

In conclusion, I wish to acknowledge that part of the arguments of the sections on the hypothesis of molecular chaos and on the frictional force are taken from unpublished work of Mr. G. H. Cole.

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OBITUARIES

Sir Leonard Gregory Parsons, F.R.S.

SIR LEONARD PARSONS, emeritus professor of child health and dean of the Faculty of Medicine in the University of Birmingham, died suddenly on December 17 at the age of seventy-one years.

Although practising as a general physician, Sir Leonard's main interest was with sick children. It was his view that there was greater scope for research on children's diseases than on those of any other period of life, for disease in childhood could be studied "in its frankest and least complicated forms". He was responsible for the growth and reputation of the Birmingham Children's Hospital—a fact recognized in naming the specially designed infants' block the "Leonard Parsons Block"—and for establishing the University Department of Paediatrics. He was quick to appreciate the value of biochemistry, and with infinite patience and perseverance built up a research department which has attracted paediatricians from many schools, and from which young physicians, trained and inspired by him, have gone out to different parts of the world. Appreciation of his academic work has been shown in the many honours that fell to him and in the many invitations to lecture which came to him from learned societies at home, in the United States and in Canada—from the Arris and Gale Lecture in 1912 to the Harben Lectures which he delivered just a few days before his death. His early effort was concerned with nutritional disorders of infants, and the results were embodied in the Goulstonian Lectures (1923). These showed that many of the 'wasting diseases of infancy' are the result of 'qualitative starvation'. Later work clarified clinical problems in vitamin deficiencies, and his studies of fat metabolism in coeliac disease were recorded in the Rachford Memorial Lecture given at the University of Cincinnati in 1932. What may prove to have been his most important work was a large-scale investigation, undertaken between 1930 and 1940, into the anæmias of infancy and childhood. His contributions to the study of hæmolytic anæmia were especially valuable and linked up with the discovery of the Rh factor. To the group of diseases related to

this, he gave the now generally accepted name of "the hæmolytic disease of the new-born", which, with other ante-natal factors prejudicial to the infant, were impressively reviewed in his Blair Bell Lecture (1945). In giving it the title of "Ante-Natal Pædiatrics" he left no doubt of his conviction of the need for full co-operation between the work of the obstetrician and that of the paediatrician.

Sir Leonard Parsons was a graduate of the University of Birmingham; but, as was customary in the days when he was a medical student, took his medical degree as an external student of the University of London. He first became a member of the Board of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Birmingham in 1915 and was made professor of paediatrics in 1929. Sir Leonard succeeded Dr. Stanley Barnes as dean of the Faculty of Medicine in 1941 and it fell to his lot to steer the Medical School of the University through the difficult period of expansion which took place after 1945. The successful way in which the Faculty of Medicine has progressed over the past five years is in very large part a measure of his skilful and tactful administration.

FRANCES BRAID

Mr. A. H. Hamm

ALBERT HARRY HAMM died at Oxford on January 9 at the age of eighty-nine. During 1897–1931 he had been assistant to E. B. Poulton at the Hope Department of Entomology in the University of Oxford, and was well known as an ardent field naturalist of the old school.

Trained as a printer, Hamm went to Oxford chiefly in that capacity to help Poulton in labelling the vast numbers of accessions; but Hamm was already recognized as an amateur entomologist of high degree. He paid great attention to the courtship of predaceous flies (Empididae), and his observations on their habits provided evidence of a complete evolutionary series. He collaborated with the late Geoffrey Smith in a study of "Stylops and Stylopisation", and, with Dr. O. W. Richards, communicated to the Entomological Society of London, of which he was a fellow, two papers on the biology of British fossorial wasps. Hamm added much to the knowledge of Sarcophagid flies by breeding many species from dead snails in his garden, so that it was possible for the first time to associate sexes correctly. The small Agromyzid flies, often horticultural pests, were also bred, with their parasites, from their host plants.

An expert photographer, Hamm was keenly interested in the early methods of producing lantern slides by direct colour photography; he also photographed moths in their normal resting places, showing the adaptive significance of attitude and coloration.

His valuable collections, which he gave to the University of Oxford, included the Diptera and Hymenoptera mentioned above; to Dr. O. W. Richards he had given his aculeate Hymenoptera. Special collections of miscellaneous insects obtained from the nests of moles and birds will be kept intact at Oxford; the Diptera will be kept as the Hamm Collection.

The University awarded him the honorary degree of M.A. in 1942; he was an associate of the Linnean Society of London, fellow of the Society for British Entomology, and an honorary member of the South London Entomological and Natural History Society.

G. D. HALE CARPENTER