

dismisses this suggestion on the ground that "the difference is so fundamental that it is difficult to find any single point of agreement." But from Prof. Osborn's own account of this tooth, which appeared in *NATURE* of August 26, p. 281, it is a no less difficult matter to discover harmony between this tooth and the molars of any of the primates, living or extinct. We cannot escape the conclusion, in short, that the evidence as to the true character of the Nebraska tooth has been only partly sifted. Before we can consider ourselves in possession of the whole of the evidence it must be carefully compared with *worn* teeth of *Hyænartos*, and its near allies. Radiographs of such teeth are essential. For the moment the material for such a comparison is, doubtless, limited: but even this can, and must, be taken into account. We trust that Prof. Osborn will see his way to supplement the able summary he gave us in *NATURE*, in August last, wherein he contrasts the tooth of

Hesperopithecus with the teeth of chimpanzee and *Pithecantropus*, by a similar pictorial comparison between this remarkable tooth and the teeth of the fossil bears, or at least a *Hyænartos*.

The extremely worn condition of this tooth compels caution in every statement made concerning it: and more especially on the part of those who have never seen and handled the actual specimen. The danger of dogmatizing on the evidence afforded by photography and casts alone, was forcibly illustrated in the case of the skull of Piltown man. But it is also imperatively necessary, in the interests of science, that even remotely possible relationships should be seriously examined. It is always unwise to assume that what *ought* to be, *must* be. We cannot help feeling that this applies very pertinently in the case of the Nebraska tooth: and that therefore it would be wise at any rate to entertain the *suggestion*, that it may, after all, represent one of the *Ursidæ*, instead of one of the *Hominidæ*.

Obituary.

MRS. A. D. WALLER.

THE announcement of the death on October 22, at sixty-three years of age, of Mrs. Waller, widow of the late Dr. A. D. Waller, must have been noticed with regret by many workers in the world of science. Alice Mary Palmer, which was Mrs. Waller's maiden name, had early aspirations towards a medical career, and after matriculating in the University of London she took up her medical course at the London School of Medicine, where she became the pupil of Dr. Augustus Waller, then lecturer in physiology at the School. Miss Palmer was appointed his demonstrator—a post which she filled with enthusiasm. His original and stimulating lectures were a great delight to her, and the relationship of teacher and pupil ripened rapidly into a closer one.

Husband and wife had much in common: both cared intensely for education and worked throughout their lives for what they considered its best interests. After her marriage Mrs. Waller's chief concern was for her husband's work. In all that he did she had her part; she enjoyed the whole technique of laboratory work, owning apologetically that even a bit of "mere" anatomy never came amiss to her. The house in Grove End Road, which soon became such a centre for scientific interests, was secured for the young couple early in their married life. It was an unusual household, being at once both laboratory and home, and its ways were unconventional; but to those who caught the spirit of the place, the charm of its hospitality was irresistible. All who cared for scientific work were welcomed there, and to the student who sought her advice Mrs. Waller became at once friend, champion, and helper. Foreign friends, distinguished and undistinguished, made Weston Lodge their resting-place when visiting London, and much good talk was heard within the walls of the old study—great were the discussions, vigorous the arguments, and over all debates played the gentle humour of the hostess, softening the sometimes mordant wit of her husband.

During the latter years of their lives the centre of interest was transferred, for the Wallers, from Weston Lodge to the University Laboratory at South

Kensington. That laboratory fulfilled to a large extent the purpose for which it was founded. Many will remember it as a place of help, inspiration, and fruitful work, and it may safely be said that there are none who ever worked there but will remember with affectionate gratitude the gentle woman who cared so greatly for the destinies of the laboratory and for the welfare of each of its individual workers.

LADY HERDMAN.

IN educational and scientific circles widespread sympathy is felt with Sir William Herdman at the death of Lady Herdman on November 7. His loss is shared by all who knew Lady Herdman, as well as by many others to whom her life and work were both a stimulus and a standard. Lady Herdman was a daughter of the late Mr. Alfred Holt, and was a student at University College, Liverpool, when Sir William Herdman was professor of natural history there. She graduated in science at London University in 1891, with first-class honours in physics, and in the following year became the first president of the Women Students' Representative Council at Liverpool. She was thus an active worker in the University College of the city before it became the University of Liverpool in 1903; and in promoting this development, as well as since, Lady Herdman was closely associated with her distinguished husband. The scientific world gratefully remembers how in 1916, in commemoration of the death of their brilliant son George in the battle of the Somme, they gave the sum of 10,000*l.* to the university for the foundation of the George Herdman chair of geology, and three years later founded and endowed the chair of oceanography in the university. In these and many other ways, as, for example, by devoted service on the Liverpool Education Committee, of which she was a co-opted member, Lady Herdman exercised an influence which was always beneficial and often more far-reaching than she herself ever conceived. She possessed wisdom as well as knowledge, and the remembrance of her life will long be cherished with affection, to console as well as to inspire.