

well-established, and the most frequently occurring, type of such co-operation. More recently he has made important contributions to the analysis of complex spectra corresponding to various stages of ionization—particularly those of metals prominent in celestial spectra.

PROF. RUSSELL'S work is marked throughout by a breadth of interest and a clearness of apprehension of essentials which place him among the greatest men of science of the time. There is scarcely a branch of astronomy (with the possible exception of problems peculiar to the extra-galactic nebulae) which has not attracted his attention and become elucidated thereby. He has recently advanced some very suggestive ideas relating to the origin of the solar system, and his text-book on astronomy, written in association with his colleagues, Profs. R. S. Dugan and J. Q. Stewart, is unique in its kind. He travels freely among the American observatories, and has for many years been regarded as a kind of unofficial ambassador-at-large, co-ordinating work of various types and often taking an active part in the solution of the problems encountered. His vivid personality is one of the most conspicuous and characteristic features of astronomical conferences, and the well-deserved honour now accorded him of foreign membership of the Royal Society will give universal satisfaction.

#### The German Expedition to Nanga Parbat

EVERYONE must sympathize with the Germans who have met with disaster, for a second time, in an attempt to climb Nanga Parbat. In 1934 three members, including the leader, lost their lives on the mountain in a blizzard and one died from illness; added to this, six of their faithful porters also lost their lives. Now news has come that the second German expedition has met with an even greater disaster, seven out of nine members, including the leader, Dr. Karl Wein, together with nine porters, having been overwhelmed by an avalanche at Camp IV. Details of what exactly happened are not yet to hand, but almost at the same time as the news of the disaster was telegraphed an article appeared in *The Times* of June 22 from Dr. Karl Wein, professor of geography at the University of Munich, dated June 6 from the Base Camp. From this it seems the present expedition is following the same route as that of 1934. On June 5 it had reached Camp III, which in the former expedition was at a height of 19,400 ft., while the 'trek' to Camp IV, 20,300 ft., had been made on the following day. In this account Dr. Wein describes a great avalanche crashing down the face of Nanga Parbat, but which with the exception of several stray fragments did not reach Camp II, 17,550 ft., which was being pitched at the time. The rush of air caused tents to be "blown over, tent poles snapped and strong canvas torn". All the members of the party seem to have been thoroughly experienced mountaineers. We shall await with interest details of this, probably the greatest, of Himalayan disasters.

#### Powers of the National Trust

THE Bill by which it is proposed to extend the powers of the National Trust was considered by the Select Committee of the House of Commons on unopposed Bills on June 17, Capt. R. C. Bourne being in the chair. The object of the Bill is to put into operation the scheme of the Trust for the preservation of houses of historic or æsthetic interest in private ownership, which in part was inspired by legislation framed for this purpose in France. It will enable the Trust to take over and save from breaking up large country houses and estates, while allowing the donor and his family and descendants to continue to occupy, provision being made for the public to have access to them. In addition, the Bill provides for enabling the National Trust to acquire and hold small sites of five acres in extent for the purpose of preserving "view-points"; to enter into agreements with owners restricting the use of land, and empowers local authorities to co-operate with the Trust. By this legislation the National Trust will be placed in a much stronger position in regard to what must be regarded as its most useful function—the safeguarding and ensuring the preservation of sites which on account of their outstanding archæological, historical or æsthetic interest, are of national, or even of international importance. It will be relieved in no small measure of the constant necessity of urgent and hurried 'last-minute' appeals, which recent rapid land development has made unavoidable, but of which in the end there is danger that the public may become a little weary. The Trust will now be enabled by the Bill to concentrate on appealing to the general public for the preservation of sites of which the national importance will be most readily appreciated, or for which no other provision is possible.

#### Indians of Canada

AN example of the variation in method in dealing with the less advanced races of different parts of the Empire, to which reference is made on another page of this issue of NATURE (see p. 1083), is afforded in a recent survey of conditions among the Indians of Canada by the Hon. T. A. Crerar, M.P., Minister of Mines and Resources of the Dominion of Canada. Indian administration in Canada is dominated by the twofold aim of protection and advancement. The Indians, at one time rapidly decreasing in numbers and regarded as a doomed race, are now on the up-grade. Since 1927, when they had fallen to 104,000, they have increased to 112,000. This increase is attributed largely to the improved medical benefits they now receive and the greater attention given to hygiene. They live on reservations, of which there are two thousand of varying size, running from a few acres up to five hundred square miles, the total area being 5,170,000 acres, of which 220,000 acres is under cultivation. A fund of fourteen million dollars, accruing from the sale of Indian lands, mining rights, etc., is administered by the Government entirely for Indian benefit. The cultural condition of the Indians depends almost entirely on