

work, so that even during his student's time at Delft he began observing the Milky Way with the view of producing an exact picture of Galactic details and nuances. Though he left his technical studies in 1884 for a literary career and eventually became editor of a leading newspaper, he continued his astronomical work, and after many difficulties, succeeded in 1893 in publishing his first and important work: "La Voie lactée dans l'hémisphère boréal", containing four maps in lithography, prepared with the author's assistance and under his supervision.

This work, which was very favourably received by professional astronomers, was followed by a series of papers dealing with the distribution of the stars near the Galactic system. The principal view put forward is that the Milky Way must be considered as a spiral with two principal curves, a centre in Cygnus, secondary streams going in the direction of Perseus and Ophiuchus, the sun in a rather open space between the windings. The theory was further developed in "A Photographic Chart of the Milky Way and the Spiral Theory of the Galactic System" (*Astrophys. Journal*, 27, Mar. 2, 1913). The original maps on which this photographic chart was based, were partly published this year (*Monthly Notices R.A.S.*).

In the meantime another research had been undertaken, and in 1903 the result appeared in the memoirs of the Kon. Akademie van Wetenschappen at Amsterdam, "La distribution de la lumière galactique comparée à la distribution des étoiles cataloguées dans la Voie lactée boréale," followed by other treatises on the distribution of nebulae (1904) and the distance of galactic star-clouds (1921). Soon after the first of these publications, June 13, 1903, he obtained from Kapteyn's hands the honorary degree of doctor of the University of Groningen.

Easton's important studies on periodicity in climate ultimately led to the publication of his book: "Les hivers dans l'Europe occidentale", recently reviewed in NATURE. This work, like that on the Milky Way, involved careful and patient collection and criticism of a vast amount of material, and apart from the value of the results regarding periodicity, it will form a basis for other theoretical investigations. The principal conclusion in favour of an 89-year cycle in the frequency of severe winters certainly was confirmed by the severe winter 1928-29.

Of course, a journalist so well acquainted with astronomy and meteorology, which appeal most to the general public, had an excellent opportunity of popularising these sciences in the papers, and he did so with great success. This was one of the reasons why Easton was chosen as a member of the board of visitors of the Royal Dutch Meteorological Institute of the Netherlands. Since 1921 he was president of the Society for Meteorology and Astronomy, and since 1922 chief editor of its periodical, *Hemel en Dampkring*, which was much extended under his leadership. In every respect Easton will be very difficult to replace, but his work remains and will long continue to be appreciated.

E. VAN E.

#### PROF. LOUIS CAPITAN.

THE death is announced from Paris of Prof. Louis Capitan, one of the foremost French archaeologists of the day. M. Capitan was a doctor of medicine, a member of the Academy of Medicine, and had for many years been a professor at the École d'Anthropologie. He was the author of numerous communications dealing with archaeological subjects which appeared in French scientific periodicals, and especially in *L'Anthropologie*.

With various collaborators Prof. Capitan was responsible for several of the magnificent publications dealing with the exploration of the French palaeolithic caves, which appeared under the patronage and with the subvention of the Prince of Monaco and under the auspices of the Institut de Paléontologie humaine. "La Caverne de Font de Gaume", written with MM. Breuil and Peyrony, was published at Monaco in 1910. "Les Combarelles aux Eyzies", written with the same collaborators, appeared in Paris in 1924. Other volumes were "Limeuil, son gisement à gravures de l'âge du Renne", Paris, 1924, in collaboration with M. Bouyssonnière, and "La Madeleine", Paris, 1928, of which M. Peyrony was joint author.

M. Capitan was a strong supporter of the view which claims a very high antiquity for the art of flint working, and argued forcibly that the flints of earliest date from East Anglia for which an artificial origin was claimed were rightly attributed to man or a pre-human precursor of man. The ground for this conclusion which appealed most strongly to him was a classification of the specimens into 'artificial' and 'natural' based upon his long experience in handling flint implements in large numbers. In fact he had practically reached the position that the final test of the eolith was a judgment which had become almost intuitive as the result of experience—a subjective test which was likely to appeal more to its author than to his audience.

M. Capitan was also keenly interested in Americanist studies. He was one of the French delegates who attended the International Congress of Americanists held in London in 1912, and in 1914 he published, with the assistance of M. Lorin, a book entitled "Le travail en Amérique avant et après Colombe". He was actively concerned in the record and preservation of ancient monuments, and took a prominent part in relation to a projected series of archaeological maps, recording the existence and distribution of prehistoric monuments, for which he hoped to obtain international co-operation.

