

Obituary

MR. RICHARD SOUTH

MR. RICHARD SOUTH was born in July 1846 at Cochran Terrace, Marylebone, the site of which has long since been occupied by the old Great Central Railway. Little is known of his early life beyond the fact that he was educated at a private school at Reading. He died at his home in London on Easter Monday, March 28, after a short illness which terminated a long period of failing health.

The earliest contributions made by Mr. South to the entomological journals, in 1874-78, concerned his captures in the Mill Hill district, Hendon, which appears at that time to have been a very rich locality. Up to 1890 he contributed sixty notes and articles to the *Entomologist* and the *Entomologists' Monthly Magazine*, dealing with a great variety of subjects. The most important were his "Contributions to the History of the British Pterophori", published at intervals from 1881 until 1889, which added considerably to existing knowledge of the British plume-moths. He early developed a particular liking for the Microlepidoptera, and many of his notes concern this large group, especially the Tortricidæ; others are faunistic, for example, "The Lepidoptera of the Outer Hebrides, Shetland and Orkneys" (*Entom.* pp. 25, 28, 98, etc.; 1888); some deal with migration, others with collecting results, variation, etc. His "Notes on the Genus *Lycæna*" (*Entom.*, pp. 1, 49, 73, 121; 1887), in which the variation of a number of species was described in detail, led him into an acrimonious discussion of the species-concept, upon which his views were somewhat unorthodox. This was not the only matter which brought him into conflict with other lepidopterists of this period, for a year or two earlier, in 1884, in co-operation with those responsible for the *Entomologist*, he produced a "Synonymic List of the British Lepidoptera". This was designed to act as a label and exchange list and to replace Stainton's, which was long out of date but still the only one available. In the nomenclature used he did his best to apply the law of priority, which necessitated changing a very large number