

CENTENARIES

By S. R. Ranganathan, M.A., L.T., F.L.A.
(University Librarian, Madras)

Nicoll, Whitlock (1786–1838)

WHITLOCK NICOLL, a British physician, was born at Treddington, Worcestershire, in 1786. His father who was rector of the parish died when Whitlock was but two years. He was educated by his uncle. He took his M.D. degree May 17, 1816 and became an extra-licentiate of the College of Physicians, London.

HIS PUBLICATIONS

He became a regular contributor to the *London medical repository* in 1819. His first book entitled *Tentamen nosologicum* classified diseases into (1) febres, (2) neuroses and (3) cachexiæ. In his *History of human economy* (1819) he developed a physiological approach to clinical medicine. *Primary elements of disordered circulation of the blood* (1819), *General elements of pathology* (1820), and *Practical remarks on the disordered states of the cerebral structures in infants* (1821) were his other books. Three of his papers on defective vision attracted some attention in his days.

HIS HONOURS

He became a member of the Royal Irish Academy in 1821 and was elected Fellow of the Royal Society in 1830.

After successful practice in London for about twelve years, he retired in 1835 and died December 3, 1838.

Overton, John (1764–1838)

JOHN OVERTON, a British writer on chronology, was born at Thetford, Lincolnshire in 1764. He got appointed in the excise.

INTEREST IN ASTRONOMY

He had a strong liking for astronomy. He constructed his own telescopes for his observations. His interest swerved to biblical chronology by about 1817 when he published the *Geneology of Christ with a new system of sacred chronology and the true meaning of the weeks in Daniel*. 2 V. In 1820 he brought out his *Books of Genesis*

and *Daniel* (in connection with modern astronomy), etc. Two other books of his on related topics were *The chronology of the apocalypse investigated and defended* (1822) and *Strictures on Dr. Chalmers's discourse on astronomy* (1823).

Overton died at Chelsea December 1, 1838.

Hunt, Robert Woolston (1838–1923)

ROBERT WOOLSTON HUNT, an American metallurgist, was born at Fallingston, Bucks County, December 9, 1838. Having served in his father's drugstore for some time, he found employment for several years in an iron rolling mill.

FIRST ANALYTICAL LABORATORY

Having taken a course in analytical chemistry, he established in 1860 the first analytical laboratory as an integral part of an iron works at the plant of Canbrie Iron Co.

BESSEMER PROCESS

In 1865 this Company sent him to their plant at Wyandotte, Michigan where experiments were being made with the Bessemer Steel Process. In 1867 Hunt rolled for the Pennsylvania Railroad with Bessemer steel from the Pennsylvania Steel Company, the first commercial order for steel rails. From 1871 to 1888 he was in charge of Bessemer steel plants in several companies, until he established at Chicago the firm of Robert W. Hunt & Company. His *History of the Bessemer manufacture in America* published in the *Transactions* (1877) of the American Institute of Mining Engineers is an authoritative contribution.

RAILS

He invented the very widely adopted rail mills. He was Secretary of the American Society of Civil Engineers which designed the rail section bearing the Society's name. In 1921 he proposed a new rail section and the nick-and-break test for soundness of each ingot.