

DR. ARTHUR LATHAM.

THE medical profession has lost a somewhat striking personality by the death of Dr. Arthur Latham at the relatively early age of fifty-six. The son of a former Regius professor of medicine at Cambridge, who still survives, Dr. Latham was brought up in a cultured and scientific atmosphere, while his Oxford degree implied the double advantages of the two older English Universities. He was elected assistant physician to St. George's Hospital in 1898, and there soon showed his ability in teaching and his always masterful and dominating personality. A man of precise logical thought and of great determination, he could ill tolerate indefiniteness of view and indecision, and it is not surprising therefore that he had enemies as well as cordial friends.

Whatever Dr. Latham undertook, he made himself thoroughly acquainted with, and it was fortunate that the award to him of a prize for an essay on a tuberculosis sanatorium early determined the chief trend of his work. Although sanatoria for consumptives have not achieved all that was expected of them, this has been largely owing to their misuse under the pressure of the administration of the National (Health) Insurance Act, patients being sent in large numbers to sanatoria, for whom treatment in hospitals was indicated. Dr. Latham contributed other papers and small books on tuberculosis; he was a member of the Departmental Committee on Tuberculosis, which laid down the lines on which the state anti-tuberculosis

measures were to be carried out; and in many other ways helped to bring the anti-tuberculosis crusade to its present advanced condition.

Of Dr. Latham's value as a medical politician, of the important work which he did to secure the firm beginning of the Royal Society of Medicine, this is not the place to write; but the memory of his clear and incisive speaking, arising out of logical thinking, of his pertinacious advocacy of great causes, and of his success in advancing the interests of preventive medicine, will not soon die.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Prof. Gustav Köhler, director of the Mining Academy, Clausthal, for the years 1887-1914, and who had taught there since 1880, at the age of eighty-four.

Sir Shirley Murphy, vice-president of the Royal Sanitary Institute and other scientific societies, and for twenty-two years Medical Officer of Health for London, on April 27, aged seventy-four.

Dr. Alfred Scholl, a director of the Agricultural Experimental Station, Münster, and deputy-editor of the *Zeitschrift für Untersuchung der Nahrungs- und Genussmittel*, on February 12, at the age of forty-six.

Mr. H. J. Seaman, for many years general director of the Atlas Portland Cement Co., New York, who was responsible, with Hurry, for introducing the use of coal dust in rotary tube furnaces for the burning of clinker, on February 9.

Current Topics and Events.

PROF. DE SITTER, who is to give a lecture at the Imperial College of Science and Technology on May 7, on "Problems of Fundamental Astronomy," and will lecture also at Manchester on May 9, and at Edinburgh on May 18, was a pupil of Kapteyn's, who was invited by Gill in 1896 to work for a time at the Cape. He made determinations of the parallaxes of several southern stars with the heliometer. For his thesis for doctor of science at Groningen he presented a "Discussion of the Heliometer Observations of Jupiter's Satellites." He has continued these researches and developed a new method for treating the mutual perturbations of the satellites, and is still engaged discussing photographs taken at the Cape and Greenwich for the determination of the necessary constants. After his return to Groningen Prof. de Sitter participated in a number of Kapteyn's investigations dealing with the dimensions and structure of the stellar universe. British men of science owe a debt to Prof. de Sitter for giving during the War, before Einstein's work reached England, three papers in the Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society which presented to English readers an account of the generalised theory of relativity. Prof. de Sitter has made important contributions to this subject and has examined the various cases where any astronomical verifications may be obtained.

IN an article in the April *Quarterly Review*, Lord Ernle writes on "Victorian Memoirs and Memories." His account of Huxley runs as follows: "Mrs.

Asquith, who describes a meeting with Huxley at Jowett's, and remarks that he had about him little of the *juste milieu*, does not appear to have been favourably impressed. But Huxley was not always the gladiator. To me he was irresistibly attractive, because I fancied that I had caught a glimpse of his true outlook on life. When I think of his destructive criticism, I see again the arabesque with which he had adorned the side of the first page of his article on 'Lux Mundi.' Up the margin ran a vine-clad trellis: on the top crouched the cock of theology, and towards him crept the fox of science. I remember also discussing with him one of his numerous controversies—I think the Gadarene swine. With the impertinence of comparative youth, I expressed surprise at the quantity of vinegar and mustard which he mixed with the discussion of questions that to many people were matters of life or death. 'My dear young man,' he answered, 'you are not old enough to remember when men like Lyell and Murchison were not considered fit to lick the dust off the boots of a curate. I should like to get my heel into their mouths and scr-r-unch it round.' A wistful smile lit up his plain rugged face, as he added: 'And they never seem to reflect what a miserable position mine is standing on a point of Nothing in an abyss of Nothing.' The world saw much of the first mood, little of the latter."

THE council of the Zoological Society of London presented an eminently satisfactory report for the