

on the assumption that the roughly homogeneous conditions observed at the present day have persisted through the past history of the universe. It is scarcely necessary to emphasize the speculative and provisional nature of such extensive extrapolation.

¹Haldane, J. B. S., *Nature*, **153**, 155 (May 6, 1944).

²Eddington, A. S., "The Combination of Relativity Theory and Quantum Theory", *Dublin Inst. Adv. Studies*, A, No. 2 (1943).
A summary of the astronomical implications of the theory appeared in the *Observatory*, **65**, 209 (August 1944).

³Robertson, H. P., *Rev. Mod. Phys.*, **5**, 22 (1933).

⁴Hubble, E., *Astrophys. J.*, **84**, 517 (1936).

⁵McVittie, G. C., *Proc. Phys. Soc.*, **51**, 529 (1939).

⁶Milne, E. A., *Proc. Roy. Soc.*, A, **158**, 324 (1939); **159**, 171 (1939).

⁷McVittie, G. C., *Z. Astrophys.*, **14**, 312 (1937); **16**, 21 (1938).

OBITUARIES

Prof. G. F. Stout

By the death in Sydney of Prof. G. F. Stout, emeritus professor of logic and metaphysics in the University of St. Andrews, at the age of eighty-four, British philosophy and psychology have lost one of its most representative and distinguished figures. A first class in the Classical Tripos in Cambridge in 1882, followed in the next year by a first in the Moral Sciences Tripos, seem, on the face of it, strange preparation for a man who was to become a dominant figure in British psychology for the next two generations, and who, as late as 1936, after fifty years of academic life, could enter into equal fray with the new *Gestalt* experimental psychologists from Germany. But three further factors must be taken into account: the presence of Ward at Cambridge, the nature of British philosophy and Stout's own penetrating insight. That Ward was one of the dominating influences in his life, Stout himself was ever ready to admit. Ward's article on psychology, in the "Encyclopædia Britannica" of 1885, ultimately embodied in his "Psychological Principles", was the precursor of Stout's "Analytic Psychology" (1896) and his "Manual of Psychology" (1898), and both these latter books bear the marks of this influence. But both Ward and Stout were following in the clearly marked tradition of British psychologists and philosophers from the seventeenth century onwards, and Stout himself was, until his death, the ablest survivor of a type of philosophy which included Locke, Hume, the two Mills and the Scottish school.

Neither Ward nor British tradition, however, can account for the fact that a text-book on psychology written nearly fifty years ago is still, despite the many changes in technique and outlook, an indispensable work for teachers and students alike. Here two points call for comment. The first was Stout's superb intellect, with its keen insight into philosophical and psychological problems, and the second, his freshness of mind, which never lost its interest in his subject and enabled him to revise one edition after another.

Stout left Cambridge in 1897 and was for two years lecturer in Aberdeen in comparative psychology and for four years Wilde reader in mental philosophy at Oxford. In 1903 he was appointed to the chair at St. Andrews. From this period his writings were, in the main, on epistemology and metaphysics. In the former, the influence of Plato, and particularly the Theætetus and Sophist, is obvious; in the latter, his animism and his views on the body and mind are

Spinozistic. But Stout was never merely a copy of any other thinker; his originality was too strong for that: and for this same reason, although his knowledge of philosophical literature was astounding, he was not a mere scholar. He was a thinker first and always, and in his reading he both re-thought and re-moulded. It is not possible in a short notice to go into details of Stout's philosophy, but I hazard the opinion that if readers of *Nature* would ponder the Gifford Lectures (Stout, "Mind and Matter", 1931) of a former editor of *Mind* (Stout edited *Mind* from 1891 until 1920) British scientific philosophy would be a far better thing than it is at present.

To the bulk of St. Andrews students—Stout, in the main, lectured only to a small number of advanced students—and to most members of the staff he was a mythical figure, spoken of with awe and around whom legends and anecdotes were spun of a recluse living in a rarified atmosphere of pure thought. Those of us who worked with him and who talked and walked with him for many years knew what a caricature this was. In addition to his extensive knowledge of philosophical and psychological literature, Stout was one of the best read men of a reading generation, in literature, history and in many branches of science, and his judgment of men and affairs was unerring. He seemed to have read (and to remember) everything, and he showed the same penetrating insight in his judgment on affairs that characterized his professional work. Those who only know the latter never really knew Stout, who will always be remembered by his friends as a man who not only gained the highest distinction in his own branch of study but who had also assimilated the matter and spirit of European culture from the Greeks downwards. Even among academics he was an aristocrat. We of a later generation knew that, as did men like Ward and Bradley of his own.

J. N. WRIGHT.

Dr. E. N. Miles Thomas

WITH the death of Dr. E. N. Miles Thomas on August 8, there passed one of the most brilliant women botanists of the century. Educated at the Mays High School (Home and Colonial School Society), she studied also at University College, London (where she was later made a fellow) and at the Imperial College of Science and Technology. Her contact with Miss Ethel Sargent, to whom she acted as research assistant (1897–1901), and with Mr. (later Prof.) A. G. Tansley was probably responsible for her life-long devotion to problems of seedling anatomy.

Her appointment as lecturer at Bedford College in 1908 marked the inauguration there of a separate Botanical Department, and in 1912, she was also awarded the status of reader in the University of London. The Department made rapid progress under her vigorous leadership and was already well established in the new premises of the College in Regent's Park when war broke out in 1914. Like others, Dr. Thomas felt the urgency of war claims, and when her appointment terminated in 1916 she became an inspector of the Women's Land Army for London and the Home Counties. Afterwards she became acting head of the Botanical Department in University College, Cardiff, during 1918–19 and keeper of the Department of Botany in the National Museum of Wales during 1919–21. In 1923, she was appointed lecturer in biology at University College, Leicester,