

executed directly on the lined paper, drawing paper being reserved for illustrations intended for publication. Reprints, original letters, photographs of correspondents and other matter were also loosely inserted. Separate books were devoted to material from special collections such as the Paris Museum or from important correspondents such as T. Petch (when in Ceylon). Each book when completed was indexed, and a general index to the whole series and a letter register were maintained in a folio ledger. Thus they kept their many records under continual review and easily accessible.

It was this interest in Myxomycetes which led to the long association of the Listers with the British Museum (Natural History), which Miss Lister first visited with her father around 1890 when, as mentioned above, she was helping him prepare his "Monograph". She continued her connexion with the Museum until 1939, being virtually honorary curator in charge of the Mycetozoon collection, which she helped to make the most complete and valuable in the world. With the outbreak of war, at the age of seventy-nine, the exigencies of travel made the journey from Leytonstone to South Kensington no longer possible for her.

Those of us old enough to have worked in the Botany Department of the Museum before the Second World War remember both her and her very dear friend, Miss Annie Lorraine Smith, the great lichenologist, for their ready interest, kindness and patience in helping and teaching younger workers.

Many of the Listers' specimens were deposited in the British Museum (Natural History) during their lifetime. Miss Lister bequeathed her mycological library and her Myxomycete notebooks to the British Mycological Society and her personal collection of slides and specimens to Mr. H. J. Howard of Norwich, another amateur myxomycetologist. On his death in 1957 this material was divided between the British Museum (Natural History) and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

The Linnean Society of London and the British Mycological Society arranged a meeting, held on October 28 at the British Museum, to commemorate the centenary of Miss Lister's birth and her long association with the two Societies and the Museum.

G. C. AINSWORTH
FRANCES L. BALFOUR-BROWNE

¹ Ramsbottom, J., *Nature*, **164**, 94 (1949).

² Ainsworth, G. C., *Trans. Brit. Mycol. Soc.*, **35**, 188 (1952).

OBITUARIES

Sir George Stapledon, C.B.E., F.R.S.

SIR GEORGE STAPLEDON, who died on September 16, was world renowned as the first director of the Welsh Plant Breeding Station at Aberystwyth; he was indeed its inspiration and the architect of its work during its formative years from 1919 up to the late 1930's.

Reginald George Stapledon was a kindly man and one whose prime interest was the human both as an individual and as part of a community. He was born in 1882, was educated at the United Services College, Westward Ho!, in North Devon, and Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where he read biology under Prof. A. C. Seward. For a period after leaving Cambridge he joined the family shipping concern, but soon returned to Cambridge, where he gained the University diploma in agriculture. In 1910 he became professor of agricultural botany at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, and in 1912 went to Aberystwyth as agricultural botanist. After the outbreak of the First World War he joined the Ministry of Agriculture's Food Production Department in London. At the end of hostilities he became the first director of the newly formed Official Seed Testing Station, Cambridge, but in the summer of 1919 accepted the invitation to establish and to direct the Welsh Plant Breeding Station which was to be set up in Aberystwyth as a result of the monies given for the purpose to the University College of Wales by Sir Laurence Philipps, Bart. (now Lord Milford). Stapledon remained at Aberystwyth until the outbreak of the Second World War, when the Minister of Agriculture invited him to establish the Grassland Improvement Station at Stratford-on-Avon and to become its director. On his retirement in 1945 he joined Dunns Farm Seeds, Ltd., as scientific adviser and was soon invited to join the board of directors, a post he held until his death.

It was as director of the Welsh Plant Breeding Station that Stapledon would wish to be remembered. To him this very rightly represented the central core of his professional work. His influence, however, went far beyond Wales—indeed, it is world-wide. His was a genial personality; he was a man who worked hard and never spared himself if there was a job to do. He had the capacity also to instil into others those same personal qualities for hard work done willingly, loyally and with affection towards the leader. Stapledon was a man of ideas and of great ideals. He will be renowned in history as one of the great, and among grasslanders, as the greatest of them all. He was a notable figure in any gathering, particularly where the conversation and discussion found his interest and were to his liking.

His personal work at Aberystwyth (he himself was the cocksfoot breeder) resulted in the creation of new varieties of herbage plants, and in all essentials the types then selected are still embodied in the 'S.' varieties which are to-day widely used in Britain and in many countries overseas. It was Stapledon's creative mind which outlined the need for the study of pasture plants and to apply existing genetical and agronomic knowledge to this end. He went further, however, and insisted that there should be built up a mass of new knowledge, much of which by now has become embodied in the new science of grassland.

Stapledon was at heart a farmer. His sympathies were with the farmer and with the land. He was at once scientist, artist and humanist, a combination which was bound to culminate in an enthusiasm for applying his science—and indeed all his other talents—and bringing them to bear upon the day-to-day problems of the grassland farmer.

