

ment of many problems gained him an international reputation: indeed, I know of no one who excelled him in critical analysis; but, unfortunately, this was not accompanied by a practical constructive ability. For several years he applied himself to the nomenclature of units below that of species and in their definition and typification.

He botanized widely in the British Islands for many years in company with Francis Druce, who endeavoured to see every native species in its natural habitat. In 1927 he accompanied C. C. Lacaíta to the Sierra Nevada.

Wilmott was a man of many talents, but lacked the power of co-ordination which would have enabled him to become one of the most eminent of systematists. It was this failing which accounted for a manner which, occasionally boyish, was sometimes formidable to those who met him for the first time, for with his huge frame and excited criticisms he was wont to strike terror in the uninitiated. But beneath it all there was a gentle kindness which was invariably shown when assistance was needed.

Having regard to his somewhat ungainly figure it is remarkable how he excelled at games of all kinds. His 'soccer' was ended in his undergraduate days by a displaced cartilage, but he continued with other games to the very end: his dislike of solitude may have had something to do with this. He was an international table tennis player and three times won the British Veteran's championship. He was also an accomplished pianist and violinist.

J. RAMSBOTTOM

Dr. Helgi Pjeturss

DR. HELGI PJETURSS, an Icelandic scientist of outstanding distinction, died at his home in Reykjavík on January 22, 1949. He was born in Reykjavík on March 31, 1872. His mother's family were Icelandic Government officials; but his father's ancestors were gifted farmers in northern Iceland. After passing through the grammar school at Reykjavík, 1891, he studied zoology and geology at the University of Copenhagen and took his degree there in January 1897. In the summer of 1897 he was the geological

member of a Danish scientific expedition to Greenland, where he carried out some remarkable researches. Returning to Iceland in 1899 he worked on the geology of Iceland, and during following years many geological papers by him appeared in Icelandic, Danish, English and German. He published the main results of his researches in the thesis for his doctorate (Copenhagen, 1905), "Om Islands Geologi" (On the Geology of Iceland). In his book "Island", a volume of the "Handbuch der regionalen Geologie" (Heidelberg, 1910), he described in detail his geological investigations in Iceland.

Dr. Pjeturss proved that the Dolerite and Palagonite formation of Iceland was not Pre-glacial, as had been generally held, but was formed during the Glacial age. His discovery of glacial facies in the Palagonite formation was announced in the *Scottish Geographical Magazine* (May 1900). It was at first received with some incredulity; but his find of arctic shells (for example, *Portlandia arctica*, Gray), together with boulder clay, in these hotly disputed strata, proved his conclusion that the Palagonite formation was, at any rate to a considerable extent, contemporaneous with the Pleistocene epoch. This was fundamental for Icelandic geology.

In addition, Dr. Pjeturss investigated more thoroughly the Crag formation in Tjörnes, especially its thickness and relationship to other strata in Iceland. He discovered post-glacial raised beaches, which had not been recognized before, in many places in Iceland.

In his later years, Dr. Pjeturss wrote extensively on philosophy and cosmogony. He attempted to investigate dreams and other difficult mental problems, and to explore the possibility of the continuation of our earth life on other stars. He maintained that a more intimate knowledge of our own soul-life would enable us to solve this problem. All his writings on cosmogony were in Icelandic. They are full of original thought.

Dr. Pjeturss was a classical scholar and a great linguist. His Icelandic was of a singular and superior quality. A fine looking man, he was a great athlete and used to swim daily, even in his old age.

JÓHANNES ÁSKELSSON

NEWS and VIEWS

Marine Biology Station, Port Erin:

Mr. J. S. Colman

MR. J. S. COLMAN, who has been appointed to the directorship of the Marine Biology Station at Port Erin, Isle of Man, brings to his new duties a rich experience of the seas, the conditions of life and the animals that live therein. He is a widely travelled zoologist, having done research in Florida, Woods Hole and Harvard University (while holding a Commonwealth Fund Fellowship), the Great Barrier Reef off Queensland, and Jamaica and St. Helena. As zoologist to the late Lord Moyné he was able to study the sea in a world tour. He may therefore be expected to offer no narrow point of view, particularly when his comprehensive experience as a teacher is taken into account—one-time associate professor of zoology at the Memorial University College, St. John's, Newfoundland, and latterly senior lecturer in zoology in the University of Sheffield. Mr. Colman's numerous published researches cover many aspects of life in

the sea, including additions to our knowledge of the zooplankton, the morphology of coral reefs, the zonation of animals and seaweeds between tides, seal and commercial fisheries. These many interests have been happily brought together in his recently published book, "The Sea and its Mysteries". His present studies are chiefly directed to shore ecology, and a detailed investigation of part of the Yorkshire coast is now nearing completion. No doubt Mr. Colman's colleagues at neighbouring marine stations in Wales, Ireland and Scotland will look forward to a long and fruitful period of co-operation with him.

Central Research Establishment of the National Coal Board:

Dr. J. Bronowski

DR. J. BRONOWSKI has been appointed director of the National Coal Board's Central Research Establishment at Stoke Orchard, near Cheltenham, and will take up his post on May 22. This Establishment is a new one and is designed to carry out research into the underground problems of mining, coal prepara-