

of invertebrate larvæ, mostly prepared by Mr. W. Rogers, laboratory steward, from the fine collection of microscope slides of marine larvæ made at Port Erin by the late Mr. H. C. Chadwick and purchased from him. Gastropod development is illustrated by copies of Dr. Doris Crofts's models of *Haliotis* larvæ.

Among the Museum's treasures are numerous delicate preparations of medusæ, corals and sea-pens with polyps expanded, from Naples Marine Biological Laboratory, preserved especially for the Museum by Cavaliere Salvatore Lo Bianco. They were probably the last specimens preserved by that greatest of preparators of marine material.

At one time the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, with its long history from Hunter to

R. H. Burne, was Reading's nearest parallel and exemplar; but this was destroyed by bombs in the Second World War. The Cole Museum was built up probably in the last years when such things were possible. Thirty years ago it was adequately housed in the room which it still occupies, and now congests. It is greatly to be hoped that on the new University site a worthy building will be planned for the Cole Museum and that provision will be made to maintain what is a unique asset, not only for the University of Reading, but also for the entire country. Since this project may be many years ahead, we look to the University authorities to preserve the Museum intact, perhaps, if necessary, in a temporary building big enough for the whole collection to be adequately displayed and used.

OBITUARIES

Prof. Kurt G. Stern

KURT G. STERN died on February 3 of a heart attack in St. Mary's Hospital, London, in his fifty-first year. Born in Tilsit, he attended elementary and grammar school there and moved to Berlin for his higher education, where he received his Ph.D. in 1930 at the University. In the following year he won a Rockefeller fellowship, worked for one year at the Rockefeller Institute in New York, and for two more years at the Courtauld Biochemical Institute in London. When he was to return to Germany in 1935, the Nazis had taken over and Dr. Stern decided to accept a research fellowship at Yale University in New Haven, where he became a research associate in 1938 and joined the Overly Research Foundation in 1942. Two years later he was offered a post as research associate and adjunct professor at the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn, in which position he remained until his death.

Stern's influence on the development of biochemistry rested on the combination of several distinguished qualities: he was an excellent lecturer and an inspiring teacher; he was a meticulous experimentalist with an innate urge for precision and accuracy, and on top of it all he had a never-failing flair for selecting problems of general importance and far-reaching significance. He was strongly attracted by questions connected with the fundamental aspects of life, and hence biochemistry, biology and physiology were the sources from which he selected his problems; but with equal firmness he adhered to the exact quantitative and reproducible methods of physical chemistry and physics. As a consequence, for many years, his activities developed in the borderland between different sciences, taking problems from one and solving them with methods taken from another. In this difficult, self-assigned task, Stern succeeded not only in introducing precise methods in fields where they were unknown, but also in inventing and constructing many new instruments for the purification and characterization of biological objects, particularly enzymes, virus, proteins and nucleic acids.

While he worked and taught at the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn, he also acted as chemical consultant at the Montefiore Hospital in the Bronx; and it was a fitting expression of his constant tendency to bridge gaps between different sciences that each day he moved in the morning through the corridors

of a busy hospital at one end of New York's metropolitan area, and in the afternoon lectured and supervised fundamental research in the laboratories of the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn at the other end. This type of work he liked; thus he contributed innumerable important results, and in both fields he was highly esteemed and liked by his colleagues and collaborators.

Dr. Stern's activities and efforts won him many recognitions and honours. He served as chairman of the Protein and Nucleic Acid Week of the Gordon Research Conferences; he was the secretary of the Planning Committee of the Chaim Weizmann Institute in Rehovoth; he was president of the American Society of European Chemists and Pharmacists and he served on many occasions as chairman of special symposia arranged by the American Chemical Society, the New York Academy of Sciences and in other scientific and technical organizations. He was awarded in 1953 the Pasteur Medal of the French Society of Chemistry and Biology.

His great scientific achievements and professional success were equalled by his warm, friendly and helpful personality. Everybody who came into contact with Dr. Stern was impressed by his high ideals, his devotion to the cause of science and his unflinching deep interest in social and human relationships.

H. MARK

Mr. Horatio Ballantyne

HORATIO BALLANTYNE, who died on January 25 at his home at Tadworth, Surrey, in his eighty-fifth year, was a consulting chemist and expert witness in patent cases whose theoretical knowledge was firmly buttressed by wide practical experience. His transfer from this field of activity to the Board of Lever Bros. in 1928, while at the height of his powers, though doubtless of benefit to commerce and industry generally and to that great Company in particular, left a gap in the ranks of scientific witnesses, and when, a few years later, his boyhood friend, Sir Dugald Clerk, the patent agent and expert on internal combustion engines and gaseous fuels, passed away, the fundamental contribution which they had made to the administration of the patent law was demonstrably evident. In engineering matters, Sir James Swinburne, the late Mr. H. A. Gill and Horatio's younger brother, the late Mr. W. H. Ballantyne,