

She was also an artist of no mean calibre. She had many delightful water-colour sketches to her credit. Her literary tastes were often reflected in her lectures, which, though not always easy to follow, were a delight to hear.

Hers was such a personality that she will be remembered affectionately by many of her former students when some of their more brilliantly scientific and successful teachers have been forgotten. It is an irony of fate that a woman who argued and worked for peace so unflinchingly should have met her death on Armistice Day.

Dr. Prankerd leaves her mother to whom she was devoted and to whom our deepest sympathies are extended.

WE regret to announce the following deaths :

Prof. F. Angell, emeritus professor of psychology in Stanford University, on November 2, aged eighty-two years.

Prof. Charles Barrois, formerly professor of geology in the University of Lille, on November 8.

Mr. C. J. Bond, C.M.G., a former member of the Industrial Health Research and of the Medical Research Board, on November 23, aged eighty-three years.

Mr. Wilfred Trotter, F.R.S., sergeant surgeon to H.M. the King, and consulting surgeon at University College Hospital, on November 25, aged sixty-seven years.

## NEWS AND VIEWS

### Pithecanthropus and Peking Man: Comparative Studies

By a happy and fruitful conjunction in comparative study of old and new material, Dr. G. H. R. Koenigswald, of Bandoeng, Java, and Prof. Franz Weidenreich of the Peking Cenozoic Research Laboratory, are able to record in another column of this issue of NATURE (see p. 926) some remarkable observations bearing on the relationship between those early fossil hominids, or precursors of man, Pithecanthropus of Java and Peking man. In the further light now thrown upon the problem of the descent of man by recent discoveries of both Sinanthropus and Pithecanthropus—of the former, some still undescribed, of the latter, some of the more important made only in the current year in response to intensified search—the authors demonstrate by detailed comparison not only the essentially human affinities of Pithecanthropus, which Dubois, its first discoverer, has come to question, but also the very close affinity of Pithecanthropus to Sinanthropus, of whose right to stand in the line of human descent no doubt has ever been raised. Further, among the latest Pithecanthropus material to be discovered is an upper jaw, which in the separation of canines from incisors presents a character hitherto regarded as distinctively Simian. The appearance of this character in Pithecanthropus is notable as it has been adduced as an argument in discussion of the Piltdown jaw. By far the most interesting and significant result to emerge is, however, not so much the affinities of the two groups of fossil remains as their differences, in which not only now one now the other exhibits an approach to modern man, but these differences also indicate that the variability, which is so marked a feature in the individual specimens of Sinanthropus, is almost equally striking when the two groups are compared each as a whole. In other words, there is evidence even at this comparatively early stage of human evolution of a variation which may be termed racial. Of the authors' pregnant allusions to the position of

*Homo soloensis*, no more need be said here than to express a confident hope of further light from an equally fruitful collaboration.

### Anthropometry and the War

In a written reply in the House of Commons under date September 28, to a question in reference to offers from ex-officer anthropologists to conduct an anthropometric survey of H.M. Forces, Sir Victor Warrender, financial secretary, War Office, stated that he was advised that "though such a survey might be of scientific interest, it is impossible in present circumstances to carry it out, owing to the time which would be required for the purpose". Captain A. G. Pape, by whom the attention of NATURE has been directed to the passage in *Hansard* reporting question and author (September 28, 1939, p. 1516), writes strongly urging the need and advantages of such a survey, which, he informs us, he himself had suggested to the authorities with the offer of his services. Readers of NATURE will scarcely need to be reminded of the deplorable gap in evidence relating to the constitution of the British population, owing to the lack of systematic records of physical characters and other anthropometric data. The survey contemplated by Captain Pape, however, is apparently of a far more extensive character, and would include observations demanding the services of medical and psychological specialists, and an extension to the rising generation through an organization embracing both university and school. Strong though the argument for an anthropometric record of the population may be—the need will be much more insistent when post-war measures of social amelioration have to be considered—it is probably quite inevitable that in so far as regards H.M. Forces, the time factor is all-decisive. While opportunity might possibly be found to examine troops serving in the field or in training, these subjects would not be representative of an average sample of the popula-