

we were discussing College matters or the subject of a lecture, he would often turn to her for criticism and suggestions connected with decisions which he had made, and always with benefit.

John Millar Thomson was a remarkable man, of great ability, earnestness of purpose, and commanding influence, combined with a fine sense of humour and a great power of sympathy. He would have been a smaller man if he had realised how great a personality he really was.

HERBERT JACKSON.

THE death is announced of Mr. Walter E. Roth, which took place on April 5 after an operation at

Demerara. Mr. Roth was a brother of the late Mr. H. Ling Roth, curator of the Bankfield Museum, Halifax. For many years before proceeding to British Guiana, Mr. Roth was Protector of Aborigines, Queensland, Australia. He was the author of "Ethnological Studies among the North-West Central Queensland Aborigines" (1897) and of a number of monographs on various aspects of the culture of the Queensland aborigines which appeared as official bulletins. He also wrote a number of papers, mostly technological, on the culture of the Indians of British Guiana which appeared in the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, the reports of the Bureau of American Ethnology and elsewhere.

### News and Views

#### Jews in Germany

THE political significance of Nazi revolutionary supremacy under Herr Hitler in Germany is outside our field; but the treatment of the Jewish learned and professional classes stands condemned in the eyes of the intellectual world. It is a relapse to the crass repression of the Germany of Heine's day and the *Judenhetze* of Prussia fifty years ago. An outstanding case is the resignation by Prof. James Franck, Nobel prizeman with G. Hertz for physics in 1925, of his chair in experimental physics in the University of Göttingen. Prof. Franck, it is said, probably would have been spared the forced retirement now operative against Jewish officials, including university professors; but he feels that Germans of Jewish descent are being treated as foreigners and foes of the Fatherland, and asks to be released from his office. Prof. Franck served with distinction during the War and received the Iron Cross of the First Class. His action follows fittingly on the retirement of Prof. A. Einstein from Germany, and is the logical, indeed the only, reply for a man of his standing to the acts by which Jews are being excluded from the liberal professions and debarred from the universities. This is the achievement of a movement which, ever since the War, has sought to mould the German people to one pan-Teutonic pattern—in accord with neither the facts nor the conclusions of ethnology. In the denial of a part in Germanic culture to any element alleged to be foreign, Jews, liberals and socialists are to be treated alike; but Jews have suffered most.

THE Jewish people need no one to hold a brief on their behalf. The contribution of the Jews to the growth of civilisation in the Western world speaks for itself. There were Jews in Germany in Roman times, and wherever they were found in medieval Europe, in spite of, or perhaps because of, their disabilities, they were laying the foundations upon which the modern system of finance and commerce was built up. In Italy as bankers, they rivalled the great houses of Lombardy. In the liberal arts, the preservation of much of classical literature and philosophy was due to them. In the later Middle Ages

they were largely responsible for the reputation of Spain as a centre of intellectual and scientific development. In the middle of the eighteenth century the revival of Jewish learning, which had Mendelssohn for its inspiration and leader, paved the way for the Jewish people to take its place in the intellectual life of the respective countries of their adoption as their disabilities were gradually removed, so that Bunsen could say that, in the German universities of his day, the greater number of the principal professors were Jews. Everywhere the Jews have won to pre-eminence in literature, in the arts, especially music, and the drama. Even if it were not admitted that the Jews had contributed to Germanic culture—a contention which could not be accepted without argument—in the world of learning and science it is to men such as Oppert, the classical scholar, Benfey, the Orientalist, and Heinrich Hertz, the physicist, to take three names only, selected almost at random, that she owes her international standing, just as much as to any of her sons of purest German stock.

#### William Morgan, F.R.S., 1750-1833

WILLIAM MORGAN, who died on May 2, 1833, was the son of a doctor at Bridgend and studied medicine in London, but he failed to make headway after his father's death. He returned to London, where his uncle, Richard Price, found him work with the first life assurance company to grant assurances for the whole of life at a level premium depending on the age when the assurance was effected. This new venture gave Morgan his opportunity. He studied mathematics, applied them to life contingencies and produced, in 1779, his "Doctrine of Annuities and Assurances". He followed this with a series of five papers to the Royal Society in which, for the first time, solutions were given of complicated survivorship probabilities in terms that enabled a computer to use actual mortality statistics instead of an arbitrary law of mortality such as de Moivre's. He was given the Copley Medal in 1789 and his fellowship of the Royal Society in the following year. Morgan did still more important scientific work in connexion with his business, where he worked out the proper reserves that should be kept by a life assurance company and studied