

OBITUARY NOTICE

Dr. William Crooke, C.I.E.

Indian Anthropology has suffered a great loss in the death of Dr. Crooke, which took place at Cheltenham on the 25th of last October. He was born at Macroom, Co. Cork, in 1848, and was educated at Tipperary Grammar School and at Trinity College, Dublin, where he won a scholarship. In 1871, Trinity College contributed no fewer than seven members to the Indian Civil Service, and among these were Vincent Smith and William Crooke, both of whom, each in his own department, were destined to win reputations as Oriental scholars. Crooke was posted to the North-Western (now the United) Provinces, and, passing through the usual grades of the Service, retired in 1896. The last years of his life were spent at Cheltenham.

Early in his career Crooke began to interest himself in the Ethnology and Anthropology of his Province, and in 1888 he published his valuable *Rural and Agricultural Glossary of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, based upon materials collected by him and previously published in 1881, when he had been but ten years in the country. In the interval he had been serving as manager under the Court of Wards of the great Awa Estate, and had seized the opportunity thereby afforded to prosecute those inquiries which made his Glossary an inexhaustible source of information regarding the rural conditions of Northern India. Several other works from his pen, besides many contributions to the *Indian Antiquary*, appeared during the rest of his stay in India, the most noteworthy being his *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India* (1894), and his monumental *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh* (1896).

After his return to England he published numerous works, such as *Things Indian*, *The Natives of Northern India*, and

authoritative editions, enriched with valuable notes, of Fryer's *New Account of East India and Persia* (for the Hakluyt Society), Mrs. Mīr Hasan 'Alī's *Observations on the Musalmāns of India*, Tod's *Rājasthān*, and Herklots's *Qānūn-i-Islām*. Shortly before his death he had completed an edition of Tavernier's *Travels in India*, the manuscript of which is now in the hands of the Oxford University Press. He was the author of numerous articles in Hastings's "Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics", in the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, and in *Folklore*. Of the last, he was editor for some years before his death. In 1910 he was President of the Anthropological Section of the British Association, and in 1911-12 he was President of the Folklore Society. In 1919 he received the title of C.I.E., and, subsequently, was given the honorary degrees of (1919) D.Sc. (Oxford) and (1920) D.Litt. (Dublin). In 1923, the year of his death, he was elected a Fellow of the British Academy.

Crooke's work in regard to the Anthropology of India and kindred subjects, though voluminous, was throughout marked by careful accuracy and by sobriety of theory. At the same time his knowledge of general folklore was peculiarly wide, and enabled him to illuminate his accounts of Indian customs and beliefs by original and apposite illustrations drawn from the most varied sources. It is not only his personal friends, but also many members of this Society interested in Indian studies, who lament his loss, and who tender their respectful sympathy to those whom he has left behind.

G. A. G.