

OBITUARY

THEOBALD SMITH¹

WE are here to pay homage and respect to a noble personality, Theobald Smith, whose life was spent in intimate association with us. We are here with a sense of deep satisfaction for having known him. We are here with an unavoidable emotion of pride in counting ourselves among his friends. We are here with a sense of actual joy at the realization that a leader among us could have so beautifully and completely rounded out a life of perfect accomplishments as an example and inspiration to each of us.

Dr. Theobald Smith began his scientific life, and continued it, as a simple unassuming student of nature. He was in the highest sense a naturalist. He was devoted to simple understanding and constructive thinking. Complexities and uncertainties were realities to him, but his mind made no attempt to encompass complexities. The direction of his thought was toward finding some means of reduction to elementary simplicity.

He said on the opening of this house: "We who have dealt with the finitely small living things have perhaps as much a sense of the highly complex, unfathomable, the eternally elusive in the universe as do those who look for the outer boundaries of space. Each group contributes a different story of the same final significance."

He was clear-minded, strict-minded and absolutely honest. He was tolerant where tolerance is a virtue, but was emphatically intolerant of any compromise with error. He avoided every semblance of deceit, he was unpretentious and was most careful not to deceive himself. While in a world of cloudy and confused thinking with bungling attempts at the solution of pressing problems it is a joy and inspiration to have known a mind of such direction and clearness as that of Theobald Smith.

Dr. Smith's genius displayed to a high degree the rare quality of foresight. He visualized the line of attack on a broad problem as the master artist in his imagination sees the finished creation before it is begun. He carefully proceeded along the line of his interest step by step with a seeing eye and a penetrating appreciation of the meaning in what he saw. To him the greatest reward was the solution of the problem and toward this his efforts were ever turned.

He was the originator and the builder of the opportunities and the fields in which he worked. When a young man of twenty-five, and only one year after his graduation from medical college, he joined the

service of his country in its battle against animal disease. His intelligence and keen foresight made him aware of the problems of this undertaking in a way that others had not comprehended. Very soon he had accomplished the fundamental discovery of the rôle of the intermediate host in parasitic and infectious diseases. This knowledge is to-day one of the most fundamental possessions of preventive medicine in maintaining the public's health.

Dr. Smith's work in the Bureau of Animal Industry was of such significance that after only a few years he was invited to a great university as professor of applied zoology. This call was not to fill an already existing chair. Such a professorship had never existed anywhere before. It was created for and by Dr. Smith in order to give place to the new field in medical science which he had discovered. This chair after one year was transferred to the medical faculty and the designation of Dr. Smith's position was changed to that of professor of comparative pathology.

At Harvard University Dr. Smith built this new department into one of great strength and importance so that it became an example to other universities of the country, which to this day have been unable to imitate it for want of men with the scientific outlook such as he had. The department of comparative pathology at Harvard was Dr. Smith's second large creation—but his imagination and foresight made him willing to leave it.

On the occasion of his departure from Harvard Ex-President Eliot paid him the following tribute: "I have felt under great obligations to Dr. Smith ever since I first made his acquaintance twenty years ago. He has stood for me ever since as completely satisfying my ideal of the type of modern scientist—simple, diligent, loving truth, seeking truth, but seeking it for the promotion of the welfare of mankind."

Twenty years ago Dr. Smith came to the Rockefeller Institute as director of the department of animal pathology. Such a department did not exist at the time, and again Dr. Smith was to create it as well as to direct its growth and development. Here Theobald Smith, at the age of fifty-five, began anew, and with the same forethought and vision, but with greater opportunity, developed an institute which, in its organization and facilities for the study of the biology of disease, is an outstanding model for the entire world. No one here will misunderstand what I have said as intimating that Dr. Smith was concerned with material building. The architectural designs to which I refer are far rarer and more subtle in nature than those built of stone alone. His building was the creation and construction of arrangements which

¹ An appreciation of Dr. Smith given at his funeral in "The Theobald Smith House" of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research at Princeton, New Jersey, on December 13, 1934.

would facilitate a freer, deeper and broader attack on the problems of biologic associations and animal disease than were possible before he built.