#### MR. E. H. MAN, C.I.E.

WE regret to record the death of Mr. Edward Horace Man, which took place on Sept. 29 at Preston Park, Brighton. Mr. Man, who was formerly in the Indian Civil Service, retiring in 1901, was born in 1846. As a young man he was appointed to the Andaman Commission, and not only entered into close and friendly relations with the



aboriginal tribes, but also made them the subject of close study. In this he ran no inconsiderable personal risk, for the tribes were then and continued for many years to live in an entirely wild state. Not only did they raid the settlements but many of them resented, and often actively resisted, European visitation, especially if its object were punitive.

Mr. Man's relations with the Andaman Islanders were, however, normally of a happier nature, and he was thus able to visit and study them in their native haunts. As a result he became, and continued to be until the end of his life, our foremost authority on Andaman beliefs and customs. His work has been supplemented by the work of Sir Richard Temple, who for some years was resident High Commissioner, and by that of Prof. A. R. Radcliffe-Brown; but Mr. Man's records will always be the main authoritative source of infor-

mation relating to this important and interesting relic of a primitive stage in human culture.

The results of Mr. Man's observations were embodied in a number of papers contributed from time to time to the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*. These, with other material, were afterwards published in his "The Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands" (1883). He also published a grammar and dictionary of the Central Nicobarese and South Andaman languages and contributed frequently to the *Geographical Journal* and the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, as well as to the *Indian Antiquary*, the editor of which, Sir Richard Temple, has recently still further contributed to our knowledge of the Andamanese in notes appearing in that periodical. Mr. Man made a large collection of photographs of the Andamanese which are deposited with the Royal Anthropological Institute.

### News and Views.

THE Royal Commission on National Museums and Galleries has carried out its labours expeditiously. Scarcely more than a year after its appointment it issued an interim report, accompanied by a volume of evidence and memoranda, and now the first part of the final report has appeared and the second is promised at an early date. The Commission's terms of reference suggested a roving commission through the institutions containing the national collections, and there was a danger that a too close interpretation of them might have led to a prolonged inquiry in which useful conclusions would have been lost under a dead-weight of detail. This danger has been seen, and has been avoided by the concentration of attention on the main aspects as they presented themselves to the commissioners in the course of their extensive investigation. The present report, therefore, deals with the more general aspects of the relationships of museums to the public and to each other, as well as to the state. It examines the actual workings of the different institutions, and makes many suggestions for more efficient methods, for example, of exhibition and of storing, of co-ordination and co-operation, and of public contact. It stresses the need of central co-ordination, and suggests as the best means to this end the appointment of a Standing Commission covering all the institutions concerned, and having, through its chairman, ready access to the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. We propose to deal in separate articles with some of the points raised in this important report. The second part will be devoted to remarks and recommendations applicable to the individual institutions which house the national collections.

ON Oct. 16 the Royal Swedish Academy of Science, Stockholm, celebrated the 150th anniversary of the birth of Berzelius, the great chemist. Born on Aug. 29, 1779, a year before Davy, Berzelius graduated at Upsala in 1804, and in 1806 succeeded Spaurneau, professor of medicine, botany, and chemical pharmacy at Stockholm, where the remainder of his life was passed.

Of the Academy of Science he became president in 1810; he was made a baron in 1835, and died on Aug. 7, 1848. Distinguished "as an experimenter, as a discoverer, as a critic and interpreter, and as a lawgiver", Berzelius made contributions to every branch of chemical science, and Ramsay once said "that he believed that since the time of Boyle none had done more for the advancement of chemistry than had Berzelius". His kitchen laboratory at Stockholm, in which Dulong, Mitscherlich, Gmelin, Gustav and Heinrich Rose were taught, has been described for us by Wöhler. In the gardens at Stockholm "not far from the statues of the kings, amidst trees, with a fountain playing before it, is the bronze figure of Berzelius, the great chemist. He is enveloped in a thick, heavy mantle, the stoic fur of the philosopher, and the face and the whole pose indicate the union of perseverance and intelligence which belongs to such conquerors in the field of science."

DR. D. ADAMSON'S presidential address to the Institution of Mechanical Engineers on Oct. 18 was of a somewhat discursive character; the topics he touched upon ranging from examinations to salesmanship; from researches to public affairs. Among the activities of the Institution is that of holding examinations in conjunction with the Board of Education. On the results of these examinations, which are held in many centres, National Certificates are granted, and these in some cases form the first step towards qualification for membership. Speaking of himself as the "one dissentient" in February 1912 when compulsory examination for admission to associate membership was approved by a general meeting of the Institution, Dr. Adamson said he has been much interested in the success of the scheme of National Certificates which has since been developed. "What is wanted now is that the Institution should foster the co-operation of reputable engineering employers and endeavour to include on the National Certificate a record of the holder's practical training in works". Dr. Adamson laid stress on the need of