

Television in Colour

RESEARCH ENGINEERS, by the very nature of their calling, are notorious hidiers of lights under bushels, and the Baddow Research boys are no exception to this rule. Last month, however, they cast reticence to the winds, and went to Town in a big way.

We say "went to Town" advisedly; to be precise, to Marconi House, Strand, where they staged the first demonstration of compatible colour television ever to be seen in this country. If "compatible" should fox anyone, it simply means a system of colour transmission which can also be received as a black-and-white picture on existing television sets, without noticeable deterioration in quality.

Two systems of compatible colour television, each with several possible variants, were on view at this demonstration. One was the American system suitably modified to suit British requirements; the other, a Marconi "Wide-Band" development. One of the primary objects of the show was to demonstrate these on a strictly impartial comparison basis.

The "Wide-Band" system was by no means the only item of original Marconi development on view, however. A Marconi Two-Tube colour television camera, believed to be the only one of its kind in the world, and a Marconi Flying-Spot Colour Telecine also starred in the show.

The first demonstration in Britain of all-electronic compatible colour television, given at Marconi House, London, in May, caused widespread interest



From first to last the two-day series of demonstrations were an unqualified success. Nevertheless, the atmosphere at zero-hour was understandably reminiscent of a theatrical first-night. That not even the slightest technical hitch occurred throughout the whole of the two exhausting days is surely a tribute to the people who designed and built the incredibly complicated apparatus.

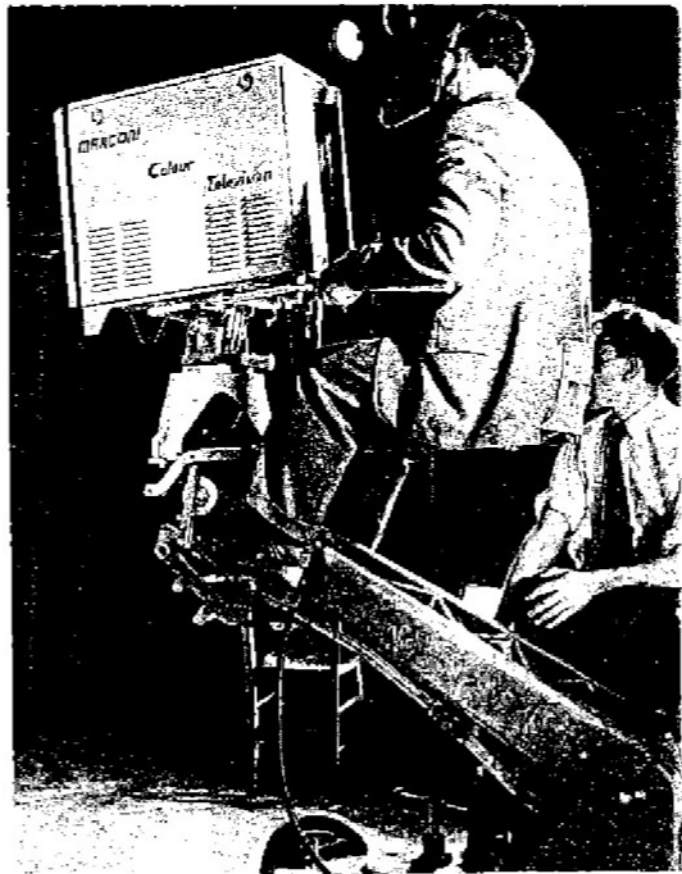
Each demonstration opened with a brief introductory talk by L. H. Bedford, our Chief TV Engineer, after which the party adjourned to the viewing room, where four colour receivers and various standard black-and-white sets had been installed—the latter being used to assess compatibility.

Leslie Mitchell, ace television announcer, compèred the show impeccably—his initial appearance in black-and-white, and immediate transformation to colour being most impressive, and a striking testimony to the Marconi Two-Tube camera.

Next, the Marconi Flying-Spot Telecine was put through its paces, to show how a colour film can be televised. The film chosen was an exacting one, but the equipment reproduced the wealth of colours excellently. Then, back to the camera again, for interior shots from the studio next door, where two charming models, Gloria Clarry and Anne Sturnham tried on gaily coloured hats and scarves for our benefit. Anne, incidentally, is one of us—or almost—as she is at English Electric, Marconi House. This was by no means her first experience of fashion modelling, however, as was very evident from her grace and poise.

A short discourse, illustrated by televised coloured slides, was then given by L. C. Jesty, Head of the TV Research Section, who gave a lucid exposition of the main problems involved in colour television and how these had been met.

As a finale, a foretaste of colour out-



The Colour Television camera manned by R. W. Eldred, with dolly-pusher Geoff Downie

side broadcasts was given when the camera looked through the window of the studio on to the Strand. A florist's van laden with blooms, the red 'buses and G.P.O. vans appeared on the screens in full colour and with startling effect, as did the hoardings and the crowds. Most of the latter will never know that they have made history by being televised in colour!

The demonstration over, an informal "at home" took place, while the visitors examined the equipment and asked questions to their hearts' content. To judge by the enthusiastic reports which appeared next day in the National Press, they did so to good purpose.

So congratulations to the Baddow Research Team, and all concerned in the enterprise. You have sown the seed well, and in good time we shall no doubt reap the harvest on the Works floors.

W. J. B.