2Va for five wave-lengths, obtained from the measurements of the apparent acute and obtuse angles in monobromnaphthalene by the use of accurately orientated section-plates, are so close together that it was considered advisable to ascertain in some other manner whether the order of dispersion was truly represented; that is, whether the angle for one end of the spectrum was really very slightly greater than that for the other end, or whether the amount of dispersion thus indicated did not really fall within the limits of experimental error, thus leaving it possible that the dispersion might even be of the contrary order. By immersing a plate perpendicular to the first median line in a liquid of refractive power equal to the medium refractive index of the crystal, the interference figure in white light usually at once indicates, by the colours exhibited on the margins of the axial brushes, the order of dispersion, and measurements of the axial angle for the two extreme wave-lengths afford an immediate check upon the accuracy of the calculated angles. It is a considerable source of satisfaction to be able to confirm such calculated optic axial angles in so simple a manner.

Prof. Klein further describes how admirably the new apparatus is adapted for the determination of the extinction angles upon the various faces of a zone, in parallel polarised light. For this purpose the converging lenses are removed, and the eyepiece analysing nicol is employed, so that the polarising and analysing nicols may be arranged for simultaneous rotation. The measurements are carried out while the crystal is immersed in the liquid as in case of the determinations of optic axial angle. The only precaution necessary is that the crystal should be uniformly illuminated in order that the exact position of extinction may be ascertained by use of one of the usual half-shadow stauroscopic plates.

The memoir concludes with a description of the general mode of investigating a biaxial crystal immersed in a liquid of equal refractive power, indicating how the principal planes of optical elasticity may be found, the positions of the optic axes ascertained, and the true internal angle of the latter measured. One of the most important advantages of the method is the simplification which it introduces into the study of triclinic crystals, hitherto almost dreaded by the crystallographer for the trouble they involve. It would appear that their optical investigation by the immersion method offers but slightly more difficulty than that of crystals of higher symmetry, the positions of the optic axes being readily found, and the true angle at once afforded. This alone would entitle Prof. Klein to the thanks of crystallographers and mineralogists for perfecting so admirable an aid to investigation.

A. E. TUTTON.

MICROBES AND METALS.

THE effect of metals on the growth of bacteria has been examined by Miller, Behring, and others, and another contribution to this subject has lately been published by Dr. Meade Bolton, in the December number of the *International Medical Magazine*. According to Uffelmann, who smeared the surface of copper coins with liquefied jelly-cultures of cholera bacilli, the latter were destroyed in seventeen minutes; whilst on a brass coin they were alive after thirty hours, but dead after sixty hours. Bolton employed Miller's method of inoculating a tube of melted jelly with particular microbes, and pouring the contents out on a sterilised glass-plate, after which bits of the metal under examination were laid on the jelly whilst it was still soft. If the metal has an inhibitory action on the microbes, then a clear zone is left around the metal after the colonies have developed in the other parts of the jelly. The width of this zone, Dr. Bolton found, varied very considerably with different

organisms, as well as with different metals. Thus carefully purified bits of silver produced in the case of cholera bacilli a clear zone 5 millimetres broad, in the case of typhoid bacilli a zone of about 1 millimetre, whilst with the closely allied colon bacillus a zone of about 5 millimetres was produced. In the case of purified gold, no inhibition was observed with the staphylococcus pyogenes aureus, colon bacillus, typhoid bacillus, or cholera bacillus. Freshly "glowed gold" had invariably no inhibitory action; and in the few cases where inhibition was observed, the gold had not been glowed for several weeks. Pure nickel, platinum wire, and platinum black aluminium, silicon, and niobium, again, also failed to give any reaction with most of the microbes examined. Throughout the investigations it was found that those metals that are resistant towards chemical reagents in general, failed to produce any effect on microbes; whilst, on the other hand, those metals which are readily attacked by chemical reagents, all exhibited a marked inhibitory action upon the growth of bacteria. This result is probably due to a solution of the metal taking place in the medium. The length of time it is necessary to leave the metals in contact with the jelly, to produce an effect on the microbes present, was tried with brass, copper, cadmium, and zinc, on the staphylococcus pyogenes aureus. The metals were put on and removed at various intervals. When cadmium was left on for a minute, there was a clear space underneath where it had rested, which extended to 1 millimetre round; when it was left on for three or four minutes, the clear space usually extended over 3 millimetres. Very similar results were obtained with zinc. With brass no effect was produced when it was left on thirty-six minutes, but after this there was more and more marked inhibition up to fifty minutes; but to produce a clear space, it was necessary to leave it on for still longer. Copper produced no visible effect under thirty-six minutes, and fifty minutes was required to produce a clear space.

G. C. FRANKLAND.

PROFESSOR JAMES DWIGHT DANA.

BY the sudden death of Prof. J. D. Dana, from heart-failure, on April 15, America has lost a veteran man of science, who in his time has not only played many widely varied parts, but has reached the highest excellence in each. As a mineralogist he published, so long ago as 1837, the first edition of a "Descriptive Mineralogy," which by reason of its completeness and accuracy soon became a standard work of reference throughout the civilised world, and of which the sixth edition (1134 pages), issued in 1892 under the superintendence of his distinguished son, Prof. Edward Salisbury Dana, still maintains the high reputation attained by the original work. As a geologist and palæontologist, he published in 1863 a similarly excellent and well-illustrated "Manual of Geology," having special regard to the geology of the North American continent, and of which the fourth edition (1087 pages) was issued only two or three months ago. Of his work as a zoologist, we may cite as example his elaborate report on the zoophytes, collected by an expedition in which he took a very active part. The report is illustrated by 61 plates, and in it are described no fewer than 230 new species. Attainments so diverse belong only to the few.

James Dwight Dana was born on February 12, 1813, at Utica, in the State of New York, U.S.A., and was therefore in his eighty-third year at the time of his death. He was educated at Yale College, New Haven, Connecticut, receiving there a sound training in mathematics, physics and chemistry, which was of the greatest service to him in his subsequent career; he proceeded to his