

lating medical discovery seems to have originated in 1896 owing to an accident to one of Lord Iveagh's employees. A labourer upon his estate having been bitten by a rabid dog, he directed that everything possible was to be done for the unfortunate man, but was surprised to learn that the treatment for hydrophobia could only be secured by sending the patient to Paris. This was done, and no further ill results ensued; but the novelty of the treatment and the absence of facilities in England for the prosecution of researches such as had led to Pasteur's fruitful discovery made a deep impression on his mind. In 1898, Lord Iveagh visited the Pasteur Institute, and the project of endowing a similar institute in London began to take shape. Ascertaining that the Lister Institute (then the Jenner Institute) had been founded with the objects he had in view but was languishing for want of funds, he decided, after careful inquiry, to endow the Institute to the extent of £250,000, subject to certain alterations in its constitution and government.

Another institute for medical research, as well as the treatment of patients, which is largely indebted to Lord Iveagh's liberality, is the Radium Institute in Riding House Street, London. This was founded in 1909 to make researches upon the effect of radium on the human organism and to supply treatment to patients whose circumstances did not permit them to receive the benefit of radium treatment without financial help. The whole of the money required for the building, equipment, and endowment of the Radium Institute was provided by Lord Iveagh and the late Sir Ernest Cassel.

Lord Iveagh made large benefactions for various purposes to his old college, Trinity College, Dublin, and built for it new Institutes for physics and botany, and endowed the school of geology. The new National University of Ireland also is indebted to him for a valuable site at St. Stephen's Green.

Even a complete list of Lord Iveagh's known gifts for public purposes would fail to record many of the benefits he dispensed. Partly from a distaste

for notoriety, partly for self-protection, the hand of the donor was concealed. His philanthropic enterprises were carefully considered and evolved with patience and attention to details. He took a personal interest in all his schemes and often a large part in the direction of them.

In 1906, Lord Iveagh was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society under Statute 12 "as having rendered conspicuous service to the cause of science," and in 1908 he was unanimously elected chancellor of the University of Dublin.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Dr. Charles C. Godfrey, president of the American Association of Variable Star Observers, conducted in co-operation with the Harvard Observatory, on Aug. 31, aged seventy-one years.

Dr. B. Daydon Jackson, secretary of the Linnean Society of London for forty-seven years, editor of the "Index Kewensis," and author of other important botanical works, on Oct. 12, in his eighty-second year.

Dr. William Libbey, professor of physical geography and Director of the Museum of Geology, Princeton University, from 1883 until 1923, on Sept. 6, aged seventy-two years.

Prof. Alexander Mair, professor of philosophy in the University of Liverpool, president in 1925 of the Association of University Teachers, and author of "Philosophy and Reality" (1911), on Oct. 8, aged fifty-seven years.

Dr. J. W. Mollison, C.S.I., formerly Inspector-General of Agriculture in India, who was the first head of the Imperial Agricultural Research Institute at Pusa, on Oct. 4, aged seventy years.

Dr. Eugene Allen Smith, emeritus professor of mineralogy and geology in the University of Alabama and state geologist since 1873, who was vice-president (Section E) of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1904, on Sept. 7, aged eighty-five years.

Mr. H. M. Taylor, F.R.S., senior fellow and formerly mathematical lecturer of Trinity College, Cambridge, distinguished by his contributions to mathematical science and his translation of many scientific works into Braille for use by the blind, on Oct. 16, at eighty-five years of age.

News and Views.

THE amount of change a story can undergo through repeated copying is a commonplace of experimental psychology; and every scientific worker in the habit of verifying original references has met with examples where the actual statements of an early investigator differ substantially from the versions of them to be found in more recent writings. But it is not often that one meets so extreme a case as that given by Mr. Gheury de Bray in a letter to NATURE of Sept. 17, and in an article in the present issue. Of eleven determinations of the velocity of light quoted in standard works, only one turned out to have been quoted correctly. Mr. de Bray's historical work should provide material for any one in need of examples for the precept 'Verify your references.'

In a paper in the *Astronomische Nachrichten* (No. 5520), Mr. de Bray has used what appear to be the best of the determinations, after due criticism, and

has shown that they point to a decrease in the velocity of light of about 200 km./sec. in the last fifty years. As he says, however, the earlier determinations are not good enough individually to determine such a change, and his argument rests on the fact that they all agree in suggesting a change in the same direction. Of the seven determinations retained, one differs from 299,800 km./sec. by 2.2 times its probable error, one by 2.0 times, and the rest by smaller multiples. In a random set of observations 1 in 5 would deviate from the true value by more than twice the probable error. The velocity of light being so fundamental a constant, physicists may prefer to attribute any change in its measure, if established, to a change in the unit of velocity and not to one in the velocity of light itself. The variation of the second is shown by E. W. Brown's recent work to be within a few parts in 10⁷. The possibility of measurement of wave-lengths within a few thousandths of an