RECENT DEATHS

DR. ALVAH HUNT DOTY, health officer of the Port of New York from 1895 to 1912, died on May 27 at the age of seventy-nine years.

DR. HERBERT CARL KASSNER, associate professor of analytical chemistry at the College of Pharmacy of Columbia University and a consultant in pharmaceutical chemistry, died on May 14. He was thirty-five years old.

DR. GEORGE F. STROHAVER, S.J., head of the department of chemistry and dean of the college of Arts and Sciences at Georgetown University, died on May 18. He was forty-eight years old.

LOUIS M. POTTER, general sales manager and vice-president of the Spencer Lens Company, died on April 26 while attending a meeting of the Book Committee of the Methodist Book Concern in Cincinnati. Mr. Potter had been associated with the Spencer Lens Company for more than twenty-five years.

PROFESSOR JAMES YOUNG SIMPSON, lecturer on natural science in the University of Edinburgh, died on May 21. He was sixty years old. Dr. Simpson delivered the Terry Lectures at Yale University in 1929.

Nature reports the death of Dr. Angel Gallardo, formerly Argentine Minister for Foreign Affairs, rector of the University of Buenos Aires since 1932, and president of the Academy of Sciences in Buenos Aires since 1927, aged sixty-six years.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

WORK IN PHYSICS OF THE BRITISH NATIONAL LABORATORY

THE annual report of the British National Physical Laboratory at Teddington has been issued. In a summary printed in the London *Times* it is recalled that the laboratory has grown in the course of 34 years to a large institution occupying 14 buildings in grounds of 50 acres. The staff of over 600 is engaged on the most varied research and test work in most branches of physics and engineering, and an exhaustive account of the work done in 1933 is given.

Some of the most valuable features of the laboratory, according to the *Times*, are its wind tunnels for aerodynamic research. The highest wind-speed available hitherto has been about 75 miles an hour, but in 1933 a tunnel with a wind-speed of 140 miles an hour was brought into use, and a similar tunnel is being constructed. These new tunnels are of the open jet type, *i.e.*, an object can be thrust from the surrounding still air into the center of the wind-stream. The air speed attainable in the new tunnels will be of great value in view of the constantly increasing speed of aircraft.

During the year the Radio Research Station at Slough has become part of the laboratory. The station equipped and took part in the Polar Year radio expedition which, under Professor E. V. Appleton, undertook ionospheric observations at Tromsö, in the north of Norway.

In the course of the year the department of physics investigated the method of reducing sound transmission between two rooms by a partition composed of two layers of material with an intervening air space. It was found that unless such a double panel was properly designed it might transmit more sound than one of its panels used alone.

The department of electricity is responsible for the maintenance of the ultimate electrical standards, a task involving great accuracy as on it depend charges running into many millions of pounds. Similarly the department of metrology is charged with the maintenance of the standards of length and mass. During the year it completed the task of measuring the yard and meter in terms of the wave-lengths of red cadmium light. The ideal of a standard of length which is an invariable physical constant has thus been realized. Over 16,000 taximeters used in London taxicabs were tested at the laboratory during the year owing to the increased initial fare.

The department of engineering made tests of cylinders for gas-propelled road vehicles. The department of metallurgy continued its research on dental amalgams with the object of finding a filling which will not expand with time.

The department of aerodynamics has carried out work on the spinning of aeroplanes, and the hope is confidently expressed that the difficulties in designing aeroplanes free from spinning troubles will soon disappear. There was a large increase in the number of ship models tested in the ship tanks for industrial firms during the year. Important results are said to have been made in the design of the smaller coast vessels.

THE DUTCH ELM DISEASE

IN less than a year the number of elm trees in this country found to have been infected with the Dutch elm disease has jumped from 10 to 1,480. During the last winter, scouts of the U. S. Department of Agriculture discovered more diseased elms than they found last summer, largely because systematic scouting did not begin until about September when a public works allotment was made available.

The area in which infection is most menacing in-