

## OBITUARY

## HANS VON DER AU

In consequence of serious heart disease contracted in a Russian prison camp during the First World War, Hans von der Au (Dr. Theol. and Phil.) died on May 21st, 1955, at the age of 63. With his passing, German folk-dance research and folk-dance cultivation lose their leading figure. Although himself a theologian, he bestowed his particular affection upon folklore, above all, upon folk dance. He was one of the great collectors, and had published no fewer than ten collections of folk dances from Hesse, the Spessart, Nassau, the Rhön and the Palatinate. The last great collection of a hundred dances from the Saar District came out last year as his last work. If the folk dances of the west midlands of Germany have been submitted to more thorough research than have those of any other part of Germany, the credit is due to him. Moreover, he exerted his influence through numerous folk dance courses, which he conducted with a view to preserving the folk heritage.

In addition to his activities as a collector, he was a true scholar. He treated the various problems of folk dance research in more than thirty works, especially in his exemplary book, *Das Volkstanzgut im Rheinfränkischen* (Giessen, 1939). Among his special attainments was a very closely-reasoned systematisation of folk dance. He also devised a method by which cognate dances could be arranged in "dance-families," chiefly on the grounds of their distinctive rhythmic features. In addition, he was interested in the role of the dance in the life of the people and in its roots in ancient customs. The wide extent of his folkloristic studies is demonstrated, too, by his book *Die Odenwälder Tracht* (Darmstadt, 1952). His survey of the folk-song treasury of the Germans in the Dobruja still awaits publication.

Dr. Hans von der Au's passing will be deeply mourned, not only in folk-music circles throughout the whole German-speaking world, but much further afield. The lamented scholar also collaborated with the Council as a correspondent. His scientific accomplishment as well as his kindly and inspiring personality guarantee him lasting remembrance.

RICHARD WOLFRAM,

Trans. K. D.

## EDUARDO MARTINEZ TORNER

Eduardo M. Torner, the Spanish musicologist, who died in London last year at the age of 66, will be known to readers of this *Journal* chiefly for his research in Spanish folk music. Those who heard him lecture at the war-time Instituto Español in London will remember his insistence that Spanish folk music came from all over the Peninsula, and not merely from the south-west corner; and though a genuine Andalusian folk song certainly existed, he was appalled by the commercialisation of *Cante flamenco* and the guitar. He was most at home in the music of the north-west, particularly that of Asturias and Galicia, and his *Cancionero musical de la lirica popular asturiana* (Madrid, 1920) was a notable contribution to folklore studies.

His work on the music of the *Romancero* (the whole corpus of Spanish ballads) was interrupted by the Civil War; and though not himself politically-minded, he had the integrity to prefer exile to compromise, and his notes and materials were lost in Madrid when the Centre of Historical Studies (where he used to work) was *gleichgeschaltet*.

His later work in England was mainly concerned with the study of Spanish literary style, in the rhythms of poetry and prose; and he was rash enough to use musical notation to illustrate his points. This at once prevented scholars from taking him seriously; even learned researchers in English prefer a rough-and-ready system of noughts and crosses. But Torner's studies will be more highly appreciated later, when Spanish scholars have the time, and the musical preparation, to digest them.

J. B. TREND