

science. There was no Naturforscher-Versammlung and no meeting of the Physikalische Gesellschaft where his small but powerful figure with the characteristic beard and big spectacles did not appear, no scientific conference where his wise counsel was not welcomed. He never claimed to be a man of science, but only a "poor technician". But he insisted that every article in *Die Naturwissenschaften* should be written in such a way that his "simple mind" could understand it. How few of the contributions proved up to the high standard which he set, and how lively was the ensuing correspondence! He had a collection of the most remarkable extracts from these letters, as material on the "psychology of the scientist", whom he liked to describe as "mimosenhaftes Stachelschwein" (a hybrid of mimosa and porcupine). Perhaps he did not realize how well this description fitted his own character, which was the strangest mixture of infinite kindness, generosity, greatness of outlook and personal touchiness.

He was a technician by profession, an amateur scientist; but his real life was in literature, art and music. He read abundantly and remembered everything. He knew all the great galleries of Italy and Germany, and filled his home with good modern pictures. But his greatest pleasure were his annual visits to the Bach, Beethoven, Brahms festivals and to Bayreuth. Of his numerous friendships with men of importance he valued none higher than that with Gustav Mahler, the composer. Music was left to him when the decay of his eye-sight deprived him of reading and enjoying art. Finally, even music was taken from him, for going to concerts became impossible for a Jew. The work of his life was broken and his last years were lonely, dark and tragic. Many of his friends were dispersed over the globe. But he will not be forgotten by them.

MAX BORN.

Prof. A. L. Selby

ARTHUR LAIDLAW SELBY, born on July 2, 1861, at Atherton, Lancashire, was the eldest son of Atherton Thomas Selby. He was educated at Heversham Grammar School and at Queen's College, Oxford. He was a fellow of Merton College from 1886 until 1893, and examiner in the Honour School of Natural Science in 1889-90 and 1900-1. He married Dorothy, daughter of Ernest Beck of Great Amwell.

After holding an assistant demonstratorship in physics at the Clarendon Laboratory, Oxford, for six years, Selby was in 1890 appointed assistant professor of physics at Cardiff University College, becoming professor of physics in 1897. He occupied this chair for twenty-nine years, retiring in 1926 with the title of professor emeritus. During his sixteen years of retirement he continued to reside in Cardiff, and maintained the closest possible touch with the College. He died on July 22 last, at the age of eighty-one. He is survived by his widow.

It would be vain to attempt in a short obituary notice to do justice to the manifold services rendered by Selby to the University College at Cardiff, to higher education in Wales, and to the many students who have passed through his department. His personality, his clear and unbiased judgment, and his inimitable command of phrase, marked him as a leader in committee and as an inspiring lecturer in the class-room. His transparent honesty of purpose and his sympathetic understanding rapidly gained for him the confidence of his students and colleagues, and he never failed to win the lasting affection of those who worked with him.

His name will be perpetuated in the series of Selby Lectures, and will be held in affectionate remembrance by all who knew him.

R. T. DUNBAR.

NEWS and VIEWS

Anglo-Soviet Scientific Collaboration Committee

It is now four months since the formation of the Anglo-Soviet Scientific Collaboration Committee under the chairmanship of Sir John Russell. The Committee came into being as a result of a conference held last March at the Royal Society to discuss the development of contacts between British and Russian scientific workers. With Sir John Russell as chairman and Mr. J. G. Crowther as vice-chairman, the Committee arranged that scientific communications should be forwarded to the U.S.S.R. according to the following procedure. Letters addressed by individual British men of science to individual Russian men of science, or communications from British scientific and technical societies to the corresponding Russian societies, can be sent either to Sir John Russell, Ministry of Information, Malet Street, London, W.C.1, or to Mr. J. G. Crowther, British Council, 3 Hanover Street, London, W.1, who will take the necessary steps to forward the communications to the U.S.S.R. This amplified the machinery for exchange of scientific information with the U.S.S.R. already set up by the British Council.

A number of communications have already been forwarded to the U.S.S.R. in this way, but owing to the time taken in transit and the inevitable dispersion of Soviet scientific workers, and the evacuation of scientific institutions in the Soviet Union, it

is realized that it may be some time before replies reach Great Britain. In collaboration with the University of London School of Slavonic Studies, the Committee has arranged for special Russian classes for scientific workers. In this way, many young scientists are being encouraged for a moderate fee to learn the Russian language. The Committee has fully realized the importance of a satisfactory exchange of scientific literature between Great Britain and the U.S.S.R., and as a basis for this has recommended that a survey shall be undertaken of the war holdings of Russian scientific and technical periodicals in Great Britain, with details of location and accessibility. The British Council has agreed to finance the survey, which will be organized by ASLIB. The survey is already under way, and it is hoped that it will be completed in two months time. Librarians of scientific institutions are now asked to co-operate in this important piece of work by completing and returning their questionnaires as soon as possible. When the survey is completed the Committee will endeavour to obtain from the U.S.S.R. the periodicals still being published in the Soviet Union, but which no longer reach Great Britain.

In view of the urgent demand for a Russian-English technical dictionary, the Committee is making a collection of existing glossaries of Russian technical and scientific terms in Great Britain and the United States, with the idea of placing a complete set in