honours, and his D.Sc. degree in 1921 for a thesis on "Accurate Viscosity Determination of Fluids". His published papers deal with elastic hysteresis in steel, elastic properties of steel at moderately high temperatures, and viscosity of liquids; but his research work at the Royal Naval College has not been published.

Dr. Rowett was of a very retiring and modest nature, a skilful engineer and an ingenious research worker of great ability, very thorough in all he did. His work was his hobby, and forms a lasting memorial to him. Ill-health overtook him in his prime and he died at the early age of forty-six years. J. B. H.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Prof. A. V. Fomine, director of the Botanical Museum of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, and professor of botany in the University of Kiev, an authority on the Cryptogams and plant geography, on October 16, aged sixty-six years.

Prof. J. G. Goodman, emeritus professor of civil and mechanical engineering in the University of Leeds, on October 28, aged seventy-three years.

Prof. Frederick L. Ransome, professor of economic geology in the California Institute of Technology, on October 6, aged sixty-seven years.

News and Views

Sir Charles Sherrington, O.M., G.B.E., F.R.S.

THE official announcement of Sir Charles Sherrington's retirement from the Waynflete professorship of physiology at Oxford recalls the simple but moving ceremony which took place at the Oxford meeting of the Physiological Society in July. Sir Charles was then presented with an address recording his long association with the Society, and expressing the esteem and affection of his fellow members. These feelings are world-wide. Sir Charles's studies of the nervous system will command the admiration of neurologists for years to come, but those who have been privileged to know him personally have far more to admire. During his tenure of the chair at Oxford, the conception of the nervous system which he originated has become part of the classical doctrine of physiology. At the same time, his more recent studies have made Oxford the chief centre in Great Britain for research on the central nervous system. He has been president of the Royal Society, has served on countless scientific committees, and recently has done much for the improvement of scientific bibliography. Though we may regret the loss from active work of such a leader, we cannot grudge a rest and change of scene to one whose example has so enriched the scientific life of our time.

Progress in Medical Science

IN his Sir Halley Stewart Trust Lecture on October 31 in the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, Prof. Edward Mellanby, secretary of the Medical Research Council, discussed recent developments in medical science. He said that it is only in the past hundred years that medicine has made substantial advance. This relatively dormant state of knowledge lasting over a period of thousands of years was due partly to the idea that disease was caused by the invasion of the body by evil spirits—a view held by the Egyptians, Babylonians and Assyrians—and partly to the belief that man's body was of no account as compared with his soul—a view held throughout the Middle Ages. Landmarks of medical advancement were introduced on the anatomical side by the Italian school as represented by Vesalius and on the physiological side by Harvey, who gave the first classical demonstration of the possibilities of acquiring knowledge by the experimental method. By the time of Pasteur, the field was set for development and intensive study. Pasteur's work on enzyme action immediately opened up a new chapter of knowledge and led to the work of Lister on antiseptics and of Koch on bacterial disease in general. In the present century, medical research has become more and more intense. In Great Britain, the Medical Research Council was initiated in 1913 and, besides using its own public funds, it has the privilege of working in close association with the efforts of private benefactors such as the Lister Institute of Preventive Medicine, founded by Lord Iveagh, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the trusts formed by Sir Otto Beit and Sir Halley Stewart. On the administrative side, the greatly increased activities of the Ministry of Health and local health authorities have resulted in the application of new knowledge acquired by research to the practical problems of health.

PROF. MELLANBY gave some results showing the effect of advancement in medical science on mortality rates. The infant mortality rate in the period 1896–1900 was 156 per 1,000 births registered; in 1934 it was 59. The mortality rate of men between 45 and 55 years of age was 20·3 per 1,000 males in the period 1870 to 1875; in the period 1926–30 it was 11·7. Progress in medical science has tended in recent years to centre round three types of knowledge affecting: (1) Problems of infection—protozoal, bacterial and virus—and their control by raising the immunity. In this way such diseases as smallpox, measles, diphtheria, meningitis and scarlet fever have been influenced. In a group of 399 London children recently treated by immune serum, not one had died of measles, whereas in a control group the death rate