OBITUARY

GEORGE LEES TAYLOR

THE premature death of Dr. George L. Taylor on March 9 at the age of forty-seven years is a serious loss to the field of serology that will be felt keenly, particularly by those workers interested in the branch dealing with the blood group differences and their practical applications. Dr. Taylor was born in Ashton-under-Lyne, England, on June 26, 1897. At the University of Manchester, as a medical student, he gained distinctions in anatomy, pathology and surgery (M.B. thesis) and won the Dumville surgical prize. At Manchester Royal Infirmary he was house-surgeon to Sir William Thorburn in 1919 and house physician to Dr. G. R. Murray in 1920–21; at St. Mary's Hospital in Manchester he then spent a year as obstetric house-surgeon. In 1929, after having spent a number of years in the general practice of medicine, he decided to devote himself to medical research and teaching. For six years he worked as John Lucas Walker student under Professor H. R. Dean in the department of pathology at Cambridge. From 1935 to his death he directed a unit in London particularly devoted to the study of blood groups in relation to human genetics. In 1930, he took his M.D. with commendation at Manchester, and in 1932 he obtained his Ph.D. at Cambridge. In 1939 he was elected a member and, in 1944, a fellow to the Royal College of Physicians.

Taylor's scientific contributions fall into two principal categories. His earlier investigations, carried out from 1929 to 1935 in close association with Dean and the two Adairs, dealt chiefly with the precipitin reaction. His findings are described in a series of ten papers which illustrate well Taylor's thoroughness and pertinacity in carrying out investigative work. Taylor's subsequent publications, comprising some 30 papers in which he was author or collaborator, dealt with various aspects of blood grouping and its applications. Until 1935, when Taylor became interested in the field, this important subject had been relatively neglected in England. Within a short period of time, Taylor and his coworkers at the Galton laboratory had published an extensive series of investigations on the heredity of the A–B–O groups, the A_1–A_2 subgroups and the M–N types. This important work was supported by a fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation, and at the outbreak of the present war, Dr. Taylor was designated by the Medical Research Council to direct a laboratory in the department of pathology at Cambridge, with the responsibility of producing high-titered grouping sera for use in connection with the war. Despite the large amount of routine work this task entailed, the unit under Dr. Taylor's direction achieved a remarkable amount of excellent research work, particularly in the complex field of the Rh blood factors and their applications. The beginning of the Rh work in England can be dated from a letter which appeared in the *British Medical Journal* on May 2, 1942, in which Taylor and Mollison appealed to physicians for specimens of blood from mothers of infants with erythroblastosis fetalis. Within a year Taylor became known to hundreds of practitioners throughout the United Kingdom, and spared no pains to explain to physicians and patients the significance of this new blood factor. Within twenty months the Cambridge unit had discovered seven alleles in the Rh series of genes, their report appearing only a month or two following the report by Wiener of six allelic Rh genes, thus independently corroborating and extending Wiener's work. A particularly generous gesture by Taylor was that he did not hesitate to adopt Wiener's nomenclature for the Rh genes, though their existence had been separately discovered by Taylor and his colleagues.

It is fitting to close with the following quotation of a statement by one who knew Dr. Taylor intimately as a man as well as a scientist. "You had to know him well to realize that whatever cares he had were primarily cares for the welfare of others; and that the determination of his character was sustained by a warmth of feeling which sought, in general practice as well as in research, to alleviate the suffering of his fellows. If the motive of medicine is service and not personal gain, George Taylor was a good doctor."

A. S. WIENER

RECENT DEATHS

DR. GEORGE B. RAY, executive director of the department of physiology and pharmacology of the Long Island College of Medicine, died on July 6. He was fifty-two years old.

DR. JOHN L. HOGG, from 1920 to 1936 research engineer of the Bell Telephone Laboratories, previously professor of physics at McMaster University, Toronto, died on July 4 at the age of seventy-four years.

LAWRENCE JOHN PALMER, from 1937 to 1944 principal biologist in the investigations of the Wildlife Resources of Alaska for the Fish and Wild Life Service of the Department of the Interior, died on June 20 at the age of fifty-two years.

DR. EDWARD BARCLAY-SMITH, the British anatomist, died on July 5 at the age of eighty-four years. He was formerly dean of the faculty of medicine at King's College, University of London.

MEMORIAL services for Dr. Harold Hibbert, professor of industrial and cellulose chemistry at McGill University, who died on May 13 at the age of sixty-seven years, were held at Pawling, N. Y., on July 8.