Early in his professional career he recognized that in grass we have a crop, the potential contribution of which to material welfare was not appreciated by the agricultural community itself, let alone by the

nation at large. This concept fired his enthusiasm, with the result that he led the British nation to plough up their derelict pastures and replace them with high-yielding leys. This process still goes on throughout Britain, which at the present time is universally acknowledged as the leader of ley farming techniques among the countries of the world.

WILLIAM DAVIES

Dr. D. Chatterjee

DR. DEBARRATA CHATTERJEE, superintendent of the Indian Botanic Garden, Sibpur, Calcutta, was shot dead at point-blank range on September 24 by one of his subordinates, who, having committed this utterly wanton and senseless crime, turned the gun on himself and successfully brought his own life to an end. It appears that the assassin aspired to a post in the Botanical Survey of India, and although he did not possess the necessary qualifications he fancied that Dr. Chatterjee was not active enough in furthering his claims. Homicidal mania, inflamed by an insane sense of injustice and frustration, was responsible for the death of one of India's leading botanists at the early age of fifty.

Dr. Chatterjee received his early botanical training at the Presidency College, Calcutta, obtaining his M.Sc. in botany in 1937. From Calcutta he proceeded to the University of Edinburgh, where he worked for two years under the late Sir William Wright Smith. He obtained the Ph.D. degree for a thesis

dealing with endemism of Indian plants. On his return to India he worked for a time in the herbarium at Sibpur and then went to Burma as a lecturer in botany at Mandalay College. He escaped to India when the Japanese invaded Burma in 1942 and lectured at the Cotton College, Gauhati, Assam, for four years. He became botanist for India at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in 1946, and in 1949 was appointed to the post of systematic botanist at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, which he held for six years. He succeeded Dr. K. Biswas in 1955 as superintendent of the Indian Botanic Garden.

Dr. Chatterjee's botanical interest lay mainly in the taxonomy of Indian and Burmese plants, and he published papers in a number of journals including the *Kew Bulletin*, *Hooker's Icones*, *Nature* and several others. Since leaving Kew he had never really had the opportunity of developing his undoubted taxonomic ability. For part of the time he had to work without an adequate herbarium or library, while during the past few years he had been overwhelmed with the numerous details inherent in the administration of the Botanic Garden. Even so, his loss will be severely felt in India, where there is a conspicuous shortage of competent taxonomists.

At Kew he will be remembered as a congenial colleague who did valuable work for India during the period he worked there.

He is survived by his aged parents and by his only daughter, to whom our sympathy is due. His wife died some years ago.

N. L. BOR

NEWS and VIEWS

Nobel Prize for Medicine

THE Nobel Prize for Medicine, amounting to about £15,000, has been awarded jointly to Sir Macfarlane Burnet, director of the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute for Medical Research and professor of experimental medicine in the University of Melbourne, and Prof. P. B. Medawar, Jodrell professor of zoology and comparative anatomy in University College, London. Both recipients are well known for their work on acquired immunological tolerance, which has initiated a new era in experimental biology and medicine. (See p. 376 of this issue.)

A.R.C. Institute of Animal Physiology, Babraham : Dr. R. Keynes, F.R.S.

A NUMBER of new appointments to senior posts at the Agricultural Research Council's Institute of Animal Physiology at Babraham, near Cambridge, has recently been made.

Dr. Richard Keynes has been appointed head of the Physiology Department. He succeeds Dr. I. de Burgh Daly who was head of this Department as well as being director of the Institute. Dr. Keynes's scientific work has mostly been done in Cambridge, but, during the War, he worked for five years with the Navy on asdic and radar. His best-known researches are concerned with the movement of ions in nerve and muscle and the origin of the discharge in electric fish. He measured the quantities of radioactive sodium and potassium which cross the surface membrane of a single nerve fibre during the passage of

an impulse. More recently he has studied the movements of these ions against concentration differences during recovery, and has become interested in the metabolism of potassium in the whole animal. He has been a member of the editorial board of the *Journal of Physiology* since 1954 and is now chairman. Dr. Catherine Hebb has become head of a Sub-Department of Chemical Physiology.

Dr. T. Gillman

DR. THEODORE GILLMAN succeeds Sir Alan Drury as head of the Experimental Pathology Department. Sir Alan went to Babraham in 1952 and established this Department as an active centre for work on cell surfaces, immunity, and blood groups in cattle and sheep, with especial reference to genetics. Dr. Gillman graduated in the University of the Witwatersrand and became lecturer in clinical pathology. He was appointed professor of physiology in Durban in 1951, but he has not been confined by the title of his department, and has worked, not only on gastric physiology, but also on iron metabolism, malnutrition, neoplasms, and liver disease. Recently he has been interested in tissue reactions in wound healing, the ageing of arteries and the transplantation of tissues. Dr. Gillman is an energetic person; while he was in Durban he built up a large and active department from nothing, replanning the architecture and organizing courses in physiology, biochemistry and pharmacology, and wrote many scientific papers.