Theobald Smith was one of nature's high priests. He believed with Pasteur that science, in obeying the law of humanity, will always labor to enlarge the frontiers of life; and with Goethe, that the first and last thing required of genius is the love of truth.

He built temples to nature and communed in them by whispering questions to her. And nature answered back to this favored son—and he understood.

CHARLES R. STOCKARD

RECENT DEATHS

DR. WILLIAM HUBERT BURR, consulting engineer, professor of civil engineering at Columbia University from 1893 until his retirement in 1916 with the title emeritus, died on December 13. He was eighty-three years old.

DR. CHARLES FERGUS BINNS, director emeritus of

the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University, died on December 4 at the age of seventy-seven years.

DR. FRANK CARNEY, professor of geology and geography at Baylor University, Waco, Tex., died on December 13. He was sixty-six years old.

DR. ALLAN WINTER ROWE, director of research at Evans Memorial Hospital, Boston, formerly president of the Boston School of Physical Education, died on December 6 at the age of fifty-five years.

DRS. JOHN W. CARMACK and Arthur M. Mendenhall, professor of rhinology, otology and laryngology and professor of obstetrics, respectively, at the Indiana University School of Medicine, were killed in an airplane accident on December 5. A memorial meeting was held by the Indianapolis Medical Society on December 7.

ADRIEN DE GERLACHE, Belgium, Arctic and Antarctic explorer, died on December 4. He was sixty-eight years old.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

BIRD SANCTUARY IN NEW YORK CITY

NINE acres of natural woodland on the Bronx River, between the new Thompson Memorial Rock Garden and the large iris plantation in the New York Botanical Garden, early next spring are to be enclosed by a fence, within which birds may find shelter unmolested and wild flowers and trees of New York will be planted and protected. Birds are to be encouraged to stay over winter by being fed. Entrance to this sanctuary will be permitted only to those whose honorable interest in wild life is assured.

The idea of the sanctuary within the city limits, where birds and wild flowers are particularly precious, was inspired by the sanctuary created by Mrs. James Baird on the grounds of the Scarsdale Golf Club. This area, established only five years ago, when the club threatened to cut down a magnificent stretch of natural woods, has already become a haven for many birds, who naturally appreciate this bit of forest preserved for them. The existing growth of the area has been augmented by the planting of some of the finest of the native shrubs and flowers.

The New York Bird and Tree Club, which is now sending out pleas for new memberships and for additional funds to help in constructing the fence which will mean the establishment of the new sanctuary, hopes to make this project as outstanding a piece of work as it did when it raised \$12,000 a number of years ago for the replanting of orchards which had been devastated by the war in France.

The sanctuary at the Botanical Garden is to be made

a memorial to Mrs. Nathaniel Lord Britton, wife of the founder and former director of the institution and herself an ardent worker for the preservation of wild life. It has been suggested that sections of the fence be dedicated as memorials to others. Mrs. William Wallace Nichols, of Scarsdale, is chairman of the sanctuary.

Eventually, the club aims to establish arboretums in other states, beginning with New Jersey, where Mrs. Thomas A. Edison is to be the chairman. But the immediate endeavor of the 200 members is to raise funds for the New York City sanctuary at The New York Botanical Garden in Bronx Park. The garden itself is offering all possible support and cooperation for this project.

E. D. MERRILL,
Director

ORNITHOLOGICAL EXPEDITION FROM CORNELL UNIVERSITY

PROFESSOR ARTHUR A. ALLEN, of the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University, will lead an expedition next spring to search out the haunts of rare North American birds in order to preserve for future generations their habits and calls. A. R. Brand, formerly of the American Museum of Natural History, now an associate in ornithology at Cornell, is sponsoring the expedition. P. P. Kellogg, instructor in ornithology, and Dr. George M. Sutton, curator of birds, will make up the rest of the party, which will start in two trucks for the South and West at the end of Feb-