

has recalled, he was a generous contributor to the funds for the excavation of Ur; and a visit to the site of the excavation was one of the few occasions on which he travelled in the East. Another which afforded him an even greater delight than that he experienced in Mesopotamia was when in 1935 he travelled in China with R. L. Hobson of the British Museum to help in selecting exhibits for the International Exhibition of Chinese Art held in London in the following winter. The welcome he then received in China was such as befitted his eminence as a collector and expert, and was in a sense the crowning reward of his career.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Prof. Czeslav Białobrzęski, professor of theoretical physics in the University of Warsaw recently executed by the German authorities in Poland, aged sixty years.

Sir John Withers, M.P., who has represented the University of Cambridge in Parliament since 1926, a former president of the Alpine Club and member of the Mount Everest Committee, on December 29, aged seventy-six years.

Prof. Hans Ziemann, professor of internal medicine in the University of Berlin, aged seventy-four years.

NEWS AND VIEWS

Seventy Years Ago

ON November 4, 1869, the first issue appeared of a new "weekly illustrated journal of science" entitled *NATURE*. It was under the able and forceful editorship of Sir Norman Lockyer, who secured the support of the leading men of science of the day for the new venture. Turning back in thought to those days, it will be seen that there is a certain parallelism between world affairs of that time and the present international situation. Prussia had defeated Austria and its German allies, and had emerged as a leading European power. Strategic railways had been built to the eastern and western frontiers, and tension between Germany and France increased until in July 1870 war was declared. The campaign was relatively short, but its consequences were momentous and have determined much of the history of the past half-century. It seemed worth while, therefore, to turn back to the early pages of *NATURE*, to note the reaction of scientific men and affairs to the course of events, and to observe the progress of science as recorded week by week in this journal. Let this be sufficient reason for the column of quotations and notes, taken from the first number of *NATURE* to appear in 1870, which is printed elsewhere in this issue (p. 41). It is proposed to publish week by week similar extracts from the issues of *NATURE* of "seventy years ago", in the hope that scientific workers will derive both profit and pleasure from these contemporary accounts of scientific thought and events.

Royal Meteorological Society: Symons Gold Medal

THE decision of the Council of the Royal Meteorological Society to award the Symons Gold Medal for 1940 to Dr. J. Bjerknes will be very popular among British meteorologists, to whom he has become well known during his frequent visits to this country. In 1932 the Medal was awarded to his father, Prof. V. Bjerknes, and it is fitting that the son, who shared the work, should also share the honours. Dr. J. Bjerknes is well known for his numerous and penetrating memoirs on the structure of barometric depressions and on the mechanism of the atmospheric

circulation. Among his earlier papers we may mention "On the Structure of Moving Cyclones" (1919), and (with H. Solberg) "Meteorological Conditions for the Formation of Rain" (1921), and "The Life Cycle of Cyclones and the Polar Front Theory of Atmospheric Circulation" (1922) in which he laid down the principle of 'cyclone families' and emphasized the role taken by depressions as an integral part of the exchange of air between high and low latitudes.

Later, while temporarily on the staff of the British Meteorological Office, Dr. Bjerknes compiled "Practical Examples of Polar-Front Analysis over the British Isles in 1925-6", published as Geophysical Memoir No. 50, and he has since analysed in great detail, on the bases of both surface and upper air observations, a number of depressions presenting special features. In 1933 the accumulated research of the Norwegian school of meteorologists into the dynamics of the atmosphere was published in book form under the title "Physikalische Hydrodynamik" by V. and J. Bjerknes, H. Solberg and T. Bergeron. Dr. Bjerknes is still young, and we look forward to further important research in future from these brilliant Norwegians.

University of Oxford: Chair of Forestry

MR. H. G. CHAMPION has recently been appointed to fill the chair of forestry at Oxford in succession to the late Prof. R. S. Troup. Mr. Champion graduated at Oxford with first-class honours in chemistry and botany. He went out to India in the Forest Service in 1915 and was posted to the United Provinces. After successful work in divisional and working plans posts he was selected for appointment as silviculturist at the Forestry Institute at Dehra Dun. In this post he carried out some notable work. Perhaps Mr. Champion's most important contributions to silvicultural research in India and Burma were a "Silvicultural Research Manual for India", in two volumes—"The Experimental Manual" and "The Statistical Code"—and a "Preliminary Survey of the Forest Types in India and Burma".