construction of important new works, he succeeded to the position of acting engineer-in-chief, and became engineer-in-chief in 1898. He resigned this post in 1913, and then became a partner in the firm of Sir J. Wolfe Barry and Partners, but remained consulting engineer to the Mersey Dock Board until the time of his death. Mr. Lyster became a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers in 1882, and was president in 1914. He served as a member of the International Technical Commission for the Suez Canal, and was consulted with regard to improvements of the harbours at New York, Bombay, Port Elizabeth, Shanghai, etc. He was also a member of the Admiralty Committee on Naval Works at Doon and Rosyth, and associate professor of engineering at Liverpool University.

BY the death of MR. W. A. E. USSHER, which occurred on March 19, many British geologists will lose an old friend who, whether in his usual mood of breezy optimism, or in a rarer phase of boisterous pessimism, was always good company. Mr. Ussher joined the Geological Survey in 1868 and was engaged in the mapping of various parts of England, but his name will always be associated with the Devonian, Carboniferous, and New Red rocks of Devon, Cornwall, and Somerset, where he spent most of his official career. His principal contributions to the literature of these formations appear in the Memoirs of the Geological Survey, in the Journal of the Geological Society, and in the Transactions of the Devonshire Association. In his study of the West Country rocks it was his constant endeavour to secure correlation with their European equivalents, and thus he was brought into close association with many Continental geologists of note. In 1914 he was awarded the Murchison medal of the Geological Society in recognition of his labours. Mr. Ussher retired from the Survey in 1909; unfortunately, ill-health since then kept him in almost complete retirement.

BY the comparatively early death of DR. R. C. MACLAURIN on January 15 last, the United States have lost an accomplished and energetic immigrant. Dr. Maclaurin was born at Lindean, Scotland, in 1870, and in 1897 was placed in the first division of the first class of the advanced part of the Mathematical Tripos. It was an unusually good year, the candidates including Grace and Bromwich. Dr. Maclaurin was also equal for the second Smith's prize. After graduating, he at first turned his attention to law, but before very long became professor of mathematics in the University of New Zealand. This post he left in 1907 to occupy the chair of mathematical physics at Columbia, N.Y., and two years later became president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He published one legal treatise, and two on the theory of light; besides this, he contributed various papers to the Philosophical Transactions and other periodicals.

Notes.

A LIST of 5604 promotions in and appointments to the Civil Division of the Order of the British Empire "for services in connection with the war" was published on March 30 as a supplement to the *London Gazette*. We notice the following names of men of science and other workers known in scientific circles:—*Knight Grand Cross (G.B.E.)*: Dr. A. E. Shipley, F.R.S., Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University. *Knights Commanders (K.B.E.)*: Prof. I. Bayley Balfour, F.R.S., University of Edinburgh; Prof. W. H. Bragg, F.R.S., University College, London; Dr. S. F. Harmer, F.R.S., Director of Natural History Departments, and Keeper of Zoology, British Museum; and Dr. J. E. Petavel, F.R.S., Director of the National Physical Laboratory. *Commanders (C.B.E.)*: Prof. H. L. Callendar, F.R.S., Imperial College of Science, London; Dr. C. C. Carpenter, chairman, South Metropolitan Gas Co.; Mr. F. H. Carr, Chief Chemist, Messrs. Boots Pure Drug Stores; Prof. F. G. Donnan, F.R.S., University College, London; Mr. W. P. Elderton; Mr. A. P. M. Fleming; Prof. P. F. Frankland, F.R.S., University of Birmingham; Dr. F. W. Edridge-Green; Prof. W. A. Herdman, F.R.S., University of Liverpool; Prof. J. C. Irvine, F.R.S., University of St. Andrews; Mr. J. G. Lawn; Prof. T. M. Lowry, F.R.S.; Mr. W. Macnab; Dr. R. A. O'Brien, Director, Wellcome Physiological Research Laboratories; Mr. J. E. Sears, National Physical Laboratory; Mr. F. J. Selby, National Physical Laboratory; Dr. T. E. Stanton, F.R.S., National Physical Laboratory; Mr. G. Stubbs, Government Laboratory; Lieut. J. R. F. Wild, member of Sir E. Shackleton's Antarctic Expedition; and Dr. Dawson Williams, editor, *British Medical Journal*.

THE impending retirement of Sir Napier Shaw, who has been the Director of the Meteorological Office since 1905, and as president of the International Meteorological Committee occupies a unique position, marks an epoch in the history of British meteorology. Trained primarily as a physicist, Sir Napier has been able to approach meteorological problems in a scientific spirit. His academic experience brought him into contact with younger men, and by the encouragement he extended to them he raised the level of his subject. As a consequence, there are at the present moment a greater number of men in the British Empire capable of dealing with intricate meteorological problems than in any other part of the world. A heavy responsibility rests on the authorities on whom the duty of nominating Sir Napier's successor falls. When the Meteorological Office was taken over by the Air Ministry last year the change was looked upon with grave misgivings. The near future will show whether the anxiety then felt regarding the wisdom of a step that was taken against the advice of all competent authorities is to be relieved or intensified. It would be an irretrievable calamity if administrative rather than scientific qualifications were to determine the choice. Unless the whole future of British meteorology is to be