

## OBITUARIES

### Prof. G. A. Reisner

THE death on June 6 last of George Andrew Reisner, professor of Egyptology at Harvard University, has removed from our midst one of the greatest and most successful excavators Egypt has ever known. His rival for the foremost place could indeed only be Sir William Flinders Petrie, his senior by some ten years, who is happily still with us. To assess the comparative merits of these two would be invidious, but a few sentences may perhaps attempt to sum up the special merits of each. Petrie has been essentially the pioneer. Before him, excavation was but a haphazard affair; no attention paid to detail, often in fact left to untrained native foremen. Petrie's field-work, starting full fifteen years before that of his American colleague, was the first to inaugurate careful planning of sites, with complete recording of pottery and smaller objects; and the prompt annual publication of results has been the greatest boon to our science. It cannot be gainsaid that Reisner greatly improved upon Petrie's methods. Never has there been such meticulous regard to the smallest objects, photography applied at every stage, the most careful training and organization of the workpeople, voluminous notes compiled with unremitting patience; and scholarly philological training at the back of it all. Alas, the inevitable consequence of such minuteness has been that publication has often been unduly deferred. Reisner's books are fairly numerous, always bulky, but their content covers only a fraction of the work that he achieved. It is devoutly to be hoped that those into whose hands his material now passes will repair the miscalculation here deplored. Thus only shall we be enabled to measure the full stature of the man, and derive complete profit from the astonishing achievements of his career.

From early work on cuneiform tablets, for which he received his training in Berlin, Reisner soon switched over to Egyptian studies, and in 1899 took charge of the Hearst Egyptian expedition to Upper Egypt. Here he unearthed important cemeteries of the early periods, especially at Naga ed-Dér, near Girgah. In 1905 began the excavations on behalf of Harvard University which were continued down to his death, interrupted only by the three years spent in charge of the Egyptian Government Survey in Nubia (1907-9). Investigations in various Nubian cemeteries led on to excavations much farther south, when the tombs of many late Ethiopian kings were discovered, and a most interesting settlement of Middle Kingdom date explored at Kerma. Two seasons at Samaria (1909-10) brought to light the palaces of Omri and Ahab, with many important remains.

But it was in the neighbourhood of the Pyramids of Gîzah that Reisner scored his greatest successes. The laying bare of the temple of the Third Pyramid resulted in the discovery of marvellous statuary, chief among which was the great slate group now in Boston of King Mycerinus and his mother. Even more valuable were the results of the excavations around the Great Pyramid. Here the symmetrically laid-out necropolis city of the nobles and princes of the time of Cheops was systematically investigated, the crowning find being that of the secret burying-place of that Pharaoh's mother, Queen Hetepheres. The chaste sobriety of the magnificent furniture found in this untouched burial forms a remarkable contrast to the

far richer, but sometimes garish, treasures from the Theban tomb of Tutankhamûn, the most sensational archaeological discovery ever made.

This inadequate account cannot conclude without a brief impression of the man himself. He was an American of the Americans. With his powerful figure and forthright utterance he reminded one of Theodore Roosevelt, but hand in hand with these somewhat awe-inspiring characteristics went a kindness and hospitality unforgettable for those who, like the present writer, often benefited by them.

ALAN H. GARDINER.

### Mr. C. C. A. Monro

CHARLES CARMICHAEL ARTHUR MONRO, who died on June 21, came of a Scottish family that has had many distinguished members. It included three generations of professors of anatomy at the University of Edinburgh, all bearing the name of Alexander Monro, the second of whom (1733-1817) has given his name to the "foramina of Monro", which connect certain ventricles of the vertebrate brain. His great-grandson, David Binning Monro (1836-1905), was provost of Oriol College, Oxford, and a well-known Homeric scholar. Charles Monro was born in India on September 14, 1894, the younger son of the late Alexander Monro, who was director of public instruction, Central Provinces, and whose elder son, Alexander Monro, has also had a distinguished career in the Indian Civil Service. An uncle, the late General Sir Charles Monro, was commander-in-chief at the Dardanelles in 1915, and afterwards Governor and commander-in-chief of Gibraltar.

Monro was educated at Charterhouse, Eton (where he was a King's scholar) and Trinity College, Oxford. Going up to Oxford in 1913, he took Pass Moderations in Classics in 1914, and began to read for the Honour School of Lit. Hum. His studies were, however, interrupted by the outbreak of war. He served in France and Belgium, and was wounded and suffered shell-shock in 1916. Returning to Oxford in 1920, Monro, who had become interested in zoology, decided to read for the Honour School of Natural Science in that subject, and did so until 1922.

After brief experiments in business and agricultural practice, Monro was appointed in November 1922 to an assistant keepership in the Department of Zoology, British Museum (Natural History), and was placed in charge of the collections of Annelids and Echinoderms. While doing a good deal of curatorial work on these collections, and being responsible for their removal from the Old to the New Spirit Building of the Museum in 1924, he devoted his attention mainly to the Annelids, and in particular to the Polychæte worms. In the course of the years 1924-39 he published some thirty-seven systematic memoirs, many of which were important contributions to the subject. They included, besides smaller papers, extensive reports on the large collections obtained by the *Discovery*, Great Barrier Reef, John Murray and B.A.N.Z. Antarctic Research Expeditions, as well as reports on collections made by smaller expeditions (*St. George*, *Rosaura*, etc.). There can be no doubt that Monro was well on the way to become a leading authority on the Polychæta. An interesting investigation of his was that on a species of Serpulid new to British waters, which he named *Hydroïdes incrustans*. This was found forming extensive incrustations in an enclosed harbour canal in Sussex,

where, owing to the discharge of hot sea-water from a power-station, the temperature of the water was many degrees higher than in the adjacent part of the English Channel. Monro felt some uncertainty whether the worms represented a species accidentally introduced on the bottom of a ship from a warmer climate, or whether the high temperature of the water had produced a neotenic race of a widely distributed species, *Hydroides norvegica*, showing well-marked differences in size and structural details from the typical form.

