

## OBITUARY.

DR. G. W. LEITNER.

The death from pneumonia of Dr. Gottlieb William Leitner, at Bonn, on the 22nd inst., removes a distinguished Orientalist, whose services to Eastern learning and the cause of education have been frequently acknowledged, not only in England but in every Continental country. Dr. Leitner was born at Pest in 1840, and was educated at Constantinople, Brussa, and King's College, London. His early training, including several years' study in the Mahomedan schools attached to the mosques, made him a fluent master of Turkish, Arabic, and all the languages spoken in the Levant, so that, while still a boy, he was appointed first-class interpreter to the British Commissariat during the Russian war, with the rank of colonel; became lecturer in Arabic, Turkish, and Modern Greek at King's College, London, in 1859; and two years later was made professor of Arabic with Mahomedan law, and founded the Oriental section of the college.

A few years afterwards he accepted the post of principal of the Lahore Government College, with which the Delhi College was incorporated, and was the first Registrar of the Punjab University, of which he was the originator and founder; and its organization, the collection of its funds, and the warm interest which it excited among Hindus and Mahomedans alike were the direct results of his untiring exertions and enthusiasm. The Oriental University of the Punjab was the first serious attempt in Northern India to infuse life into the dry bones of the educational system of the Government; to interest princes and people in educational work by conveying the knowledge and science of the West through the medium of the vernacular languages of India; and to engage the religious teachers of the people, pandits and mullahs, on the side of scientific education, instead of leaving them, as the Government Department had done, altogether aloof or hostile. Fortunately the Punjab possessed at the time in Sir Donald McLeod a Lieutenant-Governor whose interest in Oriental studies was equal to that of Dr. Leitner and who cordially supported the proposal. The chiefs whose capitals Dr. Leitner visited by turns were eager to assist, and large sums were subscribed by the Maharajas of Kashmir and Patiala, the Rajas of Kapurthala, Jhind, Nabha, Nahan, and many others, and at length, after years of endeavour, when the organization was complete enough to satisfy the Supreme Government and the endowments were sufficient to secure permanency, the charter of incorporation of the new University was granted.

Although the Punjab University was the great work of Dr. Leitner's Indian career, yet it by no means exhausted his energy in every branch of educational progress and reform. He founded numerous literary societies and free public libraries; published journals in Urdu, Arabic, and English, and one of the latter, founded under the name of *Indian Public Opinion*, and still flourishing as the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore, has a special interest as having had Mr. Rudyard Kipling as an assistant editor and as having published many of his earliest verses and stories. In 1866 he undertook for the Punjab Government an expedition to the almost unknown region lying between Kashmir and Afghanistan, which was carried out with great success, and the results of which were published for the Foreign Department of the Government of India, and subsequently utilized in a separate work on "Dardistan in 1866, 1886, and 1893." Among his many contributions to Oriental and educational literature we may quote "The Theory and Practice of Education," "The Races of Turkey," "Philosophical Grammar of Arabic," and "Sinin-ul Islam, the history and literature of Mahomedanism in their relations to universal history." He was the first to suggest and popularize the title "Kaisar-i-Hind" as the vernacular equivalent of the new title of her Majesty, Empress of India.

After his return from India, Dr. Leitner founded an Indian Institute at Woking, for the training of young Indians of good family, and for some ten years he edited the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*. As a linguist he had probably no living rival in the area of his knowledge, and he was asserted to have acquaintance with some 50 languages, many of which he spoke fluently.

Dr. Leitner married in 1869 Caroline Schwaab, eldest daughter of the German and American Consul at Brussa, and leaves an only son, Henry, aged 28.