

After the Sixth International Congress of Genetics, held in Ithaca last summer, a number of foreign delegates travelled to Berkeley to examine Belling's preparations showing the structure of the chromosomes, and to discuss with him his interpretations of them. He was also the author of a small book of verse, "The Life-World. Poems of Science" (published by the Margaret Mary Morgan Co., 619, California Street, San Francisco). It contains sixty poems concerning scientific (chiefly genetic) phenomena and also three others, the last of which, "Elegy", is of exceptional beauty.

Belling married Miss Hannah Sewall, who died in 1926 without issue. He is survived by a brother, James Belling, residing in the Cheltenham district, also by a sister, Miss Annie Belling.

PROF. E. C. STARKS

WITH the passing at a comparatively early age of Prof. Edwin C. Starks, American ichthyological science has suffered yet another grievous loss, following, as it does, close upon the deaths of David Starr Jordan, Charles H. Gilbert, Carl H. Eigenmann and Barton Warren Evermann. Thus, within a comparatively few years the five zoologists, who, with Theodore N. Gill (1837-1914), may be said to have dominated the study of fishes in the United States during the last half century, have died.

Prof. Starks was born at Baraboo, Wisconsin, on January 25, 1867, studied at Stanford University from 1893 until 1897, and was then appointed assistant to the United States Biological Survey. From 1899 until 1901 he held the position

of curator and assistant professor of zoology at Washington (Seattle). In 1901 he returned to Stanford University, being appointed curator in 1901, assistant professor in 1908 and associate professor in 1927.

A list of Starks's published works on fishes, including those in which he collaborated with Jordan, Gilbert and others, would contain some seventy or more titles. Many of these were of a systematic nature, and included the results of an ichthyological survey about the San Juan Islands, Washington, the fishes of Panama Bay (with Gilbert), and the fishes of Puget Sound (with Jordan). In collaboration with Jordan he was responsible for an important series of revisions and monographs of Japanese fishes published between 1901 and 1906. By far the most valuable of his contributions to ichthyology, however, were the series of papers dealing with the osteology and affinities of various groups of bony fishes. These papers, with their careful descriptions and well-drawn illustrations, furnish a monument of accurate and painstaking research, and are invaluable to students of fish taxonomy.

J. R. N.

WE regret to announce the following deaths :

Prof. E. W. Hobson, F.R.S., formerly Sadleirian professor of pure mathematics in the University of Cambridge, on April 18, aged seventy-six years.

Sir Edward Rigg, C.B., C.V.O., who was appointed assistant assayer in the Royal Mint in 1873 and was superintendent of the Operative Department from 1898 until 1918, on April 14, aged eighty-three years.

News and Views

Rubber Industry Bill

IN the House of Commons on April 11, Mr. H. Williams asked the president of the Board of Trade whether he was aware that the Research Association of British Rubber Manufacturers had discharged many of its staff and suspended research work for lack of funds. (This matter was referred to in a leading article in our issue of February 11.) Mr. Williams asked further whether, in the circumstances, facilities would be given for further progress of the Rubber Industry Bill. Mr. Runciman stated that he was aware of the situation. He said: "The Government recognise that it is desirable that the work of this Association should continue and have decided to give an opportunity for further discussion in Parliament of the Rubber Industry Bill." Owing to pressure of business in the House of Commons, it is proposed to introduce the Bill at an early date in the House of Lords.

Improvement of Beef Cattle in Australia

If, as predicted by Dr. J. B. Orr, Australia is to become "the stock farm of the Empire", one of its urgent needs is the improvement of the beef cattle

breeds in the northern tropical parts of Queensland, North Australia and Western Australia. The handicaps to British breeds are sparse fodder and prevalence of ticks and tick fever. The success reported to have followed the introduction of Brahman (Zebu) strains into herds in poorly grassed, tick-infested territories bordering on the Gulf of Mexico induced the Australian Council for Scientific and Industrial Research in 1931 to make a close investigation of the actual position. As a result, it has for some time strongly advocated experimental breeding in Australia to evolve a suitable cross for the north between British and Brahman cattle. Lack of funds prevented immediate action, but four pastoral companies have now made sufficient money available to ensure a thorough test of the possibilities of the cross. An officer of the Council is in the United States selecting suitable animals (probably eight bulls and two cows) which will be shipped to Australia and, after compliance with exacting quarantine conditions, will be divided amongst the properties of the companies, which at present carry chiefly short-horns and Herefords. All breeding and culling will be under the sole supervision and control of the