

- Goldziher (I.). Über Dualtitel.
 Schmidt (P. W.). Zur Grammatik der Sprache der
 Mortlock-Insel.
 Hoffner (Dr. A.). Zu Thorbecke's Ausgabe der Mufaddā-
 lijāt.
 Kretschmer (P.). Neue phrygische Inschriften.
 Müller (D. H.). Der angebliche Ersatz des Artikels
 durch das Pronomen.

II. OBITUARY NOTICE.

*Sir William Wilson Hunter, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., LL.D.,
 Vice-President of the Asiatic Society.*

Sir William Hunter, whose untimely death may be said with truth to have been a national loss, was born at Glasgow on July 15th, 1840. He was not the first member of his family to exhibit great powers of application and mastery of complicated detail. The Right Hon. James Wilson, his maternal uncle, wrote with rare acumen on currency and national economy, and was charged by the British Government with the task of reorganizing the finances of India, reduced to chaos by the Mutiny. Of his boyhood there are but few memories. He passed from the Academy of Glasgow to the University, and thence to Paris and Bonn, enjoying the best training which Scotland and the Continent could bestow. It developed and stimulated his great natural abilities, and in 1862 he took the first place in the Open Competition for admission to the Civil Service of India. At the end of the following year he married the daughter of the Rev. Thomas Murray, LL.D., a Scottish antiquarian of note and a bosom friend of Carlyle. In marriage, says Marion Crawford, it makes all the difference in life whether a man castles on the King's side or the Queen's. Mr. Hunter, in giving hostages to fortune at the very dawn of his career, secured a helpmeet who was devoted to his material and intellectual interests, who

gave him what very few young Indian civilians enjoy—a refined home and freedom from those petty cares which so often sap the finest powers. Many years there were of enforced separation, for the children's early training demanded their mother's constant care. But Lady Hunter retained her gentle influence throughout her distinguished husband's life. She was his constant companion when the kindly fates brought them together; his amanuensis, his trusted critic. Nothing was more charming than the old-fashioned courtesy with which he treated her who had shared his early struggles and rejoiced with him when success and honours came. The young couple set up a house at Suri, a pretty Bengal station on the borders of the Santal highlands. Here the glamour of the East took possession of him, and inspired him with a resolve to interpret its poetry and grandeur to the English people. For materials he delved in governmental record-rooms and searched the archives of native magnates: the pundit, the artificer, the peasant yielded their treasured lore and tradition. During a visit paid to England in 1868 he gave the world the fruit of his enquiries in the "Annals of Rural Bengal." This great work placed him at once in a prominent rank at a time when the giants of early Victorian literature were still in our midst. The grace and steady flow of the writing, said a distinguished critic, make us almost forget the surpassing severity and value of the author's labours. Even in India, where literary power is but little appreciated, this wonderful book made some impression; and on Mr. Hunter's return to duty he was called to the Bengal Secretariat, passing in due course to that of the Government of India. It has been said with truth that every man has his chance in life, and that the earlier it occurs, and is grasped, the more likely it is to bring fame and fortune. Mr. Hunter's was the advent as Viceroy of Lord Mayo, a statesman who possessed warm and extended sympathies, coupled with the rarer gift of ability to discern excellence in his subordinates. He soon detected unique capacity in the young Under-Secretary,

and created for his benefit the post of Director-General of Statistics. This amazing promotion excited comment and not a little jealousy among Mr. Hunter's colleagues; but it was amply justified by results. He took the Indian Census of 1871 as the basis of a work which had often been attempted in vain by the defunct East India Company, and in the "Statistical Account of Bengal and Assam," in twenty-two volumes, gave the English official a sweeping view of the geography and economic condition of a province as large as France with nearly twice her population. The plan of this gigantic work was entirely his own: for its execution he depended to a great extent on local officers. His power of impressing his personality on others was shown at this early period, and a master mind shines clearly in every page of the undertaking. In the meantime Mr. Hunter was planning a still greater feat—that of doing for the Indian Empire what he had accomplished for a single province. In 1880 appeared the "Statistical Survey of India," in 128 volumes, including 60,000 pages, which, in the following year, was compressed into the "Imperial Gazetteer of India," in fourteen volumes. The sixth, an enlarged edition of which appeared in 1885, was issued separately as the "Indian Empire: its Peoples and Products." It is the sublimated essence of the "Gazetteer," and was hailed in England and on the Continent as worthy of the vast fabric which the author alone could have described. In 1875 he produced in two volumes a life of his patron, the Earl of Mayo. It was a labour of love, and brings into high relief the loss sustained by the Empire in that great man's assassination. There are few passages in the whole range of letters more pregnant with dramatic power than the story of his tragic end. "Orissa, an Indian Province under English Rule" appeared in 1872, and recorded the impressions gathered by its author during a brief employment as Inspector of Schools in Southern Bengal. It was generally considered to have attained a still higher level than his earlier flight. In 1883 a "Brief History of the Indian Peoples" was published, and at once

obtained immense popularity, passing into twenty editions. Mr. Hunter's versatility was now destined to shine in another sphere. In 1881 he became a Member of the Legislative Council of India, and in the following year was President of the Education Commission, a body of experts, whose report—a model of luminous eloquence—is the basis of our entire system of instructing Indian youth. In 1884 he was sent home to give evidence before a Parliamentary Committee on Indian Railway development; and, on his return to Calcutta two years later, he became a Member of the Indian Famine Commission. In 1887 he received the honour of K.C.S.I.

