PROF. CLEVELAND ABBE.

THE death of Cleveland Abbe near Washington, D.C., on October 28, in the seventy-eighth year of his age, makes a gap of a special character in the ranks of meteorologists, and particularly among those who use the English language. From 1871 until August last, when he retired, Abbe was professor of meteorology in the United States Weather Bureau. That is the title which the bureau gives to the professional meteorologists on its staff. Born and educated in New York, he had been a teacher of mathematics in New York and of engineering at the State University, Ann Arbor, Michigan. From there he went to Harvard University, 1860–64, being at the same time aid in the U.S. Coast Survey under B. A. Gould; thence to the Central Observatory of the Russian Meteorological Service at Petrograd for two years; aid in the U.S. Naval Observatory, 1867–68, and director of the Cincinnati Observatory, 1868–73.

The work at the Weather Bureau for which he is best known is the editing of the *Monthly Weather Review*, which was in his charge from 1893 until his retirement, with a break of a few years from 1909, during which the Bulletin of Mount Weather Observatory took its place. Besides original papers, it includes the best monthly epitome of progress in meteorology in English, and ranks for that purpose with the *Meteorologische Zeitschrift*. This work gave Abbe an unrivalled knowledge of meteorological literature. He was a sort of college-tutor for the Weather Bureau, and with his encyclopædic knowledge he was to a large extent the force behind the organisation. He was a very keen advocate of the study of dynamical meteorology. Every student of the subject knows his collections of translations into English of classical papers in French and German which are published by the Smithsonian Institution. He founded a meteorological library at Johns Hopkins University and was professor of meteorology in the George Washington University of Washington. He was specially the promoter of meteorology. We owe to his instigation the installation by the Meteorological Office of the station now in operation at St. Helena. He wrote a large volume on the Maryland Weather Service, with a discourse upon aims and methods. That represents his interest. In an article in the "Encyclopædia Britannica" it is the observation of clouds at sea that claims attention. He took part in a number of scientific expeditions for eclipses and other purposes, and he started the reform in civil time, reckoning by even hours from the Greenwich meridian, a reform which in Europe has over-shot itself into "summer-time."

Abbe's services to meteorology were recognised by the Royal Meteorological Society by the award of the Symons Medal in 1912. He was a man of most genial disposition. His wife, the daughter of W. G. H. Percival, of St. Kitts, whom he married in 1909, survives him. One of the sons of his first marriage, Cleveland Abbe, junior, succeeds him as editor at the Weather Bureau.

NAPIER SHAW.

NOTES.

OFFICIAL information has been received from Paris that from January 1, 1917, the millibar (1000 C.G.S. units) will be used in the publications of the Bureau Central Météorologique for atmospheric pressure, instead of the millimetre of mercury. The same unit has been in use in the publications of the British Meteorological Office since the beginning of 1914; the Colonies of British Guiana and Mauritius have already adopted the unit, and it has also been used in some of the publications of the Weather Bureau of the United States, of Harvard University (Blue Hill Observatory), and of Berkeley University, California. The question raised by Prof. McAdie, of Blue Hill, as to whether the proper name for the unit is not a "kilobar" has still to be considered, on the ground that the name "bar" was already appropriated by chemists to mean 1 dyne per sq. cm. It is one of the questions which should have been discussed at an international meeting projected for September, 1914.

AN interesting discussion took place in the House of Lords on Wednesday, December 20, on a motion by Lord Sudeley requesting H.M. Government to take the steps necessary to provide funds to enable the Imperial Institute to carry out its functions adequately and completely. Lord Sudeley pointed out that, although the institute's work is of great importance in connection with the war and with the development of the resources of the Empire, and though these services have been publicly acknowledged in various ways, yet the institute is greatly hampered in its work by want of funds. The motion was supported by Lord Rathcreedon, who gave some examples of the institute's work, and emphasised the need for more funds and more space in order that full advantage may be taken of the organisations which the institute has developed for the investigation of the resources of the Empire and the dissemination of information regarding them. Viscount Haldane, whilst in sympathy with the motion, pointed out that so far as research is concerned care must be taken to secure co-operation with the work of the Advisory Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, as otherwise confusion might arise. In his reply Lord Islington gave an account of the developments which have taken place at the Imperial Institute since the passing of the new Management Act eight months ago. Committees are being appointed by the various Dominions and Colonies to consider their needs and interests, and the special committee for India has been requested by the Government of India to undertake an important inquiry into the possibility of increasing the usage of Indian raw materials within the Empire. A number of technical committees has also been formed to advise with regard to investigations and other work on minerals, timbers, silk, rubber, etc. The Executive Council also hopes to work in close co-operation with the newly established Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, especially in those cases where more purely scientific investigation is needed. The question of funds is being carefully considered, and the Executive Council of the institute intends to approach the Government in due course with a statement of needs, in order that the work may be maintained and, as opportunity offers, developed. It is hoped that further support