

OBITUARY NOTICES

David Brainerd Spooner

The untimely death of David Brainerd Spooner, B.A., Ph.D., O.B.E., on the 30th January, at Agra, has deprived the Archæological Survey of India of one of its most distinguished and promising officers. A scholar of Leland Stanford and Harvard Universities, Spooner took his Ph.D. in Germany, studied Sanskrit at Benares, and held a professorship at Tokio before joining the department as reorganized under the able direction of Sir (then Dr.) J. H. Marshall. His first important charge was that of the Frontier Circle, where he may be said to have won his spurs in the field of archæological discovery. Those who had watched his work at Sahribahlol in 1906-7, and at Takht-i-Bāhī in 1907-8, with its fine output of Gandhāra sculptures, were prepared for the more memorable achievement next year at Shāh Jī kī Dherī, where, taking up the clue provided by M. Foucher in his monograph on the Ancient Geography of Gandhāra, he uncovered the remains of the famous *stūpa* of King Kanishka, and found, enclosed in a metal casket, the reliquary of rock crystal, containing the sacred relics (fragments of bone) of Gautama the Buddha, where they had lain for some 1,800 years. In 1910 Spooner was placed in charge of the (then) Eastern Circle, where important work was carried out on the sites of ancient Pāṭaliputra, and of the great Buddhist monastery of Nālanda. The most sensational discovery at the former site was that of the remains of a large pillared hall, which, from various indications, seemed to have been modelled on the great "Hall of a Hundred Columns" at Persepolis. The vision of a much closer connexion between the Mauryas and Irān than had ever been suspected before fascinated Spooner, as possibly solving certain problems that confront the historians of that dynasty, and led him to search in other fields of inquiry for corroborative evidence. A sense of the

importance of the conclusions to which he was thus drawn induced him to publish the article entitled "The Zoroastrian Period of Indian History", which appeared in two issues of this *Journal* (January and July, 1915). Spooner anticipated that this would meet the usual fate of such novel and boldly stated speculations. Though sensitive, as most modest men are, he did not worry over criticism on minor issues, feeling that it did not affect the really essential questions involved. He was much cheered, on the other hand, by the very sympathetic treatment and even encouragement his arguments received at the hands of certain learned European and Indian scholars, whose opinion he justly valued. Spooner was appointed Deputy Director-General of Archæology in 1919, and had acted as Director-General on more than one occasion while Sir John Marshall was absent on leave.

It was delightful to walk with Spooner round the pits and trenches at a site he was exploring; to feel the absorbing enthusiasm that inspired him; to observe his grasp of detail and power of co-ordinating data obtained, and his fertile imagination; and last, but not least, to enjoy the charm of a gentle, cultured mind of wide intellectual attainments. Deep sympathy will be felt towards his widow, whose remarkable linguistic acquirements were of such assistance to him. Deeply interested herself in every detail of his work, she shared both his successes and his disappointments.

C. E. A. W. OLDHAM.

Lord Curzon

George Nathaniel Curzon was born at Kedleston, Derbyshire, in 1859. He was created Earl Curzon of Kedleston in 1911, and Marquess Curzon in 1921.

Readers of our *Journal* will be mainly interested in Lord Curzon as Viceroy and in his activities in the field of Oriental geography, history, and archæology.

As a young man, after a very distinguished career at Oxford, he travelled extensively in the Middle and Far East,