

OBITUARY NOTICE.

ISIDORE ELKANAH BALABAN.

1896—1951.

ISIDORE ELKANAH BALABAN was born in the Midlands in 1896 and was keenly interested in Science from an early age; nevertheless, he volunteered for the army during the first World War, and served with distinction, first in the Manchester Regiment and later in the Gas Corps. He was commissioned and was awarded the D.C.M.

He returned to the College of Technology, Manchester, after the war and, having graduated, became Professor Pyman's research assistant and took the M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees. It was at this time that he became interested in glyoxalines, and a number of papers were published in this and in related fields under the inspiration of his chief. He then obtained an appointment with the Medical Research Council under Sir Henry Dale and in 1926 he joined the research staff of Messrs. May and Baker Ltd. At this time, their research staff was being organised under Dr. A. J. Ewins and the work then was mainly on organic arsenicals; Balaban made his own important and distinctly individual contribution to the organic chemistry of arsenic and of antimony. From 1925 to about 1932, very few of his papers were published with other authors but his work indicated a very high degree of skill and ingenuity and more than a trace of the influence of Pyman and of the Medical Research Council training.

Balaban was not, at first acquaintance, the easiest of collaborators but, after the ice had been broken, he proved to be a very reliable source of knowledge, experience, and new ideas and to be a very original thinker in his own specialised fields.

When this Company was re-organised after its transfer to Dagenham, he left to join Imperial Chemical Industries Limited at Blackley, thus returning to his native city. He gained his D.Sc. degree in 1935 and joined the Geigy Company Ltd. in 1941. His progress there resulted in due course in his appointment as Head of the Pharmaceutical Department; his interests in chemotherapy and the synthesis of chemicals for use in medicine continued and he was responsible for a number of patents and scientific publications with the Geigy Company.

His tragic death in a railway accident in Manchester in May, 1951, was a great shock to all who had known him and deprived science of a very able and conscientious worker.

He had just been elected to the Committee of the Fine Chemicals Group of the Society of Chemical Industry. It was typical of Balaban that his military career and distinctions were unknown to the writer until after his death. He had a great love of Nature and studied with keen enjoyment, not only his main interest, organic chemistry, but many of its manifestations such as horticulture and ornithology. His enthusiasm and honesty of purpose were outstanding and will be long remembered by his friends and colleagues.

M. A. PHILLIPS.