

## The late Mr. Joseph Thomas Ward.

We regret to note the death of Mr. J. T. Ward, of Wanganui, New Zealand, on January 4, 1927. A few days before Christmas, 1926, Mr. Ward and his wife visited their daughter, Mrs. Kensington, of Wairoa, and it became necessary for him to undergo an operation for appendicitis, but peritonitis intervened and he died. Mr. Patrick O'Dea writes of him :—" He was, I think, the most outstanding astronomical figure in New Zealand. He had been honorary Director of the Wanganui Observatory for about 20 years. Just recently the City of Wanganui took over the observatory and Mr. Ward was appointed municipal observer. In 1926 he delivered the annual Cawthron lecture at Nelson, being the first lecture delivered under Cawthron auspices at Nelson on astronomy. The Cawthron lecturer for 1925 was Sir Ernest Rutherford. Mr. Ward was that rare combination—the astronomer of philosophical mind and mechanical genius. He built many of the largest instruments in New Zealand—a 20½-inch reflector for Wanganui; a 12-inch for the Dunedin Astronomical Society, besides many others. His loss is a distinct loss to the science in New Zealand." He also used a 9¾-inch Cooke refractor belonging to the Wanganui Astronomical Society.

On June 15, 1925, Mr. Ward wrote to the Assistant Secretary of the Association :—" I am awfully glad to hear that you enjoy such good health at 84. You had just reached your majority when I came upon the scene, being now 63. It may be, as you say, that I may see a good few years yet despite the faulty ' pump,' as I come of an old Yorkshire family noted for producing long-livers." Mr. Ward was born in England, and was educated for the priesthood, but abandoned the idea of joining the Church. When he came to Wanganui, he started business in the Avenue with a lending library, and later established what was known as the " Book Nook," from which he retired quite recently.

He joined the Association on Oct. 18, 1898.