

that the fifty-six well-established elements which he was able to consider, when arranged in the order of the magnitudes of their atomic weights, formed eight octaves, each eighth element exhibiting a recurrence of the same or closely similar chemical and physical properties. All this is now acknowledged, but the Chemical Society never did Newlands full justice in the matter; and while the Royal Society awarded the Davy Medal jointly to Profs. Mendeléef and Lothar Meyer for their work on the periodic scheme, it was only some years later, namely in 1887, that the same distinction was conferred, we believe in consequence of Dr. Frankland's representations, upon the discoverer of the law.

They order these things better in France. If Newlands had been a Frenchman, the Academy of Sciences and the Chemical Society, even if they had at first fallen into error, would have taken care that in the distribution of honours their own countryman should not come in last.

John Alexander Reina Newlands, to give him his full name, was the second son of the Rev. William Newlands, M.A. Glasgow, a minister of the Established Church of Scotland, and was born in Southwark in 1837. He was educated privately by his father, and, having early imbibed a taste for chemistry, he entered the Royal College of Chemistry as a student under Hofmann, in October 1856. After a year at College he became assistant to Prof. Way, then chemist to the Royal Agricultural Society. His mother, though born in England, belonged to an Italian family, and the insurrectionary movement under Garibaldi roused the enthusiasm and sympathy of the young chemist to such a pitch that, on the call for volunteers in 1860, he left Way, and went to fight in the cause of Italian freedom, and only returned home at the end of the campaign. He then rejoined Way for a time till, in 1864, he began practice on his own account as analytical chemist in the City. About this time, and for some years later, he taught chemistry at the Grammar School of St. Saviour's, Southwark, at the School of Medicine for Women, and at the City of London College. In 1868 he became chief chemist at Mr. James Duncan's extensive sugar refinery at the Victoria Docks, and remained in that position till 1886, when, in consequence of the decline of the business owing to foreign competition, he joined his brother, Mr. B. E. R. Newlands, in independent practice as analytical and consulting chemists. Mr. Newlands' name was associated with the invention of several important improvements in the refining of sugar, especially, we believe, the so-called alum process for the purification of beet molasses.

In 1884 Mr. Newlands published a small volume containing a reprint of all his papers on atomic weights, with some additions embodying his later views on the same subject. He is also author, jointly with his brother, of a treatise on "Sugar, a Handbook for Sugar Growers and Refiners," and of some articles on "Sugar" in Thorpe's Dictionary.

Mr. Newlands left a widow, a daughter, and a son, Mr. W. P. R. Newlands. The latter studied chemistry at the Royal College of Science, and will take his father's place in the firm.

A kindly courteous man, his face will be much missed by the older Fellows of the Chemical Society, where he had been a familiar figure for so many years.

W. A. T.

PROFESSOR GEORGE EBERS.

PROF. EBERS, the well-known Egyptologist, whose death has recently been announced, will be long remembered in connection with the papyrus which bears his name. Dr. Ebers was born in 1837 at Berlin, and his friendship with Brugsch and Lepsius led him to take a keen interest in Egyptology. In pursuit of his

studies he visited Egypt, and it was during the winter of 1872-73, while staying at Thebes, that he had the good fortune to purchase from a native dealer at Luxor the hieratic medical papyrus which made him famous. On his return from Egypt he deposited the papyrus in the University Library at Leipzig, and two years later he published a facsimile of the text, with a description, glossary, &c., in collaboration with his friend Dr. Ludwig Stern. The "Papyrus Ebers," which is in a perfect state of preservation, is the most important medical papyrus that has been found in Egypt, and has thrown considerable light on the medical knowledge of the ancient Egyptians. In addition to his numerous publications on Egyptian archæology, Dr. Ebers gained a considerable reputation as a novelist. In 1889 ill health compelled Dr. Ebers to relinquish his duties as Professor of Egyptology at Leipzig, and from that time till his death he was a confirmed invalid.

NOTES.

THE death is announced of M. N. A. Pomel, of Algiers, Correspondant of the Section of Mineralogy of the Paris Academy of Sciences.

THE Paris Academy of Medicine has received information that a legacy of fifty thousand francs has been bequeathed to it by Mme. C. E. Bragayract.

DR. EVERT JULIUS BONSDORFF, formerly Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in the University of Helsingfors, has just died at the age of eighty-eight years.

M. BROUARDEL will be the president of the French Association for the Advancement of Science, at the meeting to be held next year at Boulogne. General Sébert has been elected vice-president of the Association, and will succeed to the presidency in 1900, when the meeting will take place in Paris.

A REUTER telegram from Naples announces that Mount Vesuvius is in a state of active eruption. The lava is flowing in four streams, its progress being at the rate of 100 yards an hour. The chestnuts on Mount Somma have been burned. Constant explosions are heard from the central crater, which is throwing out volcanic ash, and giving other evidence of activity.

A CONGRESS of the Astronomische Gesellschaft will be opened at the Academy of Sciences at Budapest on September 24. Meetings will also be held on Monday and Tuesday, September 26 and 27. The Hungarian members of the Society have prepared a cordial reception for the astronomers who attend the Congress, among the hospitable features being a luncheon to be given by the Minister of Public Instruction (Dr. Julius von Wlassitz), a dinner by the town of Budapest, visits to places of interest in the town and neighbourhood, and excursions to the O'Gyalla Observatory and the Danube Cataracts—the Iron Doors. The Congress will certainly give a prominent place to the discussion of questions concerning the international zone-catalogue of the Astronomische Gesellschaft; and the resolutions of the Paris Conference, which have given rise to a large amount of criticism, will also be dealt with. Prof. F. Porro will present a preliminary report on the revision of the Piazzi Catalogue of Stars, undertaken by Dr. H. S. Davis and himself.

A COMMITTEE, having upon it many distinguished men of science in Australia has been formed to secure the establishment of some permanent memorial to commemorate the services rendered by the late Baron von Mueller. This movement is entirely distinct from that which the executors of the late Baron have initiated with the object of obtaining funds for the erection of a tombstone. The object of the Committee of the National Memorial Fund is to secure sufficient funds to allow of