

MR. ALFRED MAGNALL.

THE British telephone world has lost one of its best-known figures in the official passing of Mr. Magnall, who retired from the Service on Oct. 17. His career is indeed remarkable and exemplifies the power of grit and character in the achievement of success.

Mr. Magnall commenced his service with the National Telephone Company in 1883 and rose rapidly to the post of Inspector and then to District Manager, Warrington. His engineering abilities were somewhat wasted in this capacity and he was very shortly promoted to the position of Engineer, Manchester, to succeed Mr. Watts, who had been transferred to the Headquarters Staff. Mr. Magnall entered on his new duties with an enthusiasm which



MR. A. E. MAGNALL.

(Photo by Jerome Ltd., Manchester.)

has never diminished. During his tenure of office he delivered many instructive and valuable lectures to engineering societies. He did much pioneer work in the development of external plant construction—one notable example being the investigations into the tension on aerial wires.

In 1911 Mr. Magnall was responsible for the layout of the new telephone system in Constantinople, and it is interesting to know that his forecasts have been fully justified in the years that have elapsed. Incidentally Mr. Magnall brought back with him a most remarkable and interesting series of views which has, on many occasions, served to illustrate his lecture on the Orient.

With the transfer of the telephones to the State, Mr. Magnall joined the South Lancashire District as Sectional Engineer, and

was responsible for the administration of the Manchester West Section. Mr. Magnall has often told us that for some time he did not love the Post Office, but that later he came to realise that there was wisdom in our madness. Be that as it may, we all learned to revere and to respect him. His transparent, honest, and absolute straightness in all his dealings with his chiefs and his subordinates was very soon recognised. It would, indeed, be difficult to differentiate between the regard which he won from his former staff and that which he won from those with whom he first came in contact in 1912.

On Oct. 18 1926 a meeting took place to express the feelings of every one towards him. Mr. W. J. Medlyn occupied the Chair, and in one of his delightful little speeches, gave a *resumé* of Mr. Magnall's career. After a number of tributes from every section of the staff of the Post Office Engineering Department and from the District Manager's staff voiced by Mr. Elliott, the Chairman called upon Mr. T. E. Herbert to make the presentation which owing to Mr. Magnall's uncertain plans had perforce to take the form of a wallet of treasury notes to a very considerable sum. Mr. Herbert said that he had been proud of a friendship extending over 30 years, and paid tribute to Mr. Magnall's kindly heart and his remarkably vivid personality. A large contingent of the Withington Bowling Club attended to honour their former President, and in his reply Mr. Magnall remarked that this was the third occasion on which the Club had honoured him. First in 1910 when they had presented him with a gold watch and chain. In 1923 when he was made a Honorary Member of the Club, and thirdly on the present occasion.

Mr. Magnall was deeply and visibly affected by the tributes paid to him and by the wonderful atmosphere of enthusiastic goodwill so eminently manifested. He had a kindly word for all his old staff, and finished with an old-fashioned but none the less sincere "God bless you."

Nov. 15 was yet another remarkable day for our old friend. He delivered a most interesting lecture before the South Lancashire Centre of the Institution of Post Office Electrical Engineers entitled "Reminiscences." This dealt with the early days of telephone engineering, remarkable incidents, accidents, defects, his Constantinople experiences, and many other matters. The lecture was interesting and valuable, and was very fully illustrated by a selection from his large collection of lantern slides, the bulk of which he has been good enough to present to the Centre.

The vote of thanks was proposed by an old friend, Mr. J. M. Shackleton, and was seconded by Mr. A. E. White, his former deputy.

Little remains to be said of our friend: we shall miss his kindly cheery personality and his vast knowledge of the Manchester plant, but we wish him every happiness in his well-earned retirement. It is understood that he contemplates a long trip abroad with the object of visiting his son in Central America. His other son is well known to most of us, since he is on the Secretary's Traffic Staff in London. His daughter is married to a Manchester Post Office official, and it is, therefore, clear that this indirect link with the Post Office and its people will still survive the severance of his official connexion with the South Lancashire District. T. E. H.

STERLING TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC CO.

The Sterling Telephone & Electric Co. inform us that they have acquired the Phonophone business of the Radio Phonophone & Electricals Ltd. (in liquidation) and that they will welcome enquiries for complete telephones and spare parts.

They are offering a special service for spare parts to present users but desire that samples should be sent with all enquiries for spares.