

OBITUARY NOTICES

Sir Flinders Petrie, D.Sc., Ph.D., F.R.S., F.B.A.

The death of Sir Flinders Petrie at Jerusalem on 28th July has removed Britain's most famous Egyptologist. The son of a civil engineer and the grandson of a sailor explorer of Australia, he was born in 1853 and, like quite a sprinkling of scholars, was educated privately. Starting his life's work with a survey of Stonehenge and other British remains, in 1880 he turned to the Great Pyramid and wrote a classical work on "The Pyramids and Temples of Gizeh". And his new method of excavation with its conservancy of the smallest fragments from the past laid the foundation of our knowledge of Egyptian chronology, art, and culture, especially of the archaic or pre-dynastic age. Though Petrie was insular in outlook and practice, his scientific method of digging was studied and followed by American, German, Dutch, and other foreign archæologists.

Working first for the Egyptian Exploration Fund, Petrie later with characteristic independence contrived to establish a "British School of Archæology in Egypt" without any government assistance.

Apart from publications on his excavations, his work is enshrined in his catalogues of the Edwards collection at University College, London, and in such books as *The Arts and Crafts of Egypt*. Famous, too, in its day was his article on "The Egyptian bases of Greek History" (*Journal of Hellenic Studies*, xi, 1890), and he was the first to date the middle Minoan period.

From 1892 till 1933 Petrie was Edwards Professor of Egyptology at University College, London, and he was knighted in 1923.

Edward Hamilton Johnston, 1885-1942

The death of Professor Johnston will have been widely deplored among friends and orientologists. Elected in 1937 to be Boden Professor of Sanskrit and Keeper of the Indian Institute, and admitted as a Professorial Fellow of Balliol, he was still, at the age of 57, favourably situated for a long continuation of the highly congenial work to which he had brought a vigorous competence. The few war-time students of Sanskrit at Oxford always found him accessible and helpful in their researches; and he had taken up with keen interest the task of cataloguing the very extensive

collection of Sanskrit MSS. procured for the Bodleian in 1907 by Professor A. A. Macdonell. He had also compiled for the India Office Library one Part of its "Catalogue of European MSS." In the Indian Institute he had applied his archæological *flair* and his familiarity with things Indian to the improvement and rearrangement of the Museum. In the *Society's Journal* (1938) he published an account of one of its old possessions, the "Gopalpur bricks", and he was engaged upon the interpretation of an inscription informative in regard to the early history of Pegu. More personally he was preparing an edition of a difficult ancient text of Northern Buddhist dogmatics, the *Uttara-tantra*, based upon old Sanskrit MSS. procured in Tibet by the Rev. Rāhula Sāṅkrtyāyana; of which text he had previously (*BSOS.*, viii, pp. 77-89), in collaboration with Professor H. W. Bailey, published a Central-Asian fragment in Saka-Khotanī transliteration with notes in that language.

Johnston's introduction to work as an orientalist had been gradual. Born in 1885 (26th March), second son of R. E. Johnston, a Governor of the Bank of England, he had his schooling at Eton, whence in 1904 he proceeded to Oxford as a Mathematical Exhibitioner of New College. After a First Class (1905) in Mathematical Mods he found History more to his taste and in that subject he took another First Class in 1907. He passed into the Indian Civil Service, and after the probationary period, at the close of which he won the Boden Sanskrit Scholarship, he arrived in India in November, 1909, having been appointed to Bengal, afterwards Bihar and Orissa.

Of Johnston's career in India no very personal details are available. As Assistant Magistrate and Collector, he served at first in Midnapore and afterwards mainly in South (but with one period in North) Bihar (Ranchi, Patna, etc.). During about three years (1915-18) he was Under-Secretary in the Revenue and other Departments, and in the Home Department of the Government of India. As early as 1920, after being "Joint", he became Magistrate and Collector (Imperial Service), being stationed in Monghyr. He seems to have been observant of indigenous agricultural and other practices, to which in his studies of ancient texts he sometimes appealed. But it was, it seems, not until later that he realized the great value of the Buchanan-Hamilton Survey Reports and Journals, which during the last thirty years have so creditably been edited

on behalf of the Bihar Government and the Bihar and Orissa Research Society. From 1915 Johnston was a member of that Society, and his one traceable publication during his Indian period was printed in its *Journal* for 1920 (pp. 322-3), being an account of a statue group, of medieval date, excavated at a village in the Begusarai Subdivision. Early in 1924 he took the option of retirement after fifteen years' service. Having won a wife, in the person of Iris Olivia Helena, third daughter of the late Sir Henry May, of Clare Priory, Suffolk, he settled down at Adderbury.

