of his work in and for horticulture. For nearly sixty years he was intimately connected with the Royal Horticultural Society. His grandfather and father had both taken a keen interest in gardening at Charing and Ashford, and the curate of Charing, the Rev. J. Dix, for some time chairman of the Royal Horticultural Society's Floral Committee, was an intimate friend of his youth. His love of Nature and gardening was still further fostered by his education under Prof. Pritchard, and by his vicar at Croydon, Canon Hodgson, so that when he went to Shirley he was well equipped to follow his bent in the large garden of the vicarage. He became a member of the Royal Horticultural Society's Floral Committee about 1880, and at the great reconstruction of the Society in 1888 he was appointed honorary secretary. He filled the post of secretary until 1920, when he retired and was elected to the council.

In 1888 the Society was in very low water; its liabilities were great, its finances low; it had less a horticultural than a social policy; it seemed doomed to early wreck, after weathering the storms of eighty-four years. With its new secretary, Sir Trevor Lawrence, Sir Daniel Morris, Sir William Thiselton-Dyer, Sir Harry Veitch, Mr. George Paul, Sir Michael Foster, Dr. Masters, and others, a determined return to a horticultural course was made, and in steering that course William Wilks took a leading part. He was a great secretary. A man of wide vision, a fine judge of men, courteous, tactful, able to bend men and things to the policy the new council had determined upon, cautious but ready to seize opportunity, loyal to his council and inspiring loyalty, ready with encouragement, kindly in restraining excess of zeal, an able organiser, under him the Society progressed from potential bankruptcy to financial prosperity, from a membership of about 1000 to more than 16,000, to the possession of its fine hall and offices, its *Journal* (which he edited from 1888 to 1906), its great garden at Wisley, with its school of horticulture and the development of research into gardening problems which all along he had seen to be essential to sound progress, and which, as soon as finance permitted, he fostered with all his power. His aim all through was to further British horticulture in its widest sense, and for his work for the Society, until it had been placed upon a sound financial footing, he took not even the most modest remuneration. The Society to-day is a monument to his work.

The gardens of the world, large and small, even into the Arctic regions, are the richer for Mr. Wilks's own gardening efforts, for from an aberrant field-poppy he raised the wonderful strain of Shirley poppies, and freely distributed seed every year to all comers. As with his poppies and foxgloves, he deemed no pains too great to spend upon the selection and increase of beautiful hardy things, and no pleasure to exceed that derived from sharing his beautiful things with others. His writings in the *Journal* were of these things. In his quiet garden he grew the choicest of hardy fruits, for he was a pomologist of no mean order, and he cared for and studied there the plants and animals it contained and attracted, with all the love of a true naturalist.

SIR ERNEST CLARKE.

SIR ERNEST CLARKE, a man of singular ability, and gifted in many different directions, was perhaps best known as secretary of the Royal Agricultural Society of England from 1887 to 1905.

Himself a Suffolk man, born at Bury St. Edmunds in 1856, Clarke had a special interest in East Anglia, and contributed largely to the enrichment of its archaeology, literature, and folklore. In especial he showed himself an adept in unearthing the truth and in demolishing many of the erroneous statements that had found their way into past records. This same power marked his treatment of agricultural history and literature when, as the first Gilbey lecturer, he gave, in 1896, his series of lectures at the University of Cambridge, from which, in 1894, he had received the degree of Hon. M.A. Indeed, one may say that he was the first serious student of this subject since Arthur Young.

After service in the Local Government Board, and then as assistant secretary in the Share and Loan Department of the Stock Exchange, Clarke was selected in 1887, out of 106 candidates, to be secretary of the Royal Agricultural Society of England in succession to the late H. M. Jenkins. As secretary of the Society he distinguished himself by his great activity and powers of organisation. He had great ideals as to the position which such a Society as his should occupy as the leading authority both at home and abroad, and such he worked constantly to make it. For more than eighteen years he acted in this capacity, receiving the honour of knighthood in 1898. Later, however, came the disastrous days (1903-6) arising from the decision of the Council to abandon the peripatetic Shows and to have a permanent Show-ground at Park Royal, and this resulted in Clarke's resignation in 1905. He then returned to the City, and was associated, to the close of his active career, with various commercial enterprises.

Following on the death of his wife in 1918, Clarke was struck down with a paralytic seizure, and for the last four years of his life was unable to leave his room. But he retained to the end the clearness of intellect, and the interest in all around him, that had marked his active days.

Though he could never be called an "agriculturist," Clarke contributed largely to its history and literature, and the *Journal* of the R.A.S.E. contains many admirable reports of his, chiefly memoirs of noted agriculturists, such as Philip Pusey, Sir James Caird, the Duke of Richmond, etc., besides the "History of the Board of Agriculture," "Agriculture and the House of Russell," etc. To the series of King's Classics he contributed, in 1903, a new edition of "The Chronicles of Jocelin of Brakelond," an account of monastic life in the days of Abbot Samson, and he made many other contributions to archaeological, historical, and folklore societies. He was an original member of the "Confrères"; and one of the "Sette of Odd Volumes"—being the "yeoman" in that body, and president in 1898. He was also a past-president of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries. Clarke was, in addition, a gifted musician, a brilliant conversationalist, and a man of much reading and wide general knowledge.

J. A. VOELCKER.