

Section A enjoyed a general discussion on the mode of action of the photographic plate, in which a theory of latent image formation put forward by Prof. N. F. Mott was closely followed. Sections A, B and I gathered to hear a useful symposium on surface action in biology initiated by Dr. Irving Langmuir. Prof. D. Brunt added much interest to a discussion of the upper atmosphere by releasing a sounding balloon, carrying a Dines meteorograph to record the pressure and temperature at different stages of its ascent, and a ten-shilling note with an I.O.U. for a like sum to ensure its return. The balloon was released in the College grounds on Monday morning in the presence of an enthusiastic crowd. Less spectacular, but of considerable interest to local members, was the joint discussions of Sections C and E on the potential mineral resources of Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire and their geographical significance. Perhaps the star turn in the joint discussions was the meeting of Sections C, D, E, F, K and M on Tuesday evening to talk about planning the land of Britain.

There can be no doubt that from a scientific point of view the Nottingham meeting was an unqualified success. From a social point of view it was equally pleasant. The excellent hostel accommodation, situated so close to the College and in the same beautiful surroundings, contributed greatly to the happiness of visiting members. The civic reception was obviously thoroughly enjoyed by guests and hosts alike, the flood-lit gardens of the Castle being much admired. Works visits, garden parties and excursions were heavily booked. Local firms and industrial undertakings were most generous in entertaining the Association. At the same time, the extraordinarily fine series of cinema films on subjects of biological interest, shown to members in the Savoy Cinema, proved to be a great attraction.

Forty-four years is the interval of time between the last two visits of the Association to Nottingham; it is to be hoped that, both on scientific and social grounds, the Association will not wait another forty years before it returns.

On September 3 the General Committee adopted the nomination of the Council of Lord Rayleigh to succeed Sir Edward Poulton as president of the Association. The General Officers will continue to be Prof. P. G. H. Boswell as General Treasurer and Prof. F. T. Brooks and Prof. Allan Ferguson as General Secretaries. The new members of Council are Prof. T. S. Moore, Mr. R. S. Whipple, Prof. H. J. Fleure, Prof. J. G. Smith and Prof. J. C. Philip.

Future places of meeting of the Association are Cambridge (Aug. 17-24, 1938) and Dundee (1939). Invitations have been received for the Association to meet in Swansea in any convenient year, in Belfast in 1941 or any year nearly following, and in 1943 in Birmingham.

Under the arrangement proposed last year by the Council and adopted by the General Committee, the British Science Guild was incorporated into the Association as from November 30, 1936. In accordance with the agreement of incorporation a British Science Guild Committee has been appointed to continue arrangements for lectures already initiated by the Guild, and for any others of similar character which may be approved by the Council. The first of the lectures arranged by the Association under the above scheme was the Alexander Pedler lecture, given in Leicester on May 3, in co-operation with the University College in that city, by Prof. Allan Ferguson. The first Norman Lockyer lecture to be so arranged will be given by Dr. R. E. Mortimer Wheeler in the Goldsmiths' Hall, London, by kind permission of the Goldsmiths' Company, on November 24.

The first of the triennial lectures under the foundation of Mr. G. Radford Mather will be given by the Rt. Hon. J. Ramsay Macdonald, M.P., F.R.S., in the Royal Institution, London, by kind permission of the managers, on October 22.

The Council records with much satisfaction that Lord Rutherford has accepted the presidency of the joint Congress of the Indian Science Congress Association and a delegation from the British Association in January next.

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## Obituary Notice

Prof. F. C. S. Schiller

PROF. F. C. S. SCHILLER, who died in Los Angeles on August 7 after a long and lingering illness, was born in 1864, the son of Ferdinand Schiller of Calcutta. He was educated at Rugby and Balliol, and graduated in the first class of *Literæ Humaniores*, winning later the Taylorian scholarship for German in 1887. For a few years (1893-97) he

occupied the post of instructor in philosophy at Cornell University. Then in 1897 he returned to Oxford, and became fellow and tutor of Corpus, where he remained for more than thirty years. His former pupils speak of him as a decidedly stimulating and suggestive teacher, who, although out of touch with the types of philosophical theory prevalent in Oxford, exerted considerable influence there as an

acute critic and searcher after truth. He was president of the Aristotelian Society in 1921, and had from 1906 onwards contributed to its *Proceedings* a large number of papers. At philosophical gatherings he was a well-known figure; he read, for example, a paper at the International Congress of Philosophy, held at Harvard in 1926. To *Mind* he was a frequent contributor, and was for many years treasurer of the *Mind* Association. In 1926 he was elected a fellow of the British Academy. In 1929 he was appointed visiting professor in the University of Southern California, and was accustomed latterly to spend half of each year in the United States and half in England.

