

election shortly after to a fellowship of the Royal Society, were a well-earned recognition of long years of quiet, steady, fruitful work carried out with remarkable singleness of purpose.

A. B. R.

REV. W. A. B. COOLIDGE.

By the passing away, in his seventy-sixth year, of the Rev. William Augustus Brevoort Coolidge, at the Swiss home which he had built for himself, Châlet Montana, Grindelwald, another famous mountaineer, who carried on the great traditions of the pioneers of the Alps, is removed from our midst. Not merely was he a climber of the very front rank, but the most erudite of the band, possessing a wonderfully complete personal knowledge of the Central European Alps—of their topography and physical geography, their history, and that of the countries in which they are situated. Familiarly and equally conversant with English, French, and German, he was a prolific writer in all three languages, conveying his exceptional knowledge with conciseness yet with fascinating interest. He wrote, for example, the articles on Switzerland in all the three later editions of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," those portions on the geography and history of the country being not only of great value and meticulous accuracy but also of eminent literary merit. Besides his well-known guide-books (to the Dauphiny Alps, Lepontine Alps, Adula Alps, Mountains of Cogne, and the Bernese Oberland), and his editions of Ball's "Alpine Guide" and Murray's "Handbook of Switzerland," he wrote a most charming book, "The Alps in Nature and History," in which his wide knowledge of the history, antiquities, folk-lore, religious and political development of the playground of Europe is used for our instruction in a truly delightful manner.

Coolidge was a singular combination. An American citizen throughout his life, born near New York and at school in the United States, he became an undergraduate of Exeter College, Oxford, where he took a first in modern history and won the Taylorian scholarship for French. He was afterwards elected to, and retained to the last, a fellowship at Magdalen. Moreover, from 1883 until 1895 he acted as curate at South Hinksey, having taken holy orders. In 1909, however, he removed permanently to Grindelwald, where he had built the Châlet Montana as a home for himself and his priceless library of Alpine literature.

For thirty-five years Coolidge spent the long vacations and some winter ones in climbing and exploration, in his best days accompanied by that wonderful guide, Christian Almer; during this time he climbed practically every peak in the whole of the Swiss, French, and Italian Alps. Elected a member of the Alpine Club in 1870, and an honorary member in 1904, he edited the journal of the Club for the ten years 1880-1889. His greatest claim to fame, however, is in the realm of topographical and physical geography, the whole of his writings on these subjects being characterised by a degree of accuracy which renders them pre-eminently trustworthy and of high permanent value.

A. E. H. TUTTON.

MR. F. S. SPIERS.

By the death of Mr. Frederick S. Spiers, science loses one who was well known for his ability as an organiser, particularly of affairs related to physical chemistry. Mr. Spiers was born on October 21, 1875. His father was a Dayan or Judge of the Jewish Court. He was educated at the Central Foundation School, Finsbury Technical College, and at the Central Technical College, South Kensington, and obtained the degree of Bachelor of Science (London). He was an associate-member of the Institute of Electrical Engineers and a fellow of the Institute of Physics.

Mr. Spiers was best known for his work as secretary of the Faraday Society, which he assisted to found in 1902. He was an indefatigable organiser. With his help the Society has become one of the most important organisers of scientific discussions in the country. These are noted for the way in which they have brought American, Continental, and British workers together. His ardour was so keen that sometimes it had to be checked owing to the exiguous character of society finances. In 1920 he added to his work that of secretary to the newly founded Institute of Physics, and in this post has shown a like activity and alertness in bringing to the attention of the Board every possible way of amplifying its work. For both of these societies he has proved himself a man whom it will be difficult to replace.

During the War, Mr. Spiers stimulated the formation of a nitrogen products committee of the Faraday Society. As a result of the reports of this committee, in part drafted by him, important researches were carried out by the Munitions Inventions Department. He also organised for the British Science Guild the successful exhibitions of British Scientific Products held in 1917 and 1918. For his work in connexion with the War he received the Order of the British Empire.

Mr. Spiers was well-read in all branches of physical chemistry, but his daily work gave him no opportunity for research. Two papers only appear in his name; one on the electromotive force of Clark cells (*Phil. Mag.*, 1896), and one on contact electricity (*Phil. Mag.*, 1899). His outlook was, however, much wider than his scientific work. He was a Hebrew and Talmudical scholar, and his love for music amounted to a passion. He was keenly interested in all forms of applied art, and at one time was engaged in the production of decorative metal work by electrodeposition. The gold medal and diploma of the Franco-British Exhibition (1908) was awarded for some of this work. The attendance at his funeral was a testimony to the large amount of work that he had done for Jewish education. He was a member of the Jewish Board of Deputies.

His slight body was unable to stand the physical strain of all his activities. On several occasions he had been obliged to rest. For a couple of days before his death he took holiday, but returned on the Friday feeling rather worse than better. In the afternoon (May 21) he was found by one of his office staff leaning back in his chair. He had passed peacefully away.