

## OBITUARY

## ELBERT WILLIAM ROCKWOOD

WHILE waiting for the train that was to carry him on a vacation to his beloved New England, Professor Elbert William Rockwood died suddenly of a heart attack on July 17, 1935. He was born at Franklin, Massachusetts, on July 4, 1860, the son of William and Laura (Blake) Rockwood. He received his B.S. degree from Amherst in 1884. During the three years following his graduation he was successively instructor in chemistry at Wesleyan University and Cornell University, and chemist at the Hatch Experiment Station, Connecticut. He went to the University of Iowa as professor of chemistry and toxicology in 1888. In 1904 he became the head of the department of chemistry, and he held this position until 1920, when he retired as professor of chemistry to devote his time to teaching and to his favorite field of research.

He was a graduate student at the University of Göttingen in 1889; University of Strassburg, 1890–1891; University of Leipzig, 1892 and 1894; University of Chicago, 1893. His degrees include an M.D. from Iowa in 1895, an A.M. from Amherst in 1901 and a Ph.D. from Yale in 1904.

Dr. Rockwood was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Sigma Xi, the American Chemical Society, the German Chemical Society and the American Society of Biological Chemists. Among his numerous publications are two books—"A Laboratory Manual of Physiological Chemistry" and "Introduction to Chemical Analysis for Medical Students."

Upon going to Iowa, Dr. Rockwood was placed in charge of students of medicine and dentistry. That this was not an easy task will be readily admitted by the honest and sincere, yet lusty, vigorous, boisterous, fun-loving students of those early days. The real genuine interest which he has always taken in his students was quickly recognized and won for him then, as since, the lasting loyalty and friendship of his students.

He went to Iowa when the department of chemistry was in its infancy; throughout the whole of his régime economy was the watchword; funds for equipment and instructors were low. The teaching staff was necessarily small and the teaching schedule was heavy. He never shirked his part, but always bore his share of the teaching load. He made the most of the conditions as they were. Imbued with the conviction that the best and most mature instructors were none too good for the students, he employed only full-time instructors. The efforts which he made were reflected in the attitude and the work of the students. They, too, buckled down to serious, conscientious work. At the side of the student in the laboratory Dr. Rock-

wood had few equals in imparting knowledge and methods of technique.

Dr. Rockwood took with him the traditions and the ideals of the old colleges of the cultured East and of Germany. He took also the idea that scientific chemical training, if it is to be most fruitful, must go hand in hand with culture. He has stood for scholarship among chemists, for quality rather than quantity.

In spite of the heavy burden of his work he found time to read widely in all fields. He kept pace with the most important advances in pure and applied chemistry. His knowledge and grasp of theoretical chemistry outside his particular field has always been a source of wonder and amazement to his colleagues.

An enthusiastic and conscientious teacher himself, he was always sympathetic and generous toward the efforts of others. His attitude was a source of inspiration and encouragement to younger men entering the teaching profession. He always sought the advice and suggestions of his more mature instructors and, whenever possible, he incorporated these into the work of the department.

His office door has always swung open to student and instructor alike. He was never too busy to stop his work and chat upon things worth while; never too busy to give advice and encouragement. Whenever it was necessary to admonish or to bear down, he did that also, but always in an open and gracious manner that left no sting. The one admonished may have left his office somewhat sorry, saddened and sobered, perhaps somewhat angry at the time, yet in the twenty-eight years I have been associated with Dr. Rockwood I have never known a student to leave his office as an enemy.

He always looked upon our special students and graduates in chemistry as his boys, and his interest in them has continued long after their graduation. How often he has come to me with these words, his face all smiles: "Do you remember Mr. ———, way back there? I just received a letter from him. He is doing fine. I knew that he would."

In recent years I have had frequent occasion to run through his card index containing the names and addresses of all our chemistry graduates—the mailing list of his much cherished *News Letter* to the alumni of the department. Many of these cards are old and somewhat frayed; they are covered with finger prints. These cards had become to him a rosary, a string of pearls over which he has pondered long and affectionately; each card a pearl, each pearl a student in whose success he has played a part.

