

### President Masaryk

By the death of Prof. Thomas Garrigue Masaryk on September 14, Czechoslovakia has lost its first president and the world is deprived of an eminent and much-respected philosopher and statesman.

Thomas Masaryk was born of humble Slovak parents at Hodonin, Moravia, on March 7, 1850. He had a chequered boyhood and youth. A primary school inspector secured for him the consent of the authorities to allow him to attend a secondary school to train for a teaching post. His parents' poverty, however, made it necessary for him to earn his living, and he was apprenticed first to a locksmith in Vienna and then to a country blacksmith. A former teacher arranged for his return to school, and in 1865 he entered Brno Grammar School. He made good progress, but his passion for truth brought him into conflict with the authorities, who forced him to leave. Fortunately, he was able to continue his studies at Vienna where, in 1878, he graduated as a doctor of philosophy.

A work on hypnotism in 1880 was followed by "Suicide and Modern Civilization" (1881). It was an analysis of causes of the high number of suicides recorded in Central Europe, and attracted attention both at the time and later. This philosophical study secured for Masaryk a Vienna lectureship, but in the following year he was made a professor at Prague. In 1885 he completed a lengthy work, "Concrete Logic", having previously written several shorter philosophical works, which were also translated into German. His later books mostly took on a political aspect. Thus "The Czech Question" appeared in 1895, and the "Philosophical and Sociological Foundation of Marxism" in 1898. Besides writing for the literary and philosophical journal, *Čas* (Time), which he founded, he kept in touch with science sufficiently to contribute a weekly scientific column in the Prague newspaper, *Národní Listy*. He did not identify himself with blind nationalism, and his scepticism (justified as investigation proved) of the genuineness of some alleged old Czech manuscripts brought him much abuse.

From his philosophical studies he was led to the formation of a 'Realist Movement' amongst educated Czechs. This was "an attempt to popularise the whole realm of Science and Philosophy. Without distorting scientific exactitude, Realism strives to render science accessible to every class of the people. It is a protest against the monopoly of learning, its endeavour is to socialise scientific learning and philosophical culture".

In 1878 Masaryk married Miss Charlotte Garrigue, a distinguished American, and incorporated her name in his own. She entered ardently into all his work until her death in 1923. They paid several visits together to England, America and Russia, and Prof. Masaryk continued to write many philosophical works dealing particularly with modern problems. He entered the Austrian Reichsrat as a 'Realist' in 1902, and rapidly made a reputation for honesty and uprightness, and he was quick to express his dissatisfaction at the methods practised, it appeared, by

all parties. His realism was a reaction against this and against the Tolstoyan slavonic philosophy of non-resistance to evil. Just before the Great War he wrote "The Philosophy of History and Religion in Russia", one of the most important books on the subject, whilst after the War he described his work for Great Britain and the allies and for the liberation of the Slavs. He was, for a time during the War, a professor at King's College, London.

On October 28, 1918, the Czechoslovak Republic proclaimed its independence with Prof. Masaryk (still in exile) as its first President. He held this post until December 1935, when he relinquished it with the recommendation that his younger collaborator, Dr. Eduard Beneš, be elected to succeed him. During the seventeen strenuous and difficult years of his term of office, Masaryk gave very active support to many educational movements. The new University of Brno was named in his honour, whilst the Masaryk Academy of Work, which concerns itself with supplying funds for researches in pure and applied science and in securing publication of the results, received his very keen approval and valuable support. Masaryk was in no small measure responsible for many educational advances associated with his country. Through his ministers, he was able to institute an enlightened policy advancing not only the hitherto restricted culture of the Czechoslovaks themselves, but also not overlooking the needs of the German, Hungarian and Polish minorities living within the frontiers of Czechoslovakia.

Prof. Masaryk leaves a son, Mr. Jan Masaryk, the Czechoslovak Minister Plenipotentiary in London, a married daughter and Miss Alice Masaryková, who had been his companion during the last years and is well known for her Red Cross and humanitarian activities. G. D.

### Mr. F. A. Potts

WE greatly regret to record the death in London on September 15 of Mr. F. A. Potts, University lecturer in zoology and fellow (formerly tutor) of Trinity Hall, Cambridge. He was a member of a remarkable group of young men who were specializing in zoology at Cambridge in 1906-8, his group including Prof. W. E. Agar (Melbourne), the late Dr. W. S. Perrin (London Hospital) and the late Rev. S. A. McDowall (Winchester). In his final examination he obtained first classes in both zoology and geology, being one of the last students to obtain the double honour.

Mr. Potts, after visits to Naples and Plymouth, then settled in Cambridge, assisting in the teaching of the Zoological Department until the outbreak of the Great War. During this period he became well-known for his activity in the then rather modern lines of research. He directed his interest first of all to the effects of *Peltogaster* and *Sacculina* on their crustacean hosts, *castration parasitaire*, extending this to a general consideration of phenomena associated with parasitism. His next investigations were devoted to the Rhizocephalan *Mycetomorpha* and to Nematoda, here a notable research dealing