In one of his shorter papers Monro discussed the need for a re-classification of the Echiuroidea, and made some important proposals for the rearrangement and redefinition of the families and genera of that group. He was responsible for the reorganization of the starfish gallery of the Museum in 1928, and also rearranged the study collection of echinoderms in accordance with modern classification. Almost the whole of the "General Guide to the Exhibition Galleries", published by the Museum in 1931, was written by him. He edited, for publication by the Museum, a series of postcards dealing with the old herbal "Hortus Sanitatis", a task in which his considerable knowledge of medieval Latin proved of great value. One of his last official duties at the Museum was the preparation, jointly with the present writer, of a new "Collectors' Handbook" dealing with the collection and preservation of invertebrates other than insects. He wrote the section on Vermes in the "Standard Natural History" (1931), and articles on several groups of annelid worms in the Encyclopædia Britannica (14th edition). For about two years (1925-27) he was editor of the *Museums Journal*.

Soon after the outbreak of war, Monro's services were lent to the Ministry of Food, where he worked until his last illness. He had been seriously ill in 1935, and had undergone a severe operation. From that illness he had never completely recovered, and a second operation was performed a few weeks before his death. He possessed great charm of personality and a very open and upright character. He was a pleasant colleague and a good-natured companion, with a strong sense of humour and an acute and well-informed mind. Somewhat of a rebel, from his school days, against convention and what he considered social injustice, he was also interested in many aspects of learning and the arts, and was a man of very considerable culture and wide reading. He had a great love and understanding of poetry, and was deeply interested in theology and metaphysical philosophy. He always took a great delight in intellectual discussion, and many, no doubt, will remember a lecture delivered by him at a summer school at Cambridge in 1939 on the relation between science and religion. It seems to have been a desire to understand the deeper mysteries and problems of life that urged him to the study of biological science, and the same desire that led him, when already in his thirties, to embrace Catholicism, to which he was a fervent convert. He was keenly interested in the Neo-scholastic philosophy and in foreign politics, and was for a time honorary secretary of the Catholic Council for International Relations.

Until his health became seriously impaired, Monro had unbounded vitality and love of life, and of the good things it had to offer. His recreations included walking, swimming, yachting, fishing, shooting and fencing. For some years he was a leading exponent of the *épée*, being once runner-up in the British

championship and one of the British representatives in a European tournament at Le Touquet. But above all he loved the open country and the hills, and most of his holidays were spent in walking in the Lake District, in Wales or in the west of Ireland. As a boy he had spent a number of holidays in France, acquiring a fluent knowledge of the French language, and an affection for the country and its people which he never lost.

Monro was twice married; first, in 1917, to Pamela Gartside Tipping, by whom he had one son (a captain in the Gordon Highlanders, missing at Singapore), and secondly, in 1927, to Sheila Mary Anderson, who, with their two young sons, survives him.

H. A. BAYLIS.

DURING an acquaintance with Monro extending over some twenty years I have had, in common with many other zoologists, occasion to regard him with much gratitude, admiration and affection. In an era when good systematists are becoming lamentably scarce, Monro stood out as an example of the ideal systematic worker. His systematic knowledge of the Polychæta, in the first place, was wide, accurate and of an intelligent type, and coupled with the mass of detail at his finger-tips connected with the literature of the subject and the diagnostic features of the species contained in the group was a particularly useful acquaintance with their distribution and geographical relations.

Although dealing almost entirely with preserved material himself, Monro was always keenly interested in receiving news of the living animals and actively aware of the importance of their ecological relations. He was always thoroughly willing to assist ecologists by determining their material, and did it promptly and in the most helpful way. My personal gratitude to him was elicited by the assistance which he gave me in ecological work carried out during the Barrier Reef Expedition and during ten years of marine studies in South Africa. Among a group of systematists whose kind services made it possible to work out the results of these studies at all, Monro was outstanding as one of the most actively helpful: in fact, he was a member of that rather small class, the 'perfect systematists'. This was the more so because, as so many of his friends are aware, Monro was a personality of great liveliness apart from his official work altogether. Very widely read and capable of talking entertainingly and yet with balance on almost any subject, and possessed of abilities quite distinct from those required for his museum work, he was a very fully developed human being and a most welcome companion.

T. A. STEPHENSON.

#### Prof. Joseph Paczoski

JOSEPH PACZOSKI, professor of the University of Poznan (Poland), who died on February 14, was a distinguished taxonomist and the founder of a new branch of botany, phytosociology. We do not know all the details concerning the last period of his life under German occupation in Poland; one can imagine, however, how much he must have suffered. At the beginning of the War in Poland, immediately after Poznan had been occupied by German troops, nearly all the university professors were arrested there, they were deprived of all their personal possessions, deported to the so-called General-Gouvernement and left to starve. This was also the fate of the 77-year-old Prof. Paczoski.