

most suitable means of transferring these new devices in adult education to the civil education system. Army educationists are well aware that during the War a new interest in adult education has been built up and they are anxious that this interest shall be directed into useful channels before it evaporates; hence the need for careful deliberations before the mass of men and women are demobilized and for quick action afterwards.

The Ministry of Education is fully alive to the need for the immediate capitalizing of this newly gained interest in education by adults, and it is pleasing to report that here, too, Eltham Palace is to play a useful part. At the time of writing, more than a score of His Majesty's Inspectors are attending a short course to learn the main principles of the Army Education Scheme. Very shortly they will go to commands at home and overseas to see how effectively the Army Education Scheme is working on the ground. After a few months of this field work, they will come together again, their recommendations collated and transmitted to the Ministry for any action that is thought desirable.

Eltham Palace has been on the map for some five hundred years. Its significance in history, like good wine, needs no bush. In contemporary affairs it has acquired a new meaning. That lies in the choice of the Palace as an Army School of Education with the clear recognition that worthwhile education deserves a home where it can prosper and flourish.

The Army Council is to be congratulated on securing this magnificent building for what will now become the permanent home of the Army Educational Corps. On October 25 it was officially opened by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for War, Lord Nathan. He was supported by General Sir Ronald Adam, the Adjutant-General to the Forces, and many other distinguished men and women. The first Commandant of the School is Lieut.-Colonel W. S. Beddall.

## OBITUARY

### Prof. F. Vejdovský

SIX years ago it was noted in these columns that Prof. F. Vejdovský, the distinguished Czech zoologist, was then about to celebrate his ninetieth birthday (see *Nature*, 144, 276, 1939; with portrait). It is now learned, with regret, that he died shortly afterwards, so the following additional notes may interest his numerous friends and colleagues all over the world.

František Vejdovský was born at Kouřim (Bohemia) on October 24, 1849. After passing through the Latin School, he matriculated in the philosophical faculty (natural sciences) of the Charles University of Prague, and took his doctor's degree in 1876. In the same year he became assistant to Prof. A. Friš at the Zoological Institute. Next year (1877) he was appointed lecturer in zoology at the College of Technology (Prague). In 1879 he held the post of lecturer in zoology and comparative anatomy in the University, becoming extraordinary professor in 1884. In 1892 he was elected professor of zoology, comparative anatomy, and embryology, and thereafter continued to direct the Czech Zoological Institute until 1921, when he retired as professor emeritus. His period of office covered, therefore, the rebuilding and reorganization of the Institute, and the War of 1914-18. In addition, he was dean of the philosophical faculty in 1895-6, and Rector Magnificus of the Charles Univer-

sity during 1912-13. For many years he was president of the Royal Society of Sciences of Bohemia, and remained honorary president of the Zoological Society of Czechoslovakia until the day of his death. Various other societies in France, Belgium, Poland, Russia, Jugoslavia, and the United States long ago enrolled him as a member; while England, represented by the University of Cambridge, conferred an honorary doctorate upon him on the occasion of the Darwin Celebration in 1909.

For more than half a century Vejdovský was the revered *doyen* of Czech zoologists, and by his own work and his teaching exercised an enduring influence on the development of zoology in his own country. His influence was also deeply felt abroad. Most of his own researches dealt with various groups of invertebrates (Protozoa, Porifera, Turbellaria, Annelida, Nematoda, Crustacea, etc.), and were morphological, cytological, embryological, and systematic. They cover an unusually extensive field. He was especially interested in spermatogenesis, and problems connected with the centrosome and chromosomes, but also devoted much study to freshwater hydrobiology. On these and other matters he published some ten large treatises and more than a hundred other memoirs in Czech, English, French, German, and Belgian periodicals. His most important works are the "Thierische Organismen der Brunnenwässer von Prag", and the discovery of the remarkable crustacean *Bathynella* (1882); the "System und Morphologie der Oligochaeten" (1884); his classical researches on *Gordius* (1886 and onwards); "Zráni, oplození a rýhování vajíčka" [Maturation, fertilization and cleavage of the ovum] 1886; "Entwicklungsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen" (1888-93); "Neue Untersuchungen über die Reifung und Befruchtung" (1907); "Zum Problem der Vererbungsträger" (1912); and his final work (in English) entitled "Structure and Development of the 'Living Matter'" (1926-27).

This last book embodies Vejdovský's ultimate conclusions and opinions on many problems of cytology—on spermatogenesis, reduction, the structure of chromosomes, cytoplasmic inclusions, the origin of the centrosome, and the organization and genetic continuity of cell-constituents generally. It is a big volume of 360 pages with 24 double plates (containing 579 figures admirably drawn by his own hand), and is a notable achievement for a man nearing his eightieth birthday. Much of this work was done during the War of 1914-18, under extreme difficulties, and its completion and publication—in a foreign language—afford convincing evidence of its author's industry and erudition.

Vejdovský died at Prague on December 4, 1939. Shortly before his death, his ninetieth birthday was celebrated by the publication of a *Festschrift* to which many of his colleagues, friends, and pupils contributed. It is an octavo of over six hundred pages, with a portrait and full bibliography of his publications, and entitled "Sborník prací vydaný k 90. narozeninám Prof. Dr. Františka Vejdovského Královskou českou společností nauk a Čs. zoologickou společností v Praze [Collection of works edited for the 90th birthday of Prof. F. Vejdovský by the Royal Czech Society of Science and the Czechoslovak Zoological Society of Prague]". It forms vols. VI-VII of the Proceedings [Věstník] of the Zoological Society for the year 1938-39 (Prague, 1939). As yet only one copy of this volume—surely unique in the annals of zoology—appears to have reached England.

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