

and only one general meeting—gave hope that he would for some years more be able to fulfil the light duties assigned to him as curator of the Linnean collections. It has been ordered otherwise and he has fallen, literally almost, at his post.

A. B. R.

PROF. A. MAIR.

PROF. ALEXANDER MAIR, whose death occurred on Oct. 7 at the comparatively early age of fifty-seven years, had occupied the chair of philosophy at the University of Liverpool since 1910. Although he made no direct contribution to purely scientific research, he was always keenly interested in recent developments of scientific theory, and extremely appreciative of their wider philosophic implications. He was the author of the articles on "Hallucination" and "Belief" in "The Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics," of "Philosophy and Reality" (published 1911), and of "Immanence and Transcendence," and "The Idea of Transcendent Deity," in recent volumes of the *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*.

Prof. Mair was born in Glasgow, and pursued his studies at Edinburgh, the Sorbonne, and Marburg. He exercised a marked influence both within the University and in connexion with many extra-mural educational institutions, being also the first president of the recently founded Liverpool Psychological Society and active in promoting the Liverpool Branch of the British Institute of Philosophical Studies; while his philosophy seminar was attended by a growing number of post-graduate students. His intellectual ability, combined with his generous disposition and patent sincerity, gained for him a wide sphere of appreciation.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Rev. H. N. Hutchinson, author of "Prehistoric Man and Beast," "Extinct Monsters," and other popular books on scientific topics, on Oct. 30, aged seventy-two years.

Dr. J. R. Leeson, mayor of Twickenham and author of "Lister as I knew him," who also interested himself in several aspects of natural science, on Oct. 23, aged seventy-three years.

News and Views.

SIR ALFRED MOND'S address on the chemical industry, read by Dr. F. A. Beach before the Central Economic League on Oct. 20, ought to receive wide publicity, for it tells the plain man in plain terms how that industry, particularly in Great Britain, stands in relation to his own daily needs, his protection, his future requirements, and, in fact, his very life. Such a pronouncement, coming as it does from the chairman of Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., the great merger of Brunner, Mond and Co., Ltd., Nobel Industries, Ltd., British Dyes, and the United Alkali Co., Ltd., with a total of seventy-five constituent and associated companies, cannot fail to merit the closest attention of economists and of all those interested in the different aspects of the social welfare and development of the race. An analysis of the ordinary doings of the ordinary man throughout the twenty-four hours has shown that all the objects with which he deals, and most of the food he eats, have at some time or other come within the province of chemical industry. Chemicals, in fact, form the foundation of the world's industries, and hence are to be found at the very root of Imperial security and prosperity. It is of course not only the chemist who carries the technical responsibility in these concerns; as Sir Alfred Mond remarked, good engineering can also turn an unprofitable chemical process into a profitable one, notwithstanding that the same chemical reaction has been used under comparable conditions in each case. The new fertiliser process at Billingham, for example, depends for its success on the application of extremely high gas pressures. The development of an industrial technique of high pressures not only leads to commercial success in one branch of the industry, but also opens up new avenues of research and application of immeasurable national and Imperial significance.

PROBLEMS relating to agriculture, to the ultimate dependence of the food supply on the production of

fertilisers from the atmosphere, to the new realisation of the value of systematically fertilised grassland, to the possibility of the synthetic production of vitamins, were all brought under review, and attention was directed to what may be termed the 'fuel problem.' Sir Alfred Mond views with equanimity even an exhaustion of the world's timber supplies, believing that, if necessary, chemical industry would undoubtedly come to the rescue with a substitute. More remarkable still is the movement by centralised industry in repairing the deficiencies of that local chemical works which each one of us possesses in his own body. Synthetic insulin, for example, as effective in its action as its natural counterpart, is at least a vision of the early future. In speaking of industrial peace, Sir Alfred Mond referred to the fortunate happy and friendly past of the chemical industry, and outlined the plans which had been laid within the organisation of which he is chairman, with the view of promoting personal contact, improved status, increased security, co-partnership in profits, and co-operation. In the concluding words of the address: "The achievement of industrial peace cannot be hastened merely by the desires of enthusiastic amateurs or disillusioned politicians. It can be secured only by the competence and good will of those in whose hands are placed the responsibility for industrial organisations, whether on the side of direction or on the side of labour. There is a new spirit and a new science in the management of chemical industry. That new spirit and new science is the broad avenue to industrial prosperity and industrial peace."

MR. J. E. WILLIAMS, whose interesting book, "In Search of Reality," was reviewed in NATURE of June 5, 1926, writes with reference to the leading article, "Science and Philosophy," which appeared on Oct. 22, to protest against any mechanistic explanation of