the competence of which covers nutritional problems. At its second session, held in Geneva in June 1936, the Technical Commission examined the observations communicated by these bodies, revised and amplified its London report, and presented it to the Mixed Committee in conformity with the Assembly's resolution of 1935.

This revised report, embodying considered international opinion on human dietary standards, represents the first and most outstanding contribution towards evolving order out of the chaos of specialized data on requirements which has confronted nutritional workers in recent years. A yardstick has at last been provided by which to measure diets and determine how far they are deficient for health. As already mentioned, the report has been adopted by the Advisory Committee on Nutrition responsible to the British Ministry of Health, and, in common with all the other work of the League's Technical Commission on Nutrition, has created a considerable impression not only in Europe but also over-seas. Thus, items included on the agenda of the Inter-Governmental Conference of Far-Eastern Countries on Rural Hygiene have been inspired by the Commission's work, as also has the recent formation of numerous national councils, such as those in Australia and in the British Colonies, specially set up to study local nutritional problems along the lines of the League's recommendations.

Perhaps nowhere have the suggestions of the League been acted upon with greater promptitude than within the British Colonial Empire. In April 1936, the Secretary of State for the Colonies addressed a dispatch calling for a comprehensive survey of the nutrition position in each Dependency. One of the main purposes of the dispatch was to direct attention to the important bearing which nutrition should have upon agricultural, veterinary, educational and general policy in the Colonial Empire. In planning the production of any territory the aim should be twofold; on one hand, the provision to the entire population of a locally grown food supply considered adequate by medical science and, on the other, the growth of remunerative export crops. Already many replies have been received, some of which have been made available as public documents. "Food in Relation to Health" has been issued by the recently established Nutrition Committee in Trinidad; a similar report, based on the well-known work of Nicholls, describes conditions as they apply in Ceylon; the report of a specially formed nutrition committee has been presented to the Legislative Council of British Guiana; and a "Nutritional Review of the Natives of Zanzibar" has also been submitted.

To consider these reports and to advise generally on nutritional matters relating to the British Colonial Empire, the Prime Minister, in November 1936, appointed a Committee of the Economic Advisory Council consisting of medical, agricultural and economic specialists. This Committee is expressly commissioned to keep in touch with the work of the League of Nations and enable His Majesty's Government to assist and support it more effectually.

No attempt has been made here to deal exhaustively with the subject under review. Rather the aim has been to present a brief general outline touching the reasons for, and the nature of, Government intervention and official international co-operation on a subject of intense universal interest. Unavoidably, the writer's approach has been from the British point of view. One must remember, however, that in the United States of America, in the U.S.S.R., in Italy and in many other countries, evidence that Governments have accepted their obligations to give authoritative public guidance on questions of nutrition is equally conspicuous.

By far the most important thing is that the League of Nations has been accepted as the common platform on which national aspects of the problem can be debated in their world setting and in an atmosphere of reason and mutual comprehension.

Obituary Notices

Prof. J. W. Michaelsen

PROF. J. WILHELM MICHAELSEN, *Hauptkustos* in the Hamburg Zoological Museum, died on February 18 in his seventy-seventh year. Born in Hamburg, he joined the Hamburg Museum in 1887 and worked there until the time of his death. As a young man he became interested in the Oligochæta, and from 1886 until his death he wrote many papers on their anatomy, classification and geographical distribution. He also wrote on the Tunicates and the Polychæta, but his main interest was the Oligochætes, and it would be difficult to over-estimate the extent of his contribution to our knowledge of this group. Vastly learned, disinterested and careful of minutiæ he belonged to the great tradition of German scholarship, and the sheer quantity of his work—his papers on the Oligochæta alone bind up into eight very bulky volumes—testifies to an extraordinary industry and persistence of motive. In addition to this, he found time to make journeys to the southernmost corners

of America, Africa and Australia in pursuit of evidence to throw light on the palæogeographical problems arising out of his study of Oligochæte distribution.

There has never been any question as to the consistently high quality of Michaelsen's work, and his co-specialist and in his own line his only peer, the late J. Stephenson, has for a heading to his monumental monograph on the Oligochæta (Oxford Univ. Press, 1930) the words, "To my Friend and Master W. Michaelsen of Hamburg".

