

Institute his fundamental principle that the aim of analysis of social institutions and religions should be to arrive at the mental attitude of primitive man towards his institutions and beliefs. In his view the study of marriage, for example, had been too exclusively sociological, and his book represented an attempt to bring marriage institutions and ceremonies as well as other primitive customs into the domain of psychology by defining the psychological needs which were satisfied by the magical or religious observances by which they were accompanied. Crawley's work was accurate and scholarly and was based upon wide reading and a critical appreciation of his authorities. Some at least of his work is of enduring value.

DR. E. O. HOVEY.

EDMUND OTIS HOVEY, curator of the Department of Geology and Invertebrate Palæontology in the American Museum of Natural History, had just entered his sixty-third year when he was struck with paralysis in his office and died on September 27. In his younger days Dr. Hovey filled some teaching posts; he was brought by his installation of the mineralogical exhibit of Missouri at the Chicago Exposition to the notice of the American Museum, and entered its service in 1894.

Dr. Hovey was perhaps best known to geologists for his work in connexion with the eruption of Mont Pelé, Martinique, which took place on May 8, 1902. He was immediately sent as representative of the American Museum of Natural History, arrived at Martinique on May 21, and after distributing supplies to the impoverished inhabitants, spent about three weeks in studying the Soufrière on St. Vincent and

four weeks on Mont Pele. His results were published in a preliminary report issued by the Museum in its Bulletin on Oct. 11 of the same year. In February 1903 Hovey was again sent to note what changes had taken place and to extend his studies to the other recent volcanoes of the Caribbean chain; and again in 1908 to bring the observations up-to-date. Other expeditions made by Hovey on behalf of the Museum were to South Dakota and Mexico.

As museum curator Hovey took a keen interest in his professional work, being responsible for several attractive models in the public gallery. Though in charge of the fossil invertebrata, he can scarcely be considered a palæontologist. He did, however, collaborate with R. P. Whitfield, and with him produced the very helpful catalogue of the types and figured specimens among those fossils in the American Museum (1898-1901). We have lost in E. O. Hovey a useful worker, a cheery companion, and a constant friend.

F. A. B.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Prof. W. A. Lacey, professor and director of the Department of Zoology, Northwestern University, since 1896, who was known for his work on the embryology of the nervous system, aged sixty-seven.

Dr. Clara S. Ludlow, of George Washington University and the United States Army Medical School, Washington, who carried out work in the Philippines on the transmission of disease by mosquitoes, on September 28, aged seventy-one.

Prof. G. Pruvot, honorary professor in the Faculty of Science of the University of Paris, and formerly Director of the Laboratory of Marine Zoology at Banyuls-sur-Mer (Pyrénées-Orientales).

Prof. W. A. Macfadyen, professor of philosophy in the Transvaal University College, Pretoria.

### Current Topics and Events

GREAT BRITAIN is beginning to appreciate the importance of broadening the education of the mathematician and the scientific worker. In all subjects new knowledge has been and is piling up at a great rate. The universities demand more and more for a degree, and the student is constantly becoming more overloaded. At the same time, the lines of demarcation between the subjects are breaking down, and the importance for every scientific worker of a knowledge of allied sciences is growing greater every day. Sir William Pope expounded this idea in a lecture delivered in July last before the Royal Society of Arts. He pointed out the importance for chemists of a knowledge of physics and the need of a reform by which natural philosophy (that is, physics and chemistry) would become a single whole instead of being made up of half-a-dozen disconnected subjects. He would unite them into one by emphasising the fact that they are all based upon the electronic constitution of matter and energy. The importance of a knowledge of physics to the mathematician was emphasised at the conference held recently at the University College of Southampton, and the October issue of the *Mathematical Gazette* contains a valuable article by Prof. Piaggio on the subject. The main

value of this article lies in the author's discussion of the means by which it can be made possible for the mathematician to attain a knowledge of physics in addition to mathematics within a reasonable time. He goes through the various branches of applied mathematics as at present taught at universities and picks out a considerable number of items that could well be dropped in order to make room for more important matter.

A CORRESPONDENT sends us copies of the journal, *La Province de Namur*, of June 1 and October 15, containing descriptions of a large pearl, reported by M. E. de Ceuster, of Moustier-sur-Sambre, to have been found in a coconut. Where pearls come from has always been a mystery in India, and so long ago as 1240 A.D., a Kashmir physician records them as coming from bamboos, coconuts, heads of elephants, fish, etc. Pearls are definite animal concretions of carbonate of lime around a core which may be a foreign body, the egg or some part of the body of the organism, or the egg or part of the body of a contained parasite. True pearls only occur in molluscs, and they are microscopically and chemically identical with the nacre—the inner lining of the shell—