papermaking and printing machinery businesses. Mr Maxwell, the boss of Pergamon since 1949, has in the past two years made a whirlwind series of acquisitions, although he failed recently to take control of Butterworths, the publishers. But he has succeeded in taking over Bletchley Printers, Religious Education Press, Speedwriting, the History Book Club, the Co-operative Press and Sun Engraving, among many others.

Although Mr Maxwell's methods have made him rich and successful, they have not always gained him friends in the publishing industry. To some extent this is to his credit, and few would deny that since his arrival British publishing houses have had to become more efficiently managed. The Pergamon technique is to calculate with great precision how many copies of any book can be sold to libraries and institutions, and to budget accordingly. Shareholders find this more agreeable than do the libraries which have to pay Pergamon prices, and it is a technique which can hardly be applied to the *News of the World*.

The bid has been greeted with the distaste which always faces any newcomer who has the effrontery to treat a newspaper as a business proposition. Although the bid—now raised by Mr Maxwell—is generous in financial terms, the managers of the *News of the World* were this week making determined attempts to repel boarders. The fact that Mr Maxwell is a Labour Member of Parliament is unlikely to help his cause, although he has disavowed any intention of changing the political character of the paper. The *News of the World* is independent editorially in that extraordinary British way which is indistinguishable from being Conservative. In any case, everybody remembers that Mr Maxwell's ambition some months ago was to start a Labour daily paper, and the suspicion is that he has not yet forgotten it.

As *Nature* went to press, it was not at all clear which side would win. Both Pergamon and the *News of the World* board were buying shares in the market through their merchant bankers, and it seemed clear that Mr Maxwell had cornered the 25 per cent shareholding

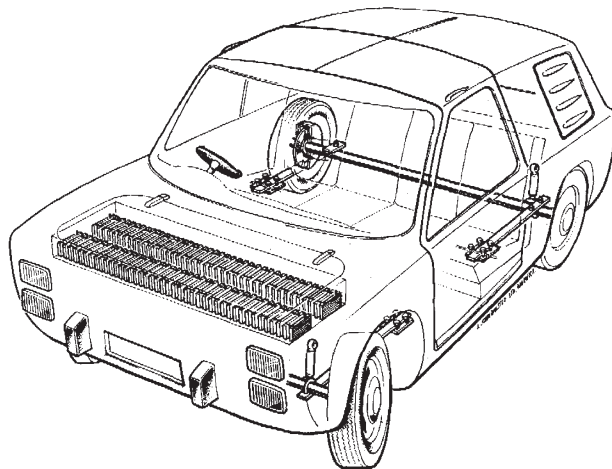
owned by Professor Derek Jackson, once a professor at Oxford and now a man of leisure. But the *News of the World* board were claiming almost 50 per cent of the shareholding, and it seemed quite likely that the bid would be repulsed.

#### TRANSPORT

### No Electric Shocks

WITH tongue firmly in cheek, the Institution of Electrical Engineers chose the week of the Earls Court Motor Show to arrange a colloquium on electric cars, the second in what seems intended to be an annual series. In the event, it has to be admitted that the internal combustion engine, for all its faults, remains very definitely the best way of propelling vehicles from one place to another; supporters of the electric car, for the most part, agreed with Mr L. Martland of Ford, who said that he was "waiting for a commercial battery with several times the energy density of those available at the moment".

One who disagrees is Mr A. Carter, from Carter Coaster Ltd of Tamworth. He declared to a disbelieving audience that "there are no further technical barriers to overcome in producing such a vehicle". Indeed, Mr Carter has already produced one, called the Carter Coaster, which embodies his conception of the ideal electric car. As the picture shows, the Coaster



The Carter Coaster.

is really stripped down to essentials; the suspension, in particular, with single leaf quarter elliptic springs, has a charming vintage air, and the passengers are likely to need the foam plastic seats which Mr Carter intends to provide. The two electric motors are contained in a space no larger than conventional brake drums at the rear, and the power is supplied by an 84 cell 168 volt lead acid battery. The bodywork on the production vehicle would be vacuum moulded ABS (acrylonitrile butadiene styrene), although Mr Carter has been forced to use fibreglass for the prototype by a shortage of ABS in Britain. Like Henry Ford, Mr Carter intends to provide only one colour, and his choice is dark grey. He expects the design to remain acceptable for twenty years, which will keep the price stable at £350 and maintain second-hand values.