Those of a younger generation who had the good fortune to correspond with Michaelsen will testify to his great kindness and patience. Even when he was a man in the seventies he would go to extraordinary lengths to assist a beginner who applied to him for help or information. On one occasion, he copied out a whole paper himself by hand and traced the drawings to send to a young student who wrote to say that the particular work was not available. He had the rare characteristic of cheerfully acknowledging his own mistakes, and was entirely free from that failing which overtakes so many men who have devoted their lives to the mastery of a specialism, the failing which consists in treating a difference of opinion, especially one coming from a younger man, as a personal affront. His letters reveal a simple, unexpectedly humorous and kindly man.

Prof. A. Erman

THE death of Prof. Adolf Erman on June 26 inflicts an incalculable bereavement upon both the Egyptological world and a large circle outside it. In the realms of his own subject he was without doubt regarded as the foremost scholar, since it was he who first placed the study of the ancient Egyptian language upon a scientific basis. His "Ägyptische Grammatik", which first appeared in 1894 and which was destined to pass through four editions, revolutionized the method of approach to the classical language, while the later phase of Egyptian, known as "New Egyptian", was fully dealt with in his "Neuägyptische Grammatik" of 1880 and 1933. Yet he was far from belonging to that class, all too large even at the present day, of specialists who never trouble to interpret their discoveries for the benefit of the general reader. He could write excellent descriptive prose, informed by a considerable sense of humour, which presented a living picture to his readers, as in his "Ägypten", translated into English by Lady Tirard under the title of "Life in Ancient Egypt", his "Religion der Ägypter", translated by the same author and called "Handbook of the Egyptian Religion", and his "Literatur der Ägypter" of which the English edition has been prepared by Prof. A. M. Blackman. The last-named book is perhaps his greatest contribution of this kind, enabling the student of the past for the first time to become acquainted with specimens of ancient Egyptian literature of all periods, beautifully translated and explained.

The greatest of Erman's undertakings, however, was the enterprise of the Berlin hieroglyphic dictionary, which he edited jointly with other colleagues. This vast work, intended to cover the whole history of ancient Egyptian, is still in process of publication, the first five volumes having appeared between the years 1926 and 1931. It has been justly said that the wide range of Erman's abilities made him an interpreter of Egyptian civilization unrivalled by any other except the Frenchman Gaston Maspero. He has left to his successors a standard of scholarship which can only be maintained if the scientific principles which he so assiduously taught during his long life are faithfully obeyed. A. W. SHORTER.

WE regret to announce the death on August 3 of Prof. Josef Woldřich, director of the State Geological Institute at Prague, at the age of fifty-seven years. Born in Vienna, Prof. Woldřich became well known in Central Europe for his geological investigations, which began with a re-examination of certain Bohemian rocks, notably those studied by the Frenchman Barrande and more recently by the late Prof. J. E. Marr of Cambridge. After the Great War, he was appointed to the chair of geology at the new University of Brno in Moravia. Here he commenced a series of geological studies of the lesser-known districts of Slovakia, a work of extreme importance for the compilation of the modern geological maps of Czechoslovakia. He had been director of the State Geological Institute for the past three years.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

M. André Beaumont (M. Jean-Louis Conneau), one of the pioneers of aviation, aged fifty-seven years.

Dr. W. M. Cumming, lecturer in bacteriology in University College, Dundee, an authority on tuberculosis, aged thirty-nine years.

Mr. C. E. L. Gilbert, C.I.E., formerly chief conservator of forests, Bombay Presidency, on August 8.

Prof. Vernon L. Kellogg, professor of entomology in Stanford University in 1896–1920, permanent secretary of the U.S. National Research Council in 1920–32, aged sixty-nine years.

Prof. Hans Reck, the distinguished German volcanologist, who was associated with the discovery of human remains at Oldoway, Tanganyika, in 1914, on August 4, aged fifty-one years.

Prof. A. E. Seaman, emeritus professor of geology and mineralogy in the Michigan College of Mining and Technology, on July 9, aged seventy-nine years.

Mr. A. Sharples, formerly Government mycologist, Federated Malay States, and head of the Division of Plant Pathology, Rubber Research Institute of Malaya, on August 6.

Mr. J. W. N. Sullivan, author of "Three Men Discuss Relativity" and other books of a popular character on aspects of modern science, on August 12, aged fifty-one years.

Prof. J. G. Thomson, professor of medical protozoology in the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, on August 13.