Having the Oxford libraries within reach, Johnston now devoted himself to systematic Sanskrit studies. His first task was the examination of a very old MS. of Ásvaghoṣa's famous poem, *Buddhacarita*, "Life of Buddha"; a MS. temporarily deposited in Oxford by the Nepal Government. A collation of this MS. was his first contribution (1927) to the Society's *Journal*. His attention had already been drawn to the Tibetan version, indirectly used to some extent in Cowell's *editio princeps* of the Sanskrit, and he had afterwards also consulted Dr. Weller's part publication of it. His own edition and translation of the Sanskrit, which required not only a detailed comparison with the Tibetan and then, moreover—a large moreover—with a Chinese rendering, but also an examination of the numerous studies which had followed upon Cowell's publication, was to be a work *de longue haleine*. In the meanwhile he turned to another famous poem by the same author, the *Saundaramanda*, which had been brought to light by Haraprasād Śāstrī in 1910: here also Johnston was able to use two excellent old MSS., generously lent by the Nepal Government. There being no Tibetan or Chinese version to complicate the task, and the critical discussions having been fewer, the improved text could be published (by the Oxford University Press, Punjab University Oriental Publications) as early as 1928: in 1932 it was followed by a translation (No. 14 of the same series), entitled *The Saundaramanda, or Nanda the Fair*. The edition and translation (2 vols., Nos. 31 and 32 of the series, 1936) of the *Buddha-carita*, presented a revised text with full critical notes, a rendering, exact but readable, with searching commentary on the matter and the Sanskrit expressions, a long introduction concerning the author, his writings, his religious and sectarian attachments, his use of language and metre, his learning and allusions and his poetic quality. The work, in connection with which Johnston had perused

the whole Pali canon of Buddhism and which is comprehensive in citations of Sanskrit texts and the literature relating to them, is a credit to British scholarship. The incompleteness of the Sanskrit text was, in *Acta Orientalia*, vol. xv, 1936-7, mitigated by a translation, direct from the Tibetan version (but with consultation of the Chinese), of the missing (xv-xxviii) cantos of the poem. The merit of Johnston's work, which included a long paper (*JRAS.*, 1931, pp. 565-592) of original "Notes on some Pali words", was recognized in 1933 by the University of Oxford, which approved his application for the Degree of D.Litt.

In connection with Āśvaghoṣa's allusions Johnston had taken into consideration the obscure beginnings of the Indian philosophical systems, especially Sāṃkhya and Yoga. In 1930 he contributed to the *Journal* an elaborate study of a cryptic passage in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* ("Some Sāṃkhya and Yoga conceptions of the Ś.U."), wherein he sought to evince a transition stage as regards some particulars of Sāṃkhya doctrine, adducing also even from the *Tattva-samāsa* traces of views prior to the classical Sāṃkhya of Īśvarakṛṣṇa's *Kārikā*. More generally he treated the same subject in vol. xv (1937) of the Society's Prize Publication Fund Series. Here the discussion was expressly limited to the development shown by leading expressions in the terminology: the argument, being extremely close and involving citation of innumerable passages from a wide literature, largely of problematic date, could be followed and evaluated only with equal scrutiny in detail. The conclusions (pp. 80-8) affirm a long and complex transformation of early notions, contemplating primarily the psychology and destiny of the individual, into the cosmological system of the *Kārikā*. There are many comparisons with Buddhist ideas and references to the evidential value of Āśvaghoṣa's criticisms, which first prompted the inquiry.

The Kauṭailiya *Artha-sāstra*, the primary treatise (recovered during the present century) on government organization, policy, and action, was the subject of two articles contributed to the *Journal*, one (1929) dealing with Buddhist references to the immoral principles of the science and with matters of land-tenure and agriculture, the other (1936) a brief discussion of a text concerning cattle-theft. Here Johnston was able to bring light from his official experience in India and to point the argument from Āśvaghoṣa's citations in favour of an early date (prior, perhaps long prior, to 250 A.D.)

of the Śāstra text : he was inclined to recognize indications connecting the text with Bihar or Central India.

Suggested by criticism of writings by other scholars were Johnston's brief paper on the *Vardhamāna* symbol (*JRAS.*, 1932), a topic originally mooted by himself, and his long, and largely controversial, discussion (1939, pp. 217-240) of "Demetrius in Sind". His last papers were a note on "Bird-names in the Indian dialects" (*BSOS.*, viii, pp. 599-601), that on "The *Tridaṇḍamālā* of Aśvaghōṣa" (*JBORS.*, 1939, pp. 11-14), and his "Ctesias on Indian Manna" (*JRAS.*, 1942).

From about 1931 Johnston frequently contributed to this *Journal* reviews, which ranged widely over the fields of Sanskrit literature and philosophy, as well as of Pali and Tibetan. He never failed, despite the brevity now usual, to manifest by definite comments or criticisms a serious examination of the matter reviewed.

Johnston's household of three sons and three daughters included children of his brother, predeceased. Upon the outbreak of the war Mrs. Johnston and most of the family left, like so many Oxford families, to reside in America, while Johnston himself took up the life of an "unmarried don" in Balliol College. From the outset of hostilities he rendered full service as an Air Raid Warden and Home Guard. The sympathy of the Society, which he joined as long ago as 1909, becoming a member of its Council in 1935, will go out to his widow and family.

F. W. THOMAS.

November, 1942.

Caroline Augusta Foley Rhys Davids

(27TH SEPTEMBER, 1857-26TH JUNE, 1942)

With the passing of Mrs. Rhys Davids closes the pioneer stage of Pali studies and of a scholarly interpretation of Pali Buddhism in England. In this capacity she was the co-worker and successor of her husband T. W. Rhys Davids to whom she owed her inspiration for Buddhist studies. His life-work, the editing of the Pali Canon through the medium of the Pali Text Society, she almost concluded.

This enthusiastic missionary of "Gotama the Man" has left us with an abundance of published research which shows a mind gifted with grace and talent, a power of assimilation and an imagination able to lend new life to dead bones and to reinterpret old creeds