Weimar had hitherto been his home during furlough. It is well-nigh the last of Germany's minor courts; and the traces of feudal pomp and circumstance, the old-world ceremony still maintained there, appealed to the poetic side of his nature. On the other hand, Sir William Hunter's genial manners made a great impression on his German friends. Long was he known at Weimar as "the Englishman who drives," for he was an accomplished whip, and a seat on the box of his mail phaeton was eagerly sought for. Soon after his retirement from official duties, he settled down at Oxford, a city which offers unrivalled advantages to the man of letters. The University received him with open arms. He became an Honorary Master of Arts of Balliol, Examiner in the Honours' School of Oriental Studies and a Member of the Faculty of Arts. But he soon forsook the green Cherwell's banks for a small estate which he purchased in the parish of Cumnor. Here, at the edge of Lord Abingdon's glorious woods, and on a sunny slope which overlooks the great central plain of England, he built a mansion which he destined, like another Abbotsford, to shelter his remote descendants. Henceforward his leisure was devoted to embellishing "Oaken Holt," which under his loving care became the model of a refined English home. Sir William Hunter was never seen to greater advantage than in this creation of his ingenuity and consummate taste. The graceful hospitality of Oaken Holt, the hearty welcome

given to all comers by its hosts, will long live in the memory of those who were privileged to enjoy them.

In pursuit of his fixed resolve to make India something more than an abstraction for the English people, he planned a series of biographical studies, styled the "Rulers of the Empire." This he inaugurated with a memoir of Lord Dalhousie, which displays the writer's marvellous power of projecting himself into the minds of other men, so to speak, and seeing things with their eyes. He also furnished an abridged edition of his biography of Lord Mayo, and a revised one of his "Brief History of the Indian Peoples." He had intended to add a life of Aurangzib, but, on learning that Mr. Stanley Lane Poole was engaged on a similar theme, Sir William made over to him the whole manuscript material which he had collected. Generosity so rare merited the acknowledgment which was gracefully tendered in Mr. Lane Poole's preface to his "Aurangzib." New light was thrown on the internal mechanism of the Empire by Sir William Hunter's "Bombay, 1885-90, a Study in Indian Administration"; and those who seek to understand a highly complex land system have to thank him for four volumes of "Bengal MS. Records," published in 1894, a selected list of more than 14,000 letters stored in the archives of the Calcutta Board of Revenue. But his literary energies found scope in directions which are seldom sought by economists and statisticians. The "Old Missionary" belongs unmistakeably to the Literature of Power. It is full of a strange, haunting sweetness which moves to admiration and tears. The "Thackerays in India" is another work of singular fascination. Sir William Hunter regarded the memory of our chief novelist with a veneration of which only the greatest minds are capable. An exquisite statuette of his hero stood close to the writing-table at Oaken Holt, and seemed to inspire his noblest efforts. His last great literary work was one which he had kept steadily in view throughout a laborious career. It was to have been a history of India from the earliest ages; but the loss by shipwreck of a mass of priceless MS. compelled him to

reduce his canvas and portray the growth of an organism which is the wonder and envy of mankind. The first volume of the "History of British India" appeared in March, 1899, and was on all sides acknowledged as worthy to rank with Gibbon's immortal picture of the latter days of the Caesars' sway. A second volume was nearly ready for the press when the writer's busy hand was stayed by death. If he had lived but a few weeks longer the record would have been carried down to the union of the rival East India Companies at the dawn of the eighteenth century. The period dealt with is, indeed, the obscurest portion of the Indian annals. But what might not have been ours had that brilliant pen been permitted to describe the impact of Western strength and knavery on the effete empire of the Moghul; to depict Clive's meteor career and the peaceful conquests of Hastings and Cornwallis! *Dis aliter visum.* The "History of British India" will remain a magnificent fragment, for who shall bend Achilles' bow?

Such is a brief and by no means exhaustive account of Sir William Hunter's permanent literary works. They would fill a respectable library; and, such is the prerogative of genius, there is not a page of his many thousands which he wrote or planned but bears the stamp of his individuality. His achievements as a journalist would in themselves have satisfied most men's aspirations. His spurs were won in the Indian Press, and in 1873-5 he furnished a weekly summary of Indian events to the *Pall Mall Budget*. He began to write for *The Times* in 1887, contributing two memorable series of essays on Burma and the "India of the Queen." Three years later he joined the staff of the leading journal; and his weekly articles on "Indian Affairs" were looked for eagerly by all who sought to follow the trend of events in our great dependency.