It is these qualities in Dr. Rockwood, together with his culture and refinement, his fairness and generosity,

his humility, his love for all that is good and worthwhile in life, in the arts and in music, that have endeared him to the alumni of the department and to the university. Forty-seven years—an academic lifetime spent in active service in one department. Relatively few have served longer, more faithfully or better. Relatively few have taken the work and the welfare of the student more closely to heart.

J. N. PEARCE

#### RECENT DEATHS

DR. CARL BARUS, professor of physics at Brown University from 1895 until his retirement in 1926, and dean of the university's graduate department for twenty-three years, died on September 20. He was seventy-nine years old.

DR. KEITH KUENZI SMITH, associate professor of physics at Northwestern University, died on September 17 in his forty-eighth year.

DR. WALTER HOUGH, who joined the department of anthropology of the U. S. National Museum in 1886 and who has been head curator since 1923, died on September 20 in his seventy-seventh year.

DR. CHARLES HENRY RICHARDSON, professor of mineralogy and geology and director of the Natural Science Museum at Syracuse University, died on September 19 at the age of seventy-two years.

DR. CLIFFORD H. ALVEY, assistant professor of zoology at Purdue University, died suddenly on September 10.

DR. JOHN P. HYLAN, assistant professor of psychology at the University of Illinois from 1898 to 1899 and assistant in philosophy at Harvard University from 1900 to 1905, died on August 30 at the age of sixty-five years. Dr. Hylan on account of ill health gave up teaching to become a dairy farmer.

## SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

### THE LONDON SCHOOL OF TROPICAL MEDICINE

AT the annual meeting of the court of the London School of Tropical Medicine a letter received from Sir Austen Chamberlain, chairman of the Board of Governors, referred to the incorporation in the school of the Ross Institute, which opened much larger opportunities for the practical application of the scientific results obtained in the laboratories and made available all the resources for study and research and for further developing the prevention and cure of tropical disease. Referring to the fact that the accounts had been balanced hitherto only by an extraordinary grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, which had now finally ceased, he said: "We owe to the large-minded generosity of the Rockefeller Foundation the fine block of buildings in which the school is carried on and a site in the center of the university quarter. It has further helped us to tide over the difficult years which followed on the world economic crisis, but our main source of income is the grant received through the university from the government in recognition of the Imperial importance of the work of the school. To supplement this grant we make our appeal to other governments of the empire and to corporations and private traders who derive advantage or profit from our labors. Surely when they know what these labors have achieved, and how much more is still to be done, their help will not fail us. In the past year we have received two splendid contributions—Mr. W. J. Courtauld, to whose generosity we already owed so much, has sent us a further sum of £16,000 to complete the endow-

ment of the chair to which he allowed us to attach his name, and the Nizam of Hyderabad sent us a donation of £2,000, which we hope will become the nucleus of a new endowment."

Dean W. W. Jameson, presenting the annual report, said they had had 173 full-time students. That very large number was 26 more than in any preceding year. They came from 20 different countries, and on taking their degrees had proceeded to appointments in 26 countries. They had also had a considerable number of foreign students for short-term courses.

### THE ENLARGED CHEMISTRY BUILDING OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT LOS ANGELES

THE construction of the new south wing completes the chemistry building of the University of California at Los Angeles. This addition rounds out the quadrangle group constituting the main academic buildings.

As described in *Industrial and Engineering Chemistry*, the building is of Mediterranean Renaissance type. The earthquake hazards of brick structures were realized from the first, so that it does not depend for fundamental support upon brick.

The new south wing, with several large classrooms in which pillars were not admissible, was constructed in "Class A" style with full steel frame and reinforced concrete, again using brick face and tile partitions. The whole combined structure accounts for a total of nearly 1,400,000 cubic feet, and cost approximately \$800,000, including all built-in scientific equipment. The low cost of 58 cents per cubic foot is explained by the fact that a mild climate permits great economies