

there is no wind, it flies in this direction along a great circle. When there is wind, the pilot determines the drift angle when starting by noticing the course which gives a constant reading of the magnetic compass with a constant indication of the radio compass. Thus, when the correct drift angle has been determined the compass readings can be corrected. In France, both civil and military aviation authorities have submitted the compass to exhaustive trials, and many aeroplanes are already equipped with them.

## University Events

**ABERDEEN.**—At the spring graduation held on March 31, the honorary degree of LL.D. was conferred upon the following, among others: Olaf Bloch, head of the Research Department, Ilford Laboratories; Naughton Dunn, surgeon and lecturer in orthopaedic surgery in the University of Birmingham; Prof. A. W. Gibb, emeritus professor of geology in the University; Dr. J. F. Tocher, lecturer in statistics in the University.

**CAMBRIDGE.**—Dr. F. P. Bowden, fellow of Gonville and Caius College, has been appointed Humphrey Owen Jones lecturer in physical chemistry in succession to Dr. R. G. W. Norrish.

S. D. Elliott has been appointed University demonstrator in the Department of Pathology.

Dr. R. van der R. Woolley has been appointed to the John Couch Adams astronomership and as first assistant observer at the Observatory.

The Amy Mary Preston Read scholarship, value £150, awarded this year for research in scientific subjects, has been gained by J. W. S. Pringle, of King's College, who graduated with a double first in natural sciences in zoology and comparative anatomy in 1934.

**GLASGOW.**—Dr. George L. Montgomery has been appointed Gardiner lecturer in the pathology of diseases of infancy and childhood.

Sir William Waters Butler has contributed £100 towards the cost of erecting the new Chemistry Institute.

At the Commemoration Ceremony on June 16, the honorary degree of LL.D. will be conferred on: Prof. Jan Boeke, professor of histology and embryology in the University of Utrecht; Sir Robert Muir, emeritus professor of pathology in the University of Glasgow; Prof. Max Planck, emeritus professor of theoretical physics in the University of Berlin; Sir Albert Seward, emeritus professor of botany in the University of Cambridge, recently master of Downy College, Cambridge.

**OXFORD.**—Sir William Beveridge, director of the London School of Economics and Political Science since 1919, has accepted the invitation to become master of University College in succession to Dr. A. B. Poynton, and will take office on October 1 (see also p. 619).

M. H. Hey, Magdalen College, has been granted the degree of D.Sc. for his work in mineralogy.

The Halley lecture for 1937 will be given on May 28 at 5 p.m. in the University Museum by Dr. B. F. J. Schonland of the University of the Witwatersrand. His subject will be "The Lightning Discharge".

## Science News a Century Ago

### Brunel on the Thames Tunnel

At a meeting of the Institution of Civil Engineers on April 11, 1837, Brunel gave an account of the progress being made with the construction of the Thames tunnel, then the greatest work of its kind under construction. The tunnel previously begun by Vazil and Trevithick, he said, had been only about 5 ft. high and 3 ft. wide, whereas the tunnel now being made was 38 ft. wide and 22 ft. high, and it was being excavated by the aid of a shield. This shield consisted of twelve parallel frames ranged side by side, each divided into three cells. Each frame was made so that it either derived support from its neighbour or assisted in supporting those adjacent. The advantage of the system which had been adopted of building by rings had been demonstrated by the fact that the brickwork had sustained two eruptions of the river, but had exhibited no sign of rupture. The great inconvenience suffered was through the want of a drain; an attempt to make one had been made, but after getting into a stratum of quicksand 50 ft. thick, it had to be abandoned. The land springs were a source of annoyance; many of them were extremely offensive, and produced cutaneous eruptions and were an annoyance to the workmen. The difficulties were great, but they would in time be surmounted.

### The University of Cambridge and Gresham College

In 1836 William Palmer (1802–58) was appointed professor of law at Gresham College, London. In his inaugural address he dealt in an interesting manner with the history of the foundation of the College. His address occupied two closely printed columns in *The Times* of April 13, 1837. After referring to the career of Sir Thomas Gresham, Queen Elizabeth's visit to his house in Bishopsgate Street on January 23, 1570, and Gresham's determination to found a college for the several sciences in the City, Palmer quoted from a letter dated March 25, 1575, from the vice-chancellor and senate of the University of Cambridge addressed "To the most accomplished Sir Thomas Gresham, the best maecenas of good learning", urging that the college should be founded at Cambridge and not in London. The letter was in Latin, but the translation ran: "In urging this alone, we would not so strongly or so long contend, unless for the convenient fitness of the place, and for the wholesome state of the air, and usefully for the dignity of the State, and piously for the defence of religion, and fruitfully for the progress of virtue, and happily and fortunately for the advancement of learning and splendidly as well as gloriously for thine own everlasting fame thou mayest erect thy college here rather than in any other place." The college should be at Cambridge or Oxford, but not in London, "to the detriment or almost ruin of either university."

But the compliments of the University could not divert Gresham from his purpose, as seen by his will of July 5, 1575. After his death and that of Lady Gresham, the City and the Mercers Company came into his estates, and the latter applied to Cambridge and Oxford for advice as to the appointments to be made, with the result that of the first seven lecturers three came from Cambridge, three from Oxford and one was appointed on the recommendation of the Queen.