Genius differs from mere talent in that it is spontaneous, and, in a manner, independent of will power. Sir William Hunter was ever conscious of a voice within urging him to accomplish some task which should benefit his country and win him literary fame. He often said that his ideal

of happiness was useful work, honestly done. I am informed by his devoted friend and secretary, Mr. P. E. Roberts, that the daily labour at Oaken Holt began at a quarter to 10 and continued without any intermission till 2 p.m. Sir William then lunched, and after another hour and a half in his library, he rode in the shady woods bordering "Oaken Holt" or the pleasant highways which stretched on either side. On his return at half-past 5 he read till the dinner hour. Like Buckle, the author of the "History of Civilization," he was wont to saturate his mind with the literature of the epoch which he was about to treat. This process completed, he wrote rapidly and with few pauses for thought or correction. No pains were spared by him in the verification of facts. The vast body of notes in the first volume of the "History" is a monument of patient research; and it is literally true that every statement in that work was based on a close examination of the original documents. Thus the author went to Lisbon, in the Autumn of 1898, in order to ransack the national archives for information bearing on Portuguese India, though this was but a side issue. The records of our India Office and those at the Hague underwent a similar process before being condensed into a history of the Dutch Settlements. The story of his search for the missing charter granted by Cromwell to the East India Company would form an interesting chapter in a new edition of the "Curiosities of Literature." It must not be supposed that this prodigious application, this conscientious treatment of a mass of dry and often repellent detail lessened Sir William's capacity for enjoyment. He warmed both hands at the fire of life, and entered with a boyish zest into the delights which this beautiful world affords. But there was not a particle of selfishness in his composition. He took his pleasures neither sadly nor alone. Never was he more completely in his element than when he was the centre of a group of young people, and holding each beneath the spell of his sweet and sunny nature. A stranger drinking in the bright humour and anecdote which flowed from his

lips in these too brief periods of relaxation, found it almost impossible to believe that he was in the presence of the grave historian, the author whose works had charmed and instructed a generation. Nor would the guest be intimidated by that tacit assumption of superiority which is so often exhibited by lesser men. He had his detractors: for mediocrity resents energy and superior power as reflections on itself. But so truly Christian was his charity that during a friendship of nearly twenty years never did I hear him speak harshly of those who had misunderstood and maligned him. Of domestic sorrows he had a full share. An only daughter, gifted with beauty and singular personal charm, was torn from her parents by death at the very dawn of womanhood; and his eldest son perished untimely in a distant land. And yet, though the father's heart bore the scars till it ceased to beat, he bravely subdued his grief for the sake of others. No stronger testimony to a man's social worth can be borne than by those who speak well of him after daily intercourse. The aged Vicar of Cumnor told his flock on the Sunday after this great and good man had been laid to rest, that all of them had witnessed "his unflinching courtesy to every rank, his wide sympathies, his readiness to give, his engaging cheerfulness, his compassion for the weak and helpless, his love of children."

Of Sir William Hunter's last sad days I find it even now inexpressibly painful to write. There can be no doubt that a vigorous constitution and an intense vitality were undermined by the labour entailed by the "History of British India." So consuming was his anxiety to complete the second volume on the date agreed upon that his afternoon rides were latterly abandoned, and he toiled in his library till far into the night. When, in the Spring of last year, he fell a victim to influenza, it left its mark in a perceptibly weaker heart action. Soon after Christmas he suffered a severe relapse of this most insidious malady. Coming to London before he was really convalescent in order to meet the great American humorist, Mr. S. L. Clemens, at dinner, he caught a chill which brought on pneumonia and increased

the cardiac weakness. At his earnest request he was carried tenderly to Oaken Holt, and Lady Hunter observed with joy a seeming improvement in his condition. But the springs of life were broken. After a few hours of insensibility he passed peacefully away at 3 o'clock on the morning of February 7th.

There is something tragic in this sudden termination of a noble career while its lifework was still undone, and the mental powers inspiring it were untouched by the hand of time. And yet such was the end which Sir William had always hoped. He had an instinctive horror of the gradual decay which is so often death's harbinger. The news was flashed through England at a time of national stress, when the silver lining to the cloud which overhung our destinies was the help rendered to the struggling mother country by her children beyond the seas. The feeling evoked in the thousands who knew him only by his works was voiced by Mr. Hutton, Select Preacher at St. Mary's, Oxford. "At a time," he said, "when we are eagerly welcoming every tie of person, history, race, and sentiment which can bind the empire together, the death of one who did so much to unite Englishmen to India in bonds of knowledge and sympathy is indeed a blow most deeply to be felt on public as well as personal grounds." So vivid, indeed, was his personality that those who loved him found it impossible at first to realize that they were fated no more to look into those kind eyes and grasp that hand held out in welcome. Their bitter thoughts found an echo in the Sanskrit Psalm of Life, which is among the many beauties of the "Old Missionary":—

" Like driftwood on the sea's wild breast
 We meet and cling with fond endeavour
 A moment on the same wave's crest.
 The waves divide, we part for ever.
 We have no lasting resting here :
 To-day's best friend is dead to-morrow ;
 We only learn to hold things dear
 To pierce our hearts with future sorrow."

F. H. SKRINE.