

primer on medicine (Bodleian No. 1617) appeared in a volume of contributions on physical and medical research presented to Sir William Osler by pupils and friends. He then settled down to edit and translate with notes a treatise on astrology by Abu'l Rayhān al-Bīrūnī. His only publication on this subject which occupied him so long was a note in German, identifying a Persian MS., referred to by Greaves in his *Astronomica quaedam* (1650), which appeared in the proceedings of the Physico-Medical Society of Erlangen (1926-7). But his edition of al-Bīrūnī's treatise is complete, and it is hoped it will appear shortly.

R. BURN.

Jessie Payne Margoliouth

On the 18th of August, 1933, the last direct link with the *Thesaurus Syriacus* was broken. No scholar could mention the name of the late Mrs. Margoliouth without a reference to her illustrious father and his monumental work, as it was she who, with the help of her husband, brought to a successful end the last part of the book from the middle of the letter *Shīn* to the end of *Tāu*. Trained in the domain of Syriac lexicography under the expert supervision of her father, she undertook also, in 1903, some eight years after his death, to publish an abridged English edition of the *Thesaurus*, under the title of *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*. In this work she followed a happy *via media* between her father's highly scientific work and the more popular *Lexicon Syriacum* of Brockelmann and *Dictionarium Syriaco-Latinum* of Brun, which had appeared almost simultaneously in 1895. These two works (especially the latter) give the Latin equivalents of Syriac words, often without any explanatory examples or phrases, while Mrs. Margoliouth supplies to her readers all the specifically Syriac expressions found in the more commonly read authors. One of the most difficult tasks of a lexicographer is this happy selection of the terms and expressions which he intends

to explain in relation to the frequency of their occurrence in the literature of the language.

As there is no finality in any dictionary so long as new texts are being discovered and new works printed. Mrs. Margoliouth further undertook the gigantic task of bringing the *Thesaurus* up to date, by writing a supplement to it, which she published in 1927, under the title of *Supplement to the Thesaurus Syriacus*. Twenty-seven years had elapsed between the publication of the *Thesaurus* and the appearance of its *Supplement*. She spent all those years in reading Syriac books that were gradually being printed, and in perusing unedited texts that had not fallen under her father's notice. The same masterly hand that was used in compiling the *Thesaurus* is seen in every page of its *Supplement*. Mrs. Margoliouth's *Supplement* may in future be further supplemented, but it will be many years before it is superseded.

It follows from what has been said that Mrs. Margoliouth could not have written many books. The technical and scientific character of her main work did not give her leisure for any further writing except some short reviews and articles, but to her may truly refer the words of the Latin sage: *Timeo hominem unius libri*. The writer remembers having met in 1927 an eminent Orientalist who had been to 88 Woodstock Road, Oxford, where Professor and Mrs. Margoliouth then lived. "The house," he said, "is not a house, but a store-house of erudition, where Mrs. Margoliouth, with her extensive Syriac knowledge, supplies the last volume of a living encyclopædia."

A word must here be said of the tender affection and genuine love that Mrs. Margoliouth felt for all the branches of the important Syrian Church, in the history and literature of which she was so well versed. Her love was even stronger for the East Syrian or Nestorian section of it, and the last lines which she wrote dealt with the sad fate of its present Patriarch, the direct descendant of an ecclesiastical hierarchy

which for centuries held under its spiritual sceptre the Eastern half of Christendom, which stretched from the Mediterranean shores to Manchuria, and from the Caspian Sea to the Indian Ocean. This devotion to the cause of the Nestorians, which she carried to her death-bed, began from the time when, with Professor Margoliouth, she paid a visit to their country and saw the oppressing yoke under which they lived.

Et fructus vester maneat!

A. MINGANA.

Professor A. A. Bevan

By the death of Professor Bevan the Society loses one of its oldest members, whose profound erudition had long been prized by the inner circle of those concerned with Orientalism. He will be sadly missed at international gatherings, where, speaking both French and German perfectly, he was so often an honoured and delightful guest. It seems fitting that the Lord Almoner's Professorship of Arabic, which he held during forty years, should expire with him; no one coming after him could have given to the Chair such distinction and dignity as he did, nor was he embarrassed by the fact that the stipend was almost as nominal as the official duties attached to it. Regarding the events of his life little need be said here, and indeed there is not much to say. Except for brief periods in vacation he rarely left Cambridge: Trinity College, of which he was elected Fellow in 1890, remained his home till the end. He was also a Fellow of the British Academy. Educated at Lausanne and Strassburg, Bevan had already laid the foundations of his immense Semitic learning when in 1884 he came from Nöldeke to William Wright. Their influence appears in all his work; with the former he kept up a pretty regular correspondence covering about half a century. Although Arabic was the main subject of his studies he knew Hebrew and Syriac equally well, while his knowledge of Persian literature, especially Firdausi and Jalálu'ddín Rûmî, went