

chemical research, of the Adolph von Baeyer Society for the promotion of chemical literature, and of the Justus von Liebig Society for the promotion of chemical teaching. Quite recently he had been elected to the committee of the Chemisch-Technische Reichsanstalt in Berlin. He died at Cairo at the age of seventy-seven years.

THE death on Feb. 28, at the age of seventy-three years, of Dr. J. Wells, formerly Warden of Wadham College and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, is felt as a serious loss in many departments of University activity. Though

not himself a student of science, he was never unmindful of the scientific traditions of the College over which he presided. It is undoubtedly the case that but for his wise and fair-minded dealing with the matter during his vice-chancellorship, the Lewis Evans collection of scientific instruments might have been lost, not only to Oxford, but to England as well. It should always be remembered that not only this invaluable asset for the history of science, but also many other advances in the scientific equipment of the University of Oxford, owe their efficiency, if not their existence, to the good offices of Dr. Wells.

### News and Views.

THE fiftieth birthday of Prof. A. Einstein occurred on Mar. 14, and brought congratulations from all parts of the world. The German Chancellor hailed him as "Germany's great savant," and the Berlin municipality gave him the life tenancy of a pleasantly situated mansion. The University of Paris conferred an honorary degree. The Zionists are to plant an "Einstein Wood" near Jerusalem. Never before has the name of a scientific worker meant so much to the average man. Yet the creator of relativity and of the unitary field theory remains a quiet and retiring personality who dislikes publicity and society. His appearance suggests a musician, and indeed his love of music is one of his leading characteristics. Last year he gave a violin recital for a charity. He finds much pleasure in Russian literature, and appreciates modern ideas in architecture. He is an ardent sympathiser with efforts for world peace. Recently his health has not been good, but he says, "Illness has its advantage: one learns to think. I have only just begun to think."

EMPLOYERS and trade unionists associated under the auspices of the Conference on Industrial Re-organisation and Industrial Relations have recently issued an interim joint report on unemployment. In this report the problem of unemployment is investigated and suggestions made for its diminution. It is pointed out that, since 1920, there have seldom been fewer than a million workers unemployed in Great Britain, while at times the number has exceeded two millions. The heavy industries in particular have been severely hit by the depression, and the activity of certain prosperous industries, such as artificial silk and the motor industry, has not really compensated for this depression in the great basic industries. The report stresses three factors, monetary policy, world economic conditions, and the temporary displacement of labour due to the rapid adoption of labour-saving methods, as being the main causes of the present acute unemployment.

CORRESPONDING to this analysis of the causes of unemployment in Great Britain, the main remedies (that is, apart from immediate or merely palliative measures) suggested in the recent interim report are: *first*, an inquiry into monetary policy with whatever action may be found necessary; *second*, the re-

organisation of industry, including rational organisation into larger units and the substitution of modern plant and technique; and *third*, measures to mitigate the evils resulting from rapid displacement of labour. Finally, the novel and interesting suggestion is put forward that a Labour Reserve Fund should be set up either by firms or by particular industries, which fund would be available for the purpose of assisting displaced labour. Progressive firms, it is pointed out, build up special reserve funds (apart from normal depreciation) to enable plant to be replaced before it is worn out, so that the most modern equipment can be introduced. It is even more necessary that such progress should not involve hardship to the human element.

INDUSTRIALISM in England moves on apace and the town continues to swallow up the countryside. This is a healthy economic sign even though it leads to unhealthy social conditions. The old order of towns and villages is giving place to new groups of towns or 'conurbations' and regional associations. Mr. F. Longstreth Thompson in his address on 'Recent Developments in Town Planning,' read at the Surveyors' Institution on Mar. 4, enumerates no fewer than 67 joint committees covering a total area of almost 12,000,000 acres and having a population of approximately 30,000,000—out of a total population for England and Wales of only 38,000,000. In view of the near approach of the next census, this raises a question of great importance. Hitherto the statistical information has been given separately for the towns, the urban and the rural districts. This assumes an economic isolation which no longer exists, and serious consideration should be given to furnishing returns on the basis of these new divisions which have developed by and from the recognition of mutual dependence and interests. For the sake of continuity it may be essential to maintain the earlier census divisions, but supplementary summaries may at least be possible.

RETURNING to Mr. Thompson's paper, he points out two useful outgrowths from the original Town Planning Act. For the moment, town-planning schemes are confined to land which is in course of development or appears likely to be used for building purposes. For boroughs and urban districts with a population