

## OBITUARIES

## Prof. F. Aveling

PROF. FRANCIS AVELING, professor of psychology in King's College, London, died on March 6, aged sixty-five.

The distinctive place in the development of British psychology which the late Prof. Aveling held, resulted from the rigorous training in philosophy to which he submitted himself before taking up his main work. Many others of his generation had reached psychology by the same route, but few have so succeeded in bringing their earlier discipline to bear fruitfully upon an empirical science. His study of the scholastic writers had given him a passion for precision and definiteness of thought, but never tempted him to forsake the experimental path for the *a priori*. His views were always as clear and hard in outline as one would expect from a student of St. Thomas, yet he was ready to modify them at any time when new evidence was presented.

Aveling was generous to a fault in his appreciation of the work of others. He could not believe that honest and persistent scientific effort could fail to reach at least partial truth, and in his later years some of his most interesting work lay in an attempt to evaluate the work of schools whose tenets were apparently opposed to those he held, believing it possible to show that their theories were not so much antagonistic as complementary to his own. He ascribed to controversial opponents his own obstinate integrity of mind, and was convinced that they could not have missed the mark completely. In the same spirit he always tried to relate his researches to those of others, believing that progress depended more on co-operation than on claims to originality. At the end of his life his views and sympathies (never narrow) were so broadening that one fears that his finest work remains undone.

His philosophical interests were probably responsible for the direction taken by his most important researches. His fine work on the "Consciousness of the Universal" was directed to the old problem of how the mind can achieve general thought, when all its process, as dated events, must be particular. This he approached in the light of the researches of the Würzburg school. After the interruption due to the War of 1914-18, in which he saw service, his work in this field was resumed by his pupils, who probably carried the study of the phenomenology of thinking as far as it is likely to go. From this he passed to volition, and an important series of studies were carried out in his laboratory. Here, too, his philosophical training is evident in his resolute facing of difficult theoretical problems, when he was driven to distinguish sharply conation from the decisive direction of effort exercised by the self. This work was summarized in "Personality and Will".

A little earlier he had published the "Psychological Approach to Reality," in which he applied the neogenetic principles of Spearman to the refutation of solipsism. But though his love of philosophy may

have determined his own contributions to psychology it did not limit his activities. Only those who knew his laboratory well can properly appreciate Aveling's work. An enormous range of research was carried on there by his pupils, extending from elaborate experimental studies of perception to social psychology, each piece of work being designed to link on to other work in progress there or elsewhere. Much ingenious apparatus was designed and made in those cramped, inconvenient rooms. He popularized the tachogram method of experimentation on the psycho-galvanic reflex.

But the most lasting memory, and the truest, is of Aveling among his enthusiastic pupils, upon whom he bestowed so much affection, and so large a measure of his energy.

A. W. WOLTERS.

## Mrs. H. H. Brindley

THE sudden and untimely death on April 3 of Mrs. H. H. Brindley has deprived us not only of an able entomologist but also of one of the most accomplished field ornithologists of her generation.

Maud Doria Haviland was a great-granddaughter of the famous Dr. John Haviland, professor of anatomy and then regius professor of physic at Cambridge from 1814 until 1851. She spent a large part of her early life in south-eastern Ireland, and it was here as a schoolgirl that the love of birds and wild animals developed. Although her outlook at first was that of the sportsman and field naturalist (she was a keen rider to hounds and a good shot), she was soon teaching herself vertebrate anatomy from text-books and taking every opportunity to practise dissection. Scientific publication began in 1913 with papers on ornithological subjects. In 1914 she went to Siberia as naturalist to a small anthropological expedition from Oxford, and this resulted in a delightful traveller-naturalist book "A Summer on the Yenesei" (1915). The war years 1914-18 were crowded with varied activities: residence at Cambridge, where she mastered the more technical aspects of biology with remarkable facility; driving a motor lorry over the rude tracks of the Bessarabian steppe, where she acted as chauffeur to a contingent of the Scottish Women's Hospital; and ambulance driving in the Paris-Soissons region for the French Red Cross. This period culminated in her election to a research fellowship at Newnham College in 1919, held until her marriage in 1922 to Mr. H. H. Brindley, fellow of St. John's College,

That Mrs. Brindley was a first-class field ornithologist her numerous papers show clearly. But she was also an entomologist of real ability. She published several valuable papers on the bionomics and post-embryonic development of various minute chalcid and cynipid hyperparasites of aphids, and she also produced excellent systematic work on the Mem-