OBITUARIES

Mr. R. C. Mossman

THE death of Robert Cockburn Mossman at Buenos Aires on July 19 removes a natural genius whose scientific instincts found their full expression without the help of a formal scientific training.

Mossman was born in Edinburgh on November 7, 1870, was educated at the Royal High School and entered his father's business, for which he had neither liking nor aptitude. I met him first when he was a boy spending every penny he could get in equipping a second-order meteorological station in his father's garden, and he kept up continuous records there from 1886 until 1900. Dr. Alexander Buchan was quick to recognize Mossman's gifts and encouraged him to make the most of them. One of his earliest labours was an elaborate study of the climate of Edinburgh, which was followed later by a still fuller treatment of the climate of London. He frequently assisted at the Ben Nevis Observatory, often acting as temporary superintendent, and he carried out a series of comparative observations in a hut high up in Glen Nevis, where he lived alone for a year in 1901-1902. He was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh almost as soon as he came of age.

He joined the Scottish Antarctic Expedition under Dr. W. S. Bruce in 1902, taking charge of the meteorological and oceanographical work on the first cruise in the Weddell Sea. While wintering in 1903 at Laurie Island in the South Orkneys, Mossman set up a meteorological observatory on shore, and rather than break the continuity of the record he remained while the *Scotia* made her second trip to the Weddell Sea and so passed a second winter in great discomfort in the miserable climate he was determined to study. Thanks to his representations, the Argentine Government took over the observatory as a going concern, and Mossman paid a visit to Grahamland in the gunboat *Uruguay* to look for Charcot, who was then missing.

Short trips in whalers to Spitsbergen and the Greenland seas occupied the next two seasons and in the intervals he was joint author with two of his colleagues of "The Voyage of the *Scotia*".

Returning to Buenos Aires Mossman spent six years in the Argentine Meteorological Office while Mr. W. G. Davis was director. When my eyes broke down in 1913 I was fortunate enough to have his help for a year in the editorship of "British Rainfall", and he remained in Great Britain until after the War.

Returning to the Argentine in 1920, Mossman filled several posts in the Argentine Meteorological Service in Buenos Aires and Cordova, being acting director in 1928-29 and receiving the appointment of head of the Climatological Department in 1930. He made a profound study of the climate of the southern continents and their relation to the Antarctic

regions. The labours of an enthusiast for a life-time necessarily produced a flood of papers and memories. Including official reports, these could not number much less than a hundred.

In 1918 Mossman received the Keith Prize of the Royal Society of Edinburgh for his Antarctic work, and he also received the Gold Medal of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society. He did not concern himself with meteorological theory, but he had no superior in conscientious and tireless labour in the accumulation and orderly presentation of the observational facts on which all theory must be based.

HUGH ROBERT MILL.

Mr. C. H. Turnor

MR. CHRISTOPHER HATTON TURNOR, whose death occurred on August 19 at the age of sixty-six, was well known for his active interest in the science and practice of agriculture. He was educated at Christ Church, Oxford, and then specialized in agriculture at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, where he was one of a remarkable group of students that included also Lord Bledisloe; afterwards he proceeded to organize and develop the considerable estates he inherited from his uncle. Throughout his life he was indefatigable in studying the possibilities of using more science in agriculture, and his sound common sense and instinct for practicability helped him to select those methods most likely to be of value and to concentrate on them. Early in his career he became greatly impressed with the possibility of lucerne growing and he introduced this crop with great success into his system of farming. He also studied in detail the Danish methods of agriculture and engaged the services of an expert Danish farmer to run one of his farms on Danish lines so that he and other agriculturists might be able to see how far they embodied improvements likely to be useful in English conditions.

His interests were very wide and he was unusually well read. He travelled a good deal but never failed to keep his farmer's eyes open, and he invariably brought back a crop of new ideas and suggestions for the improvement of British agriculture by the introduction of some of the methods he had seen. His account of the Pontine Marshes is typical of his travel writings: vigorous and enthusiastic, and punctuated with many shrewd observations about the cultivators and their ways of doing things. His writings on English agriculture included "Land Problems and the National Welfare"; "Our Food Supply" and "The Land and the Empire", in all of which he urged the adoption of a more coherent plan of land utilization in which the landowner should play the part of organizer and leader, with the farmer and farm worker fitting into the scheme