

investigation is traceable through the large series of publications which have appeared. It is an urge which found its consummation in the foundation of the Institute of Plant Industry at Indore, where the last six years of her life's work have been conducted.

The same widening outlook found an outlet in the first proposals for the founding of an Indian Science Congress. In that movement Mrs. Howard took a deep personal interest and she presided over both the Botanical and Agricultural Sections. It is not possible to estimate the material benefit of her work to India—undoubtedly it has been great; but the greater loss is that which arises from the balanced judgment, on both scientific and practical problems, which she was ever ready to place at the disposal of all who sought it.

#### PROF. JEAN BRUNHÉS.

JEAN BRUNHÉS, the French geographer, who died at Boulogne-sur-Seine on Aug. 25 at the age of sixty-one years, was one of the leading exponents of human geography of his time. By his teaching and published works he did much to put the subject on a sound scientific basis, and to lift it from the narrow lines of geographical determinism into which it tended to fall some years ago.

Brunhés was born at Toulouse and studied law at the university there before turning to science at the École Normale. His first work was on the geographical conditions of irrigation in Spain and Northern Africa. This was published in 1902 and showed a grasp of geographical correlations and a width of outlook. Much of his later work was done during the sixteen years when he held the chair

of geography in the University of Fribourg, to which he was the first appointment.

In 1910 Brunhés published his "Géographie Humaine", which immediately became a standard work and has remained so to this day. It was afterwards expanded into a much larger work, and it also appeared, with some changes, in an English edition. Brunhés was also responsible for the geographical chapters in Gabriel Hanotaux's great history of France. These constitute a whole volume entitled "Géographie humaine de la France". A third important work was his "Géographie de l'histoire". According to the *Times*, he was engaged at the time of his death on a history of races. Brunhés was elected a member of the Institut de France in 1927.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Mr. Walter Deane, a past president of the New England Botanical Club, who was known for his work on the flora of north-eastern North America, on July 30, aged eighty-two years.

Prof. Cornelius Doelter, emeritus professor of mineralogy in the University of Vienna, and author of works on chemical mineralogy and related topics, on Aug. 8, aged seventy-nine years.

Mr. Henry W. Henshaw, formerly chief of the Biological Survey of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and author of "Birds of the Hawaiian Islands," on Aug. 1, aged eighty years.

Dr. Wyatt W. Randall, formerly chief of the Maryland Department of Health, and president in 1926 of the Association of Official Agricultural Chemists, on July 22, aged sixty-three years.

Mr. J. W. Wilson, from 1892 until 1908 president of the Society of Engineers and co-founder with his father of the Crystal Palace School of Engineering in 1872, on Sept. 3, aged seventy-eight years.

#### News and Views.

IN our last issue (*NATURE*, Sept. 13, p. 391) we referred to the measures which are being taken or are under consideration by the Commonwealth Government of Australia to ameliorate conditions among the aborigines. Of the suggestions which have been made, the most important is undoubtedly that which recommends that the aborigines as a whole should come under the control of the Commonwealth Government. It involves many difficulties and would entail numerous adjustments as between the Commonwealth and State authorities; the obstacles, however, should not be insuperable, and the advantages which would accrue are too great to be lost without determined effort. Not the least of these would be that continuity and uniformity in policy could be secured by one authority dealing with the aboriginal question as a whole; and further, a wider and more effective public opinion would be brought into play when any question affecting policy or any specific measure was under consideration. All competent observers are agreed that in present conditions the extinction of the aborigines is a matter of only a comparatively brief period. With the lamentable example of the extinct Tasmanians to point the moral, no measure,

however difficult of achievement, should be left untried to avert a similar fate from the Australian tribes, in some cases, unfortunately, already reduced to the merest fragment.

THE question of the aborigines is more than a domestic matter which concerns Australia alone. Apart from humanitarian considerations, the question touches a wide circle of interests in the world of science. At the recent Bristol meeting of the British Association a resolution submitted to the Council pointed out that the Australian aborigines are now among the most valuable peoples available for scientific study, and offer opportunities of unequalled importance for research and future investigation in the early history of mankind. The resolution, while recognising the value of the measures now proposed by the Commonwealth Government, went on to ask the Council to urge upon that Government the need for anthropological training for officials entrusted with the administration of the affairs of the aborigines and the adoption of every means to prevent their extinction and the further disintegration of native society. Notwithstanding the economic and financial