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## Obituary.

G. W. PALMER.

By the untimely death of G. W. Palmer, Master of the Royal Mathematical School, Christ's Hospital, the teaching world has suffered a heavy loss. His chief interest lay in academic mathematics, but by force of circumstances his earlier post as Head of the Military Side at Clifton College compelled him to turn his attention to the practical rather than to the formal side of the subject. This exercised an overmastering effect upon his mental vision. His outlook was gradually turned into a different channel by his practical every-day teaching; and his remarkable pioneering work on Arithmetic, with his notable papers on the teaching of that subject, give ample evidence of originality. His contributions to the Teaching Committee were characterised by freshness, pungency, and non-compromising denunciation, where questions of inaccuracy and over-stepping the limits of the data were concerned. We have heard it said that he well deserved to be called the "Father of Arithmetic" in English education.

However that may be, although the removal to Christ's Hospital brought him back into direct touch with the more academic forms of mathematical work, he instituted and maintained a high standard of mental and applicational work in the Arithmetic of the school, and in that subject the master-hand was seen at every turn. By the stress we have laid on his contributions to the literature of one branch of elementary Mathematics, we do not wish to imply that his interest in his work was thereby limited. It may be said, indeed, that he inaugurated a new era in the teaching of Mathematics at Christ's Hospital. More time was given to important principles and fresh ideas, elaborate development in any one direction was carefully avoided, and with the happiest effect his teaching was leavened by his practical acquaintance with many subjects, and in particular by his wide knowledge of scientific geography. The natural outcome was an increased interest throughout the school, the attainment of a high general level, and a considerable advance in individual achievement at the universities and elsewhere.

His colleagues will always remember Palmer as a man of keen intellect, an enthusiast with high ideals, incapable of harbouring an unkind thought, characteristically generous in disposition, exquisitely sensitive to beauty, and gifted with a fine sense of humour.

He was singularly fortunate, more so than most masters, in being able year after year to increase his circle of friends from the ranks of his former pupils, on whose attitude to life and its problems he had a great influence, unconsciously asserted. The friends, colleagues or pupils who took part in the adventurous tours in the Hebrides in a 6-ton yacht, in which he spent a long series of holidays, did not detect a formal pedant in the intrepid navigator, the genial and strict commander of those never to be forgotten voyages.

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