

NOTES AND COMMENT

THE DEATH OF VITO VOLTERRA

Readers of *ECOLOGY* will regret to learn of the death of Vito Volterra, in Rome, on October 12, 1940. Professor Volterra distinguished himself in many fields of scientific endeavor, notably physics and mathematics, but he will be especially remembered by ecologists for his studies in mathematical biology, in which he formulated equations relating to population interactions in biological associations. These ideas were developed in "Saggi scientifici" published in Bologna, in 1920; in "Variations and fluctuations of the number of individuals in animal species living together" in the Appendix of Chapman's "Animal Ecology," New York, 1931; and in "Les associations biologique au point de vue mathématique," which was written in collaboration with Umberto D'Ancona, Paris, 1935. These and other works established Volterra as a leading figure in that group of scientists which developed the field of mathematical

population biology, and which included, among others, A. J. Lotka, W. R. Thompson and A. J. Nicholson.

Professor Volterra was born in Ancona on May 3, 1860. He studied at the University of Pisa, and held positions there as well as at the Universities of Turin and Rome. He lost his post as Professor of Mathematics at Rome in 1931 when he, along with ten others among the 1200 Italian professors, refused to subscribe to the "Oath of Fascism." Volterra was the President of the International Committee of Weights and Measures, and was former President of the National Research Council of Italy. He was a member of the Institute de France, and of the Academies of Stockholm, Madrid, Göttingen, Washington, and Leningrad.

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