

OBITUARY.

SIR SAMUEL CANNING, who died on the 24th September, 1908, at the advanced age of 85, was one of the pioneers of submarine telegraphy, and his name is indissolubly associated with those of Lord Kelvin, Sir Charles Tilston Bright and the other engineers and electricians whose talent and indomitable perseverance accomplished, despite all obstacles, the successful laying of the Atlantic cables.

The son of Mr. Robert Canning, of Ogbourne St. Andrew, Wiltshire, the subject of this notice, was born in 1823, and received his education at Salisbury. He gained his early practical experience in the railway branch of the profession, as assistant to Messrs. Locke and Errington on the Great Western Railway extensions, as Resident Engineer on the Liverpool, Ormskirk and Preston Railway, and on other work. This occupied the period between 1846 and 1852, in which latter year he turned his attention to submarine telegraphy. In 1856 he laid his first cable, connecting Cape Breton Island and Newfoundland, and in the following year his services were procured by the late Sir Charles Bright to assist in the construction and laying of the first Atlantic cable. He was then engaged for some years in laying cables for Messrs. Glass, Elliot and Company in the deep waters of the Mediterranean and other seas. On the formation of the Telegraph Maintenance and Construction Company in 1865, he was appointed their chief engineer, and in that capacity he had charge of the manufacture and laying of the Atlantic cables of 1865 and 1866. The alterations to, and the fitting-out of the "Great Eastern" and the accompanying ships were under his direction, and he had control of the expedition for the contractors, whilst Sir Charles Bright and Mr. Latimer Clark acted as Consulting Engineers to the proprietors. The 1865 cable broke in 2,000 fathoms of water, but the 1866 cable was successfully laid. Sir Samuel (then Mr.) Canning at once set out to recover the first cable, for which purpose he had devised special grappling machinery, and eventually, after considerable trouble, success crowned his efforts, and, for the first time, a cable was recovered from the ocean depths. For these important services, the honour of knighthood was conferred upon him in 1866. Later he was decorated by the King of Portugal with the Order of St. Jago d'Espada, and he also

received a gold medal from the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce. In 1869 he laid the French Atlantic cable between Brest and Duxbury. On his retirement from the service of the Telegraph Maintenance and Construction Company, Sir Samuel Canning continued in active practice as a Consulting Engineer on matters connected with telegraphy, and, amongst other work, he superintended the laying of the Marseilles-Algiers and other cables for the India Rubber, Gutta Percha and Telegraph Works Company. Subsequently he acted as technical adviser to the West India and Panama, and other telegraph companies. He married, in 1859, Elizabeth Anne, daughter of Mr. W. H. Gale, of Grateley, Hants.

Sir Samuel Canning was elected a Member of The Institution on the 1st February, 1876.

WILLIAM DANBY, born on the 5th May, 1842, was educated at Leeds Grammar School and at King's College, London, and received his practical training under the late Mr. E. Filliter, then Borough Engineer and Surveyor of Leeds. Subsequently he was appointed to take charge of the new waterworks in the Washburn Valley, for which Mr. Thos. Hawksley, Past-President, and Mr. Filliter were the Engineers. In December, 1873, he received the appointment of Chief Assistant Engineer in the Public Works Department of Hongkong, and the remainder of his life was spent in that colony. He remained 6 years in the public service and during that period he designed and constructed lighthouses, sea-walls, waterworks and other engineering undertakings connected with the administration of a Crown colony. In 1879 he left the Government service, and later he commenced independent practice as a consulting engineer in Hongkong, acquiring a considerable reputation amongst professional men in the Far East for his skill and ability as an engineer. Amongst other important works, he was responsible for the construction of docks at Kowloon, a concrete sea-wall and wharves, tramways and the Peak railway, besides a number of public buildings, warehouses and factories at Hongkong, Canton and other places. He took a constant interest in local affairs, was a lieutenant of Volunteers in earlier years, and an active freemason. His death, which occurred suddenly on the 12th February, 1908, was due to injuries sustained in a fall, and occasioned widespread regret.

Mr. Danby was elected a Member of The Institution on the 31st May, 1881.
