

Museum, Exeter, and did excellent work in arranging the bird and mammal collections in that institute. Early in the War he met with an accident in the black-out which seriously injured one eye, and later he became almost totally blind. To a man of such active habits this was a terrible blow; but he bore it with great fortitude. On October 3 he died after an operation, at the age of seventy-six. In 1895 he married Annie, daughter of Captain John Seals, who survives him together with a son and a daughter.

N. B. KINNEAR

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Mr. W. E. Copleston, C.S.I., formerly chief conservator of forests, Bombay, on December 1.

Prof. René Maire, professor of botany in the University of Algiers, one of the twelve non-resident members of the Paris Academy of Sciences, on November 24, aged seventy-one.

Dr. Henry C. Williamson, formerly of the Fishery Board of Scotland, on December 9, aged seventy-eight.

## NEWS and VIEWS

### Geological Society: Awards for 1949

THE Council of the Geological Society has announced the following awards: *Wollaston Medal* to Dr. Norman L. Bowen, of the Geophysical Laboratory, Washington, in recognition of his eminent researches in quantitative experimental petrology and for his brilliant application of these and related studies in the elucidation of fundamental problems of petrogenesis. *Murchison Medal* to Mr. Tom Eastwood, lately assistant director of H.M. Geological Survey, for his long and distinguished work on the Geological Survey, especially in the realm of economic geology. *Lyell Medal* to Prof. S. J. Shand, for his outstanding contributions to the advancement of geology, embodied especially in his book on "Eruptive Rocks" and numerous published papers on the petrology of the felspathoidal rocks of South Africa, Canada and Scotland. *Wollaston Donation Fund* to Mr. G. A. Kellaway, in recognition of his work on the stratigraphy and structure of the Northamptonshire ironstone district and the Bristol-Somerset Coalfield. *Murchison Geological Fund* to Dr. H. Dighton Thomas for his researches in fossil corals, sponges and other invertebrates. A moiety of the *Lyell Geological Fund* to Dr. J. E. Hemingway for his studies of the stratigraphy, structure and sedimentary petrography of the Jurassic rocks of North-East Yorkshire; another moiety of the *Lyell Geological Fund* to Mr. J. Selwyn Turner for his contributions to Carboniferous stratigraphy and structural geology.

### Food and Agriculture Organisation: Statistics Officer in the Far East

THE Economics and Statistics Division of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation has appointed Mr. C. P. G. J. Smit to be regional representative for statistics in Asia and the Far East. Mr. Smit, who has been with the Netherlands Government for twenty-one years, was formerly deputy director-general of statistics at the Central Office of Statistics, The Hague, and was responsible for all statistical work done in that Office, including work with agricultural statistics. He has also acted as chairman of the Standing Advisory Committee on Statistics of the Food and Agriculture Organisation since that Committee was set up in 1946. In his new appointment Mr. Smit will work at the Organisation's Central Office of Statistics in Bangkok, and there he will work with Governments of the region, assisting them on statistics problems, especially with regard to the 1950 world census of agriculture. He will also be responsible for some of the statistical work needed for the International Rice Commission.

### Joseph von Mering (1849-1908)

JOSEPH FRIEDRICH FREIHERR VON MERING, who was born in Cologne a century ago on December 28, is remembered as a pioneer in the work on diabetes; his paper, with Oscar Minkowski, in the *Archiv für experimentelle Pathologie und Pharmakologie* (26, 371; 1890), reported the production of diabetes in a dog following extirpation of the pancreas. Four years previously, von Mering had produced experimental diabetes by means of phloridzin, and his interest in this condition was probably derived from his teacher, Kussmaul, who introduced the term 'acetonæmia' in diabetic coma, later named 'acidosis' by Naunyn. After obtaining his M.D. at Strassburg in 1874, von Mering became assistant to Richard von Krafft-Ebing and to Friedrich Jolly. Having worked with von Frerichs, Kussmaul and Hoppe-Seyler, he was appointed professor of medicine and laryngology at Halle in 1890, and in 1900 director of the Medizinische Klinik. Von Mering synthesized veronal, and his "Lehrbuch der Inneren Medizin" (1901) went through four editions before his death on January 5, 1908. A true aristocrat, approachable and kindly, vivacious, impulsive and quick-tempered, von Mering was eminently practical in his scientific outlook; for theories and hypotheses he had neither time nor talent.

### Defence Services Research Facilities Committee of the Royal Society

IN many fields of scientific work the Defence Services in Great Britain possess equipment, knowledge and personnel which, if available, might be used for helping scientific researches unconnected with any Service objective. In some cases facilities of this kind have been provided for several years. In 1948 the Defence Services Research Facilities Committee was set up by the Royal Society not, as some have supposed, to offer scientific help to the Services, but to enlist the help of the Services on behalf of scientific workers. The terms of reference of the Committee are: "To consider proposals for the use of Service facilities and personnel for assisting scientific research, and to make recommendations to the Council of the Royal Society, the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, the Army Council, the Air Council and the Minister of Supply". To give an idea of the facilities which the Committee hoped would be available, the subjects dealt with by the five panels which were established to consider applications for help are as follows: (A) submarine gravity measurements, (B) surplus explosives, (C) magnetic survey, (D) aerial photography, (E) scientific expeditions.

The Defence Services have been most co-operative; the following examples illustrate the scope of the