

OBITUARY

Sir Oliver Wardrop, K.B.E., C.M.G.

By the death on 19th October, 1948, of Sir Oliver Wardrop, the Society has lost a member who not only had a fine record of public service but had also a wide reputation for scholarship, especially in relation to the languages of Eastern Europe.

Born in 1864, he was educated at English, French and German schools and then spent some time in travelling abroad. At the suggestion of Professor (afterwards Lord) Bryce he went, rather belatedly, to Oxford (Balliol), where he took a first-class degree and won the Taylorian exhibition three years running, each time in a different language. His knowledge of Russian resulted in his appointment (1892) as private secretary to the British ambassador in Petersburg. Three years later he entered the consular service, and during the next fifteen years he held posts in Russia, Poland and Roumania, besides acting appointments in Tunis and Hayti. Then his health gave way, and he retired. A prolonged rest and a happy marriage restored him sufficiently to enable him to accept the headship of the City of London College ; but almost immediately the outbreak of war in 1914 prompted him to offer his services once more to the Foreign Office. He was placed in charge of the consulate at Bergen, which had become the chief channel of trade between Britain and northern Europe. It was a difficult and exhausting post, and three years later he was transferred to a yet more onerous and even dangerous station as Consul-General at Moscow, then in the throes of revolution. Here he resolutely defended British interests until in 1919 he was relieved by a special envoy from London. After a turn of duty under the Foreign Office, Wardrop spent a couple of years as British Commissioner for Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. A final period as Consul-General at Strasbourg led up to his retirement in 1927.

The years that followed were troubled by ill-health. Nevertheless, he catalogued the Georgian MSS. in the British Museum and did much to promote the study of Georgian at Oxford, besides serving on the Council of this Society and as a member of the governing body of the School of Oriental Studies. Of his published works, mostly translations from the Georgian, special mention may be made of

The Book of Wisdom and Lies (Kelmescott Press) and *Visramiani* (Oriental Translation Fund). His interest in everything relating to Georgia dated from the period of his youthful travels in that country, of which he published an account as early as 1888.

W. FOSTER.

Ernst E. Herzfeld

Few scholars of our generation have contributed so much to increasing our knowledge of the sources for the study of ancient Western Asia in periods or directions of which little was previously known as Ernst Herzfeld. An established scholar of considerable reputation not only in his own University, Berlin, by 1910, his early work was encouraged by Eduard Meyer, the historian, and aided by the active co-operation of Friedrich Sarre, whose outstanding achievements there has yet been little chance to appreciate. Friendship and co-operation with Koldewey and the archæological architects of the mission of the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft in Iraq, led him to admire their methods and made him a sound field-worker, without obscuring his firm understanding of the necessity for combining the study of language and history with archæology if the tasks before him were to be accomplished.

His training fitted him for the very diverse tasks he undertook. On his many journeys he continually noted new sites, and thus pointed the way for many later excavations, particularly in Persia. At some sites already well known he carried out fresh work unexpectedly rich in results, notably at Samarra and Persepolis. He continually brought to our attention neglected subjects, such as the nature of the metal-working craft in the first millennium B.C. at Wan, the significance of the designs on scratched button seals of early date from Anatolia, the importance of Sassanian gems and of coins for the study of larger monuments, the relevance of the façades of rock tombs in the hills of Kurdistan to the development of architectural types, the standing monuments in remote, often previously unvisited areas in Persia. Everywhere he found and published new inscriptions, Akkadian, Old Persian, Aramaic, and Arabic, many of which might have been permanently lost through the activities of ignorant dealers, or might have remained unnoticed by less indefatigable travellers. It is impossible, and unnecessary to enumerate his publications; they are well known and will remain source books for such studies for a long time.