

being a vigorous opponent of the recent Education Acts. Under the terms of his will large bequests are made to Liverpool University and the University Colleges of North and South Wales.

MAURICE ALLEN SMELT was born in 1821. He went to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, and took his degree in 1842. He was ordained deacon in 1843, and after holding curacies in Kent and Hampshire was appointed Rector of Medstead, Hants, from 1863-67. He retired to Cheltenham, and gave ready assistance to religious and philanthropic societies. In particular he was for twenty years honorary secretary to the Cheltenham and Gloucester Society for the Care of the Blind. He took an interest in several branches of science, especially astronomy and meteorology. He became a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society on the 8th of March 1861.

Mr. Smelt died on the 6th of December 1904 at the age of 84 years.

CAPTAIN JOHN STEELE was born in 1819. He went to sea in 1834, and served a somewhat rough apprenticeship in the merchant service. He remained at sea for thirty-eight years, during thirty-three of which he was in command, most of the time in sailing ships. He was employed in transport service at Balaclava during the Crimean war, and after that time made frequent journeys to China and Japan. In 1872 he was appointed Nautical Assessor to the Board of Trade, and in 1878 Examiner in Seamanship and Secretary to the Local Marine Board, a post he held till 1897. He was one of the founders of H.M.S. *Worcester* Nautical School, and was a member of its committee till his death. Captain Steele throughout his whole life used his influence consistently towards improving the condition and tone of the merchant service. Captain Steele was a Fellow of the Royal Meteorological Society and for twenty-eight years kept records at sea for that Society. He became a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society on the 13th of February 1880. He frequently attended and occasionally spoke at the meetings, but did not contribute to the publications of the Society.

Captain Steele married twice. He died on the 19th of April 1904, and leaves a widow and a daughter.

SIR HENRY THOMPSON was born at Framlingham, in Suffolk, on the 6th of August 1820. In accordance with his father's wishes, though contrary to his own, he was engaged till he was twenty-seven years old in commercial pursuits. In the year 1848 he entered University College Hospital, where his surgical skill and deep interest in his profession were immediately conspicuous. In 1853 he was appointed Assistant-Surgeon to the hospital, and in 1866 Professor of Clinical Surgery. His reputation as a skilful surgeon was so great that in 1863 he was consulted by

the King of the Belgians, when his accurate diagnosis and successful operation brought him professional renown. Along with a large practice and his duties at University College, Sir Henry Thompson found time to develop his marked talent for art and literature. He studied painting under Elmore and Alma-Tadema, and frequently his pictures were exhibited at the Academy or the Paris Salon. He wrote several novels, the first, *Charley Kingston's Aunt*, had no fewer than fifteen editions. His professional writings were numerous, and mention may be made of some which are of general interest. His article in the *Quarterly* thirty years ago advocating Cremation led to its adoption in England; and Sir Henry Thompson was President of the Cremation Society till his death. His books *On Food and Feeding* and *Diet in Relation to Age and Activity* went through many editions. At the age of eighty he became an enthusiastic automobilist, and in 1902 wrote a small book on the motor car.

Sir Henry Thompson's interest in astronomy led him to build an observatory at his country house at Molesey. Messrs. Cooke erected for him in 1887 an equatorial with a visual object glass of 12 inches and a photographic object glass of 8 inches aperture. With a grating spectroscope attached to this equatorial he and his assistant, Mr. A. Taylor, made observations of widened lines and other solar phenomena. Some observations of bright line spectra and spectra of nebulae made at the Observatory were communicated to the Society by Mr. Taylor in January 1889. In 1891 Sir Henry Thompson presented to the Royal Observatory his 8-inch photographic telescope, which has since been in regular use for photographs of the Sun, and has on several occasions been used in eclipse expeditions as a coronagraph. In 1896 he made to the Royal Observatory the munificent gift of a large equatorial with a 26-inch photographic refractor at one end of the declination axis and a 30-inch reflector at the other. He was elected a Fellow of the Society on the 11th of May 1888.

Sir Henry Thompson married in 1851 Miss Kate Loder, the distinguished pianist. He leaves one son and two daughters.

THEODOR ALEXANDROVITCH BREDICHIN was born in 1831 at Nikolaieff, Russia, and was educated at Odessa and the University of Moscow. In 1857 he was appointed to the staff of the Moscow Observatory, and almost at once commenced the series of investigations, by which he will be chiefly remembered, on the dynamical theory of cometary appendages. His earliest papers on the subject were written in Russian, and it was from the short accounts of the work which he from time to time contributed to the *Astronomische Nachrichten* that it first became generally known to astronomers outside his own country. In 1865 he was promoted to the directorate of the Observatory, and from 1875 to 1890 a number of extensive memoirs appeared in the *Annales de l'Observatoire de Moscou*, in which the theory was fully developed. In the latter year he became Director of