

to take advantage of the openings that public policy seemed to offer?

We were informed on the highest authority that British effort, in the universities and in technical works, overtook and far out-distanced that long start that German military chemists possessed as regards noxious gases and other agents of chemical warfare. Has that superiority now disappeared, and why? One may even ask, judging from public pronouncements, is the same the case with our war-time superiority in aircraft and the relative scientific problems? Or is it that these things are now back under official control, with copious production of Blue-books?

A dozen years ago my duties threw me in the way of observing some of the great German university chemists who developed into chemical engineers on the grand scale and founded the German industry. While struck by their quiet capacity and apparent friendliness, it did not appear for a moment that they rated themselves higher than their British colleagues who had never had the same opportunities.

AGRICULTURE AND WIRELESS TELEPHONY IN FRANCE

AN editorial article in the *London Times* says:

WHILE England has been considering France has acted and has arranged to bring wireless telephony to the assistance of agriculture. A generous extension of the telephone system to rural districts has long been urged on our own General Post Office. It would help to redress the isolation of the country and it would confer the special benefit of prompt knowledge of approaching meteorological changes. Farmers and gardeners, who are at the mercy of vagaries of the weather, could do much to arrange their work or even to protect their crops were they in possession of weather bulletins such as are posted at harbors for the benefit of fishermen and mariners. But the cost of telephone cables has retarded the progress of extensions, and would, indeed, prohibit even the ultimate completion of a sufficient network. According to a message from our Paris correspondent, printed in our columns last Wednesday, France has overcome the difficulties of cost and distance by a prompt application of wireless telephony. The ministers of air and of agriculture, acting in concert, have arranged that the National Meteorological Office shall "broadcast" a weather bulletin twice daily. Every commune will have a receiving station in the parish school or police station, where the mes-

sages will be received and posted. It is proposed, further, that the peasants shall be warned of any sudden storm by ringing the village bell. Such an organization is well suited to rural France, where, for the most part, the owners are the actual cultivators and live in villages from which they sally forth to their fields. It would require modification in this country, where the isolated farm rather than the village is the center which would have to be reached. But messages issued by the Meteorological Office, now under the Air Ministry, could be received at suitably chosen towns, from which they would be redistributed not only to villages, but to farms in possession of the cheap wireless receivers already at the disposal of the general community.

THE MOUNT EVEREST EXPEDITION

At a recent meeting of the Royal Geographical Society Sir Francis Younghusband, the president, made the following announcement in regard to the Mount Everest Expedition:

As this is the last meeting of the session and consequently the last occasion on which I shall have the honor of addressing you as your president, perhaps you will allow me to summarize the results of the Mount Everest Expedition, so far as we at present know them. The climbers were on June 6 to have made a final effort to reach the summit—or rather the real attempt, for the previous efforts were more in the nature of reconnaissances. But we know that the monsoon broke on June 3 and we fear that this will have definitely frustrated any further effort.

But the expedition has, in spite of terrific weather, already accomplished much. As you know, they have reached 26,800 feet without oxygen and 27,300 feet with its aid. And in accomplishing these great feats they have gained much experience for future use. They have ascertained that the mountain itself at the highest points reached is, in Mallory's words, "not difficult," and Finch and Bruce were able to proceed along the north face without ropes. Mallory was convinced, too, that with favorable weather the porters could have carried a camp to 26,000 feet and so brought the climbers within reach of the summit. And Finch's experience was that by a moderate use of oxygen in camp both sleep and hunger were induced. So that, even if the final climbers did not carry oxygen on them, they might start from their high camp refreshed by its use.

The experience gained this year also shows that skilled mountaineers are able to take those un-