

One of the most clearly demonstrated examples of the dominant is the substantial enhancement of the embracing reflex in male frogs at a certain season of the year when any part of the skin is excited. Several of Ukhtomsky's researches were devoted to the time factor and 'system history' in phenomena occurring in nerve tissue during excitation inhibition.

In recent years, Ukhtomsky was interested in the physiology of labour, and his laboratory, under the direction of his collaborator Prof. M. Vinogradov, was one of the centres of this science in the U.S.S.R.

The work of Ukhtomsky and his school was published chiefly in the *Proceedings of the Physiological Institute of the University of Leningrad*, of which he was editor, and in *Educational Records of the University of Leningrad*.

Prof. K. N. Moss, O.B.E.

PROF. KENNETH NEVILLE MOSS, professor of coal and metal mining in the University of Birmingham since 1922, died on October 20 at the early age of fifty-one. Prof. Moss was very active and successful in the direction of the Mining Department of the University, and was mainly responsible for the raising of £100,000 for developments in the Faculty of Science, of which for four years he was dean. A notable scheme which he carried through was the institution of a number of scholarships to attract public-school boys to the Mining Department.

Prof. Moss was educated at Queen Mary's School, Walsall, and the University of Birmingham. He had

practical experience of mining in the Cannock Chase, South Yorkshire and North Staffordshire coalfields and was for a year organizer of mining education for Derbyshire. Among other positions which he had held, he was chairman of the Advisory Committee on Coal and Petroleum of the Mineral Resources Department of the Imperial Institute, president of the National Association of Colliery Managers, president of the South Staffordshire and Warwickshire Institute of Mining Engineers, and a member of council of the Institute of Mining Engineers.

During the War of 1914-18, Prof. Moss was captain and adjutant to the 59th Divisional R.E., was awarded the O.B.E. (Military Division) and twice mentioned in dispatches. The loss of his forceful personality will be severely felt by the University of Birmingham. He leaves a widow and four daughters.

G. A. SHAKESPEAR.

WE regret to announce the following deaths :

Prof. Alfred Baker, emeritus professor of mathematics in the University of Toronto, where he occupied the chair of mathematics from 1887 until 1919, who was president in 1915 of the Royal Society of Canada, on October 27, aged ninety-four.

Prof. J. N. Collie, F.R.S., emeritus professor of organic chemistry in the University of London, on November 1, aged eighty-three.

Prof. J. C. Schoute, emeritus professor of botany in the University of Groningen, president of the Sixth International Botanical Congress, aged sixty-five.

NEWS and VIEWS

Educational Biology

EMINENTLY sane, though occasionally somewhat diffuse, are Mr. Hugh Ramage's views on "Educational Biology" (*Sch. Sci. Rev.*, No. 91; June, 1942). Emphasizing the key position of biology in any adequate scheme of education, he takes the unequivocal stand that educational biology should centre upon a study of the human organism. There are many biologists who refuse to accept this view, but the author cuts a good deal of the ground away from the feet of potential opponents by his recognition of the importance of studying organisms valuable in the illustration of principles. Mr. Ramage also trails his coat on the controversial topic of sex education, but he speaks very good sense, here as elsewhere. Very salutary is his endeavour to check the swing of the pendulum away from a mere study of cadaver, before it reaches the position of the unco-ordinated study of 'function' isolated from the organism that functions. Salutary, too, is his insistence on the need for attention in school to problems of variability and ecology. It is rather difficult to be certain from this paper whether the author's outlook is that of a holist or a dialectical materialist, and indeed the teleological implications of the statement that organisms form a "purposive" entity (albeit with inverted commas) give ground for suspicion that perhaps Mr. Ramage takes up no consistent philosophical position. But he poses clearly here many problems of educational method which should receive the attention of all teachers.

Engineering in Agriculture

IN his presidential address to the Institution of Civil Engineers delivered on November 3, Sir John Thornycroft pointed out that his work has been so closely connected with the Navy, and to a smaller extent with the Army, that he considered it inadvisable in present circumstances to talk about it, as has usually been done by presidents of the Institution. He has, however, taken a great personal interest in engineering in agriculture, and he devoted his address to that topic. From the earliest times the engineer has played a very important part in helping the agriculturist in irrigation, drainage, land reclamation, and in the provision of implements which enable men, with the aid of oxen and horses, to do so much more than was possible with the primitive hoe and mattock. The address dealt in detail with the problems of land drainage, soil erosion, and the application of steam and internal-combustion engines to tractors and farming machinery—ploughs, machines for sowing seed in drills and for planting root crops and potatoes, and harvesting machines. The importance of research was emphasized and mention was made of the establishment by the Government of the Agricultural Machinery Development Board and of an Institute of Research in Agricultural Engineering. A very large home-grown sugar industry has been built up in Great Britain in recent years, and the British Sugar Corporation has contracts with more than 52,000 farmers, who provide 400,000 acres of the crop; the whole of the domestic sugar ration