

It is not my privilege to review the varied aspects of his life as administrator, teacher, explorer and scientist. Although known to me through his observations in Africa, Australia and Chinese Tibet, he remained an impersonal thinker among my colleagues until we had both passed threescore and more. I first met him in his home at Glasgow, when on my way to Africa to study the Rift valleys, his own special subject.

We were then mutually aware of pronounced differences of opinion on theoretical questions, but the frank, cordial reception accorded me disarmed for all time any instinct of intellectual antagonism and quickly established happy relations. In long and earnest discussions, I found him a well-informed and aggressive opponent, strongly convinced of the essential soundness of the geologic philosophy of Eduard Suess.

His convictions were natural. In the fluid medium of speculation, where free-swimming facts may group themselves at will, ideas take forms determined by bent of mind and circumstance. The agreement between thinkers so unlike as Suess and Gregory illustrates the effect.

In Gregory's youth, Suess was already the master philosopher of European geology. Certain racial characteristics distinguished the younger from the older man, but there was between them an intellectual link in that both used their great powers of imagination creatively.

Suess was the embodiment of German *Gemüthlichkeit*. He loved his home above all else. He had voluntarily become sessile, early in life. His scientific thought was contemplative. He read, absorbed and moulded the observations of others to create the *Antlitz* of the world of his imagining. Gregory, by contrast, was intensely active. His habit of observation was objective. He traveled far and wide to accumulate facts. But he also possessed a creative imagination that was strong of wing.

While still a daring, enthusiastic youth (in fact, he was never any other, where danger was concerned) Gregory explored the Great Rift valley of East Africa and found it to be a tension rift. Suess, on the evidence of more casual descriptions, had conceived it to be part of a great rent, 4,000 miles long, torn through Africa and Arabia by the subsidence of that part of the suppositious Gondwana continent which occupied the site of the Indian ocean. Here was an agreement of observation on the part of Gregory with the inference on the part of Suess, which could not but be convincing. The grandeur of the concepts appealed to Gregory's poetic thought, and he became for life an advocate of Suess's ideas of the development of the Indian Ocean basin by the foundering of Gondwana land.

It is well known that weighty arguments in support of the general theory of lost continents may be adduced from paleontology, from the geologic histories of Africa, Asia and the Americas, as also from climatic changes throughout geologic time. Gregory was master of them all. The scope of his knowledge was all-embracing. An eager student, a bold investigator, a rapid thinker, endowed with a capacious memory for facts and constructive capacity for synthesis, he became, as the result of his far-flung explorations, an outstanding authority on the world as a whole.

He was, however, far from being a dogmatic theorist. Though tenacious and formidable in argument, he recognized the incompleteness of geologic evidence and appreciated the obligation to consider advances in knowledge. In 1915 he wrote in "Geology of Today":

In order to free geology from hopeless attempts to solve problems which could not be solved with the knowledge then available and to get rid of the incubus of unscientific and premature hypotheses, a group of English geologists founded the Geological Society of London.

To that purpose he was loyal. In the words of Lyell, he conceived the ideal of the founders to have been "to multiply and record observations," and to that end he dared every risk and devoted his life unsparingly.

He passed, as he would have wished, in active service. He leaves a most eminent name in the roster of great British geologists, but it can not fill the emptiness in the hearts of his friends.

BAILEY WILLIS

#### WILLIAM HITTELL SHERZER

In the death of Professor Sherzer on July 17, Michigan lost a distinguished teacher and geologist. For forty years he was head of the department of natural science in the State Normal College at Ypsilanti, and is best known throughout the state for his energetic promotion of the study of nature in the elementary curriculum. His collection of material for giving teacher training in this work is probably unexcelled.

Outside the teaching profession he is known for his geological reports in both state and federal surveys. Among the former are the surveys of Wayne and Monroe Counties, published by the State Geological and Biological Survey. His Detroit Folio of the United States Geological Atlas is a prominent contribution to that publication. Under the direction of the Smithsonian Institution he made a study of the principal accessible glaciers of the Canadian Rockies and Selkirks of British Columbia and Alberta. His account of this expedition is embodied in the reports of the institution.

