

at Gonville and Caius in 1899, he was appointed botanist to the University of Cambridge scientific expedition to the Malay States under the leadership of Mr. W. Skeat. Of the interest aroused in him by this expedition he always spoke with warm recollection, and the material collected formed the basis of several investigations published in the *Annals of Botany*.

In 1904, Yapp was appointed to the chair of botany in University College, Aberystwyth, and during the ten years of his tenure of that professorship he reorganised and extended the botanical department, and enriched its museum with many specimens collected in the Malay States and in South Africa, during his visit to that country with the British Association in 1905. From Aberystwyth, Yapp went to Queen's College, Belfast, and in 1919 to the University of Birmingham. In all three places he threw himself with vigour into the teaching and reorganising of his department, and by his active interest in the general welfare of the college or university to which he was attached, he invariably gained the confidence and esteem of his colleagues, and was trusted as a clear-sighted adviser. Though this brought him many and exacting duties, he managed to accomplish a considerable amount of research work which was latterly of a physiological and ecological nature.

While still at Cambridge, Yapp had become interested in the fens, and spent many holidays studying the peculiarities of their vegetation. As a result of these studies he published a detailed account of the vegetation of Wicken Fen, dealing more particularly with the relation of the plants to soil moisture. This was followed by a critical account, structural, physiological, and developmental, of the foliage of the meadow-sweet (*Spirea Ulmaria*), as bearing on the problem of xeromorphy in marsh plants. In this question of the water-relation of plants his interest continued to the very end, and during his last illness he was busy editing the English translation of Prof. Maximov's book on this subject, and also writing up voluminous notes of investigations carried out by himself some few years ago.

While at Aberystwyth, Prof. Yapp became interested in the various plant associations of the Dovey estuary, and made a special study of the vegetation of the salt marshes. Detailed accounts of this investigation were published in the *Journal of Ecology* in 1917 and 1921. These ecological studies necessitated the consideration of the general inter-relationships of plants in vegetation, and led to the publication of two critical papers on the "Concept of Association" and the "Concept of Habitat" respectively. Had he been spared to work out other important ideas for which he was collecting evidence, Prof. Yapp would have still further enhanced his reputation as a careful observer and a clear thinker. In recognition of his ecological work he was elected president of the Ecological Society in 1921, and he was looking forward with eagerness to presiding over the botanical section of the British Association at the meeting in Glasgow last autumn, when his fatal

illness necessitated his resigning the presidency of the section. Though aware of the probable fatal termination of his illness, he never lost courage, and continued as long as it was possible to work at the completion of some of his botanical investigations.

Yapp possessed a clear and orderly mind, and had the ability to present lucidly and tersely the information he wished to convey. Good evidence of this is afforded not only by his published researches, but also by the success of his small text-book on botany published by the Cambridge University Press. He leaves a widow, who tended him with touching devotion during his prolonged and painful illness, and two children, a son and daughter. By his death the University of Birmingham loses a valued teacher, and science an ardent investigator and a gifted botanist. His botanical colleagues will remember him as a genial friend, of innate modesty and of singular personal charm.

FRÄULEIN GERDA LASKI.

FRÄULEIN GERDA LASKI, who was one of the few women to succeed in making a name for herself in the realms of the exact sciences, died in Berlin on Nov. 24. Coming of a well-to-do family in Vienna, her attention was liberally directed from the first towards the arts and sciences, a fact which, combined with a natural vivacity and affectionate temperament, endowed her with great versatility, and added in no small degree to the charm of her personality.

Fräulein Laski studied for her doctorate in Vienna at the Physical Institute under Prof. Ehrenhaft, and her first published work—on sub-microscopic particles—was a direct result of the intellectual circle in which she was placed. After a period at Göttingen (where Debye then was) she became assistant in the Physical Institute of the University of Berlin, where she was introduced by Rubens to the experimental technique of infra-red research. This subject had attracted her during her sojourn in Göttingen, and, broadly speaking, it remained her chief interest to the end. In 1924, Fräulein Laski was chosen to take charge of the department of infra-red research in the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute für Faserstoffchemie at Dahlem.

In addition to various publications dealing with her own investigations (such as the long wave-length spectrum of mercury vapour, the infra-red spectra of chlorates and bromates, and of cellulose), Fräulein Laski contributed the article on infra-red research to vol. 3 (1924) of the "Ergebnisse der exakten Naturwissenschaften." Her last work comprised a couple of chapters, "Special Methods for Measurements in the Infra-red" and "Thermo-electricity" for the Geiger-Scheel "Handbuch der Physik."

Fräulein Laski's death while in the prime of life has removed a talented research worker, and at the same time many will regret the passing of a colleague who had endeared herself to a wide circle of friends.