Schiller's student life in Oxford began immediately after the death of T. H. Green, but from the outset he was out of sympathy with Green's idealism. In his earliest book, "Riddles of the Sphinx", published under the pseudonym "A Troglodyte" in 1901 (2nd edition, revised, with the author's own name, in 1904, new edition 1910), Schiller followed largely in the line of the evolution theory, as expounded by Darwin; and developed at some length a view, not unlike that of J. S. Mill, of God as a finite individual, immanent in the world as a living activity, but transcendent as a true personality. In the following year, in 1902, the volume entitled "Personal Idealism" appeared, containing contributions from eight members of the University of Oxford; Schiller's essay therein was on "Axioms as Postulates", and in this essay he outlined for the first time the position which, following William James, he designated as that of 'pragmatism', or later 'humanism'.

Truth, Schiller maintained, is *human truth*, and is incapable of coming into being without human effort and agency. Human action is psychologically conditioned; consequently, the concrete fullness of human interests, desires, emotions, satisfactions, purposes, hopes and fears is relevant to a theory of knowledge and must not be abstracted from. The world of our experience is not a ready-made datum; it is essentially what we make of it. Fruitless, therefore, is it to attempt to define it by what it was originally or by what it would be apart from us; it *is* what is made of it. Accordingly, the world is *plastic* and may be moulded by our wishes, if only we are determined to give effect to them, and are content to learn from experience, that is, by trying *by what means* we may do so. The principles we employ in such construction are, it was urged, in the beginning *demands* we make upon our experience, postulates or hypotheses, "starting-points and stepping-stones". Of these, when tried, many have to be abandoned; others remain precarious, and more or less 'matters of faith'; only a few rise to be unquestioned axioms. The "making of truth" is thus, it was contended, in a very real sense also a "making of reality". For in validating our claims to 'truth' we really 'discover' realities; and we virtually *transform* these by our cognitive efforts, thereby proving our desires and ideas to be real forces in the shaping of our world.

Perhaps Schiller's chief contribution to the thought

of his time is to be found in his sustained insistence on the way in which principles, even those which appear to be the most self-evident and fundamental, are in point of fact tentative, and require to be tested by their success or want of success in enabling the investigator to get into touch with natural events; and in the repeated emphasis which he laid on the manner in which apparent facts receive modification through the growth of science. Furthermore, that man is not to be separated from Nature, and looked upon as a mere observer of a series of events which he can do nothing to alter, that revaluation and not static finality is a main feature of any truth discoverable by man—these are certainly points which it was worth while to emphasize, and upon them Schiller was constantly laying stress.

In addition to the works already referred to, Schiller was the author of "Humanism", 1903 (2nd edition 1912), "Studies in Humanism", 1907 (2nd edition 1912) and "Plato or Protagoras", 1908. He wrote also two books on logic—one, "Formal Logic: A Scientific and Social Problem", 1912, which was a sustained attack on what he regarded as the futility, the verbalism, the self-contradictoriness of the traditional logic; the other, which was a more constructive work, "Logic for Use", 1929. In the latter the logic which he desiderated was not the logic of proof but the logic of discovery, and he has said probably wellnigh everything there is to say on this subject. Nor must one omit to mention the two contributions he made to Singer's "Studies in the History and Methods of Science", on "Scientific Discovery and Logical Proof" in vol. 1 (1917) and on "Hypothesis" in vol. 2 (1921). G. D. H.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Prof. Hendrik Aldersloff, director of the State Serum Institute at Utrecht, president of the Dutch Society for the Advancement of Medicine, editor of the *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Hygiëne*, aged sixty years.

Prof. P. W. Cloassen, professor of biology in Cornell University, known for his work in economic entomology, on August 16, aged fifty-one years.

Prof. J. E. Duerden, who was associated with the Wool Industries Research Association, Torridon, Headingley, Leeds, and formerly professor of zoology in the Rhodes University College, Grahamstown, on September 4, aged seventy-two years.

Prof. Albert Heim, For. Mem. R.S., formerly director of the Geological Museum and Swiss Geological Survey, Zurich, on September 1, aged eighty-nine years.

Prof. M. Maclean, emeritus professor of electrical engineering in the Royal Technical College, Glasgow, on September 2.

Prof. Pietro R. Pirotta, formerly professor of botany in the University of Rome, on August 4, aged eighty-three years.

Mr. F. C. Thompson, lecturer in the Department of Leather Industries in the University of Leeds, aged forty-six years.