

Lord Abercromby was a fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and an hon. LL.D. of the University of Edinburgh. He was a vice-president of the Folklore Society and formerly president of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. In 1921 he presided over Section H (Anthropology) of the British Association at the Edinburgh meeting, and when, in the following year, a local branch of the Royal Anthropological Institute was formed at Edinburgh, he was unanimously elected the first president. His tact and charm of manner, his never-failing courtesy to all, and his assiduous attention to the duties of the offices he held, notwithstanding failing health, won the affection and respect of all with whom he came into contact. As Lord Abercromby leaves no heirs male, the title now becomes extinct.

THE death is announced on August 4 last of Dr. Santiago Roth, head of the department of palæontology in the Museum of La Plata, Argentina. Dr. Roth was born in Switzerland and emigrated to Argentina nearly half a century ago, where he became especially skilled in collecting fossil skeletons of mammals from the pampas. He sold many fine specimens to the museums of Zurich and Geneva, and some also to the

Zoological Museum of Copenhagen. When the Museum of La Plata was founded, he was employed by the late Dr. F. P. Moreno to collect similar pampean skeletons for that institution, and he was soon appointed to take charge of the fossils. Dr. Roth added much to our knowledge of the pampean formations, which he studied extensively and in great detail, and he also described many of the mammalian remains.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Dr. Edouard G. Deville, I.S.O., Director-General of Surveys in the Canadian Department of the Interior, and author of "Astronomic and Geodetic Calculations" and "Photographic Surveying," on September 21, aged seventy-three.

Dr. E. O. Hovey, curator of the Department of Geology and Invertebrate Paleontology of the American Museum of Natural History, on September 27, from a stroke received in his office on the preceding day, aged sixty-two.

Dr. C. W. Moulton, professor of chemistry since 1894 at Vassar College, New York, on September 13, aged sixty-five.

Dr. J. M. Schaeberle, formerly at the Lick Observatory, and author of a number of papers on astronomical subjects, aged seventy-one.

### Current Topics and Events

THE Everest Expedition of 1924 reported to a joint meeting of the Royal Geographical Society and the Alpine Club before a distinguished assembly in the Albert Hall on October 17. Earlier in the day a memorial service for Mallory and Irvine was held in St. Paul's Cathedral. Pioneers like Drake and Livingstone, these two perished, as did Scott and Shackleton, in an attempt to go one step beyond the bounds hitherto set to human endeavour, and their names in their simplest form will be treasured in the national memory. Both were Cheshire men, and the Bishop of Chester embodied the spirit of the impressive service under the famous Cathedral dome in an address which showed how the two mountaineers, now at rest in the most magnificent cenotaph in the world, were great climbers because they were great men full of courage, unselfishness and cheerfulness, men who had attained to great spiritual heights, men who had risked life itself in the service of others. Odell, who was in support, was climbing to Camp VI. on June 8 by a circuitous route. He discovered fossils in a band of limestone, and found himself enveloped in mist with clear sky above. By a mere chance he climbed a crag and emerged into a sudden temporary clearing of the mist to a vision of the summit ridge and peak of Everest. Far away on a snow slope near the base of the final pyramid he saw two figures climbing slowly towards their goal, one reaching out to help the other, then the mist fell again. The time was 12.50, and Mallory and Irvine were three hours late on their time schedule, yet they were pressing on. The chances are that they were speeding to the accomplishment of the little bit more which meant so much. Odell believes

they got to the summit and were benighted on the return journey. *Sic itur ad astra*. The sure record stands that Mallory and Irvine climbed to 28,230 feet with the help of oxygen. On another attempt, Norton and Somervell reached 28,130 feet without oxygen, and this presages a future success by a similar effort which will probably be made in 1926. Other records were Odell's three ascents between 25,000 and 27,000 feet within a week, the carriage by six porters of loads to a height of 27,000 feet; men have slept well in camp at 26,800 feet. The upper half of Everest consists of slabby altered limestones, a 1000-foot thickness of sandstone and fossils has been found, and in 1924 persistent cold winds blew from the west with night temperatures which fell once to  $-22^{\circ}$  F. At Camp IV., 23,000 feet, twice in June, the noon sun temperature was  $105^{\circ}$  F., while the air temperature was only  $29^{\circ}$  F.

THE broadcasting last week of the speeches of the leading politicians of Great Britain proves that the influence of radio communication on the lives and affairs of men is already very great. Mr. Reith, the manager of the British Broadcasting Company, in an article in the October *Quarterly Review*, gives an account of the present position of the art and indicates some possible future developments. In less than two years the staff has increased from 4 to 350, and operations are now carried out nightly in twenty cities. A system of simultaneous broadcasting has been carried out for more than a year, and practically a million licenses have been issued. There are very few "blind spots," that is, regions which suffer appreciably from shielding, due possibly to hills,