He was consulting geologist for the city of Detroit in establishing a suitable location for the Detroit River tunnel, and many shorter papers and reports are found in geological publications.

Professor Sherzer did his postgraduate work at the Universities of Michigan and Berlin. The doctorate was conferred on him by the former in 1901. Born at Franklin, Ohio, he died at his summer home near Ann Arbor at the age of seventy-two years.

FREDERICK R. GORTON

STATE NORMAL COLLEGE,  
YPSILANTI, MICHIGAN

### RECENT DEATHS

DR. HUGH A. BROWN, director of reclamation economics in the Interior Department, died suddenly on August 13.

W. H. SCHUERMAN, dean of the school of engineering at Vanderbilt University, died suddenly on August 11 at the age of seventy-three years.

DR. EDWARD W. TAYLOR, emeritus professor of neurology at Harvard University, one-time editor of *The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* and associate editor of *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases*, died on August 17 at the age of sixty-six years.

THE death is announced of Charles C. Conser, associate professor of physiology at the University of Maryland.

DR. JOHN CHARLES FIELD, head of the department of mathematics at the University of Toronto, died on August 10 at the age of seventy years.

GEORGE BARVOW, late of the British Geological Survey, died on July 24, at the age of seventy-eight years.

CAPTAIN POULETT WEATHERBY, of Bournemouth, England, geographer and African explorer, who discovered the source of the Congo, has died at the age of seventy-two years.

THE death is announced of Dr. Ludwig Haberlandt, professor of physiology at Innsbruck.

THE death is announced, at the age of sixty-three years, of Dr. Rudolf Kraus, of the State Serum Institute in Santiago de Chile.

JOHN R. F. SEBELIEN, formerly professor of chemistry in the Agricultural College, Aas, Norway, known for his contributions to the chemistry of milk and dairy feeding and artificial manures, has died at the age of seventy-four years.

## SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

### INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CENTERS IN PARIS

*Nature* reports that La Maison du Savant, which is to be built in Paris, will be a well-appointed meeting-place for French and foreign men of science, if the present plans come to fruition. Lecture rooms, a restaurant, a winter-garden, etc., will be at the disposal of members and visitors. In addition, it will possess an extensive office of information which will study projects for the erection of up-to-date laboratories and research institutions, and organize congresses, exhibitions, conferences and all publicity necessary to attain the organization's aims. An illustrated periodical will also be published eventually, to inform the public of the general progress of science. Other activities include a benevolent fund and the provision of scholarships. The Maison du Savant is under the patronage of M. Lebrun, President of the French Republic; it has received government support, and its honorary committee consists of a distinguished group of academicians, including MM. le Chatelier, Charcot, le due de Broglie, Riehet, etc. Its founder and president is M. Georges Lecuyer, president of the International Union of Decorative Arts, and its active director is M. Jean de Chappedelaine. The organization hopes to raise fifty million francs in the near

future for its extensive program. Through the official support of the Chamber of Deputies and the Municipality of Paris, a beginning has been made with convenient office rooms at 5 Avenue de l'Opéra, Paris.

"La Maison Internationale de la Science" is a project put forward on the occasion of the Colonial Exhibition of last year, during an International Congress of Men of Science and Research Workers, for the furtherance of their interests. Its temporary headquarters are at the Institut Marey, Avenue Gordon-Bennett, Paris. It has not been very active, owing to the absence of its director, M. Pélissier, on a government mission to the island of Réunion; in all probability it will join forces with the Maison du Savant. "Le Foyer International Universitaire" is a center planned by the University of Paris. It was to be housed in part of the hôtel de la Rochefoucauld d'Estissac; this, however, has been bought by the "Maison de la Chimie" for three million francs, which will be used by the "Foyer International Universitaire" to acquire another building in rue de la Four (the former École de Bouffémont). "Le Cercle Universitaire International" is a club projected by the Associations of University Students to receive visiting colleagues and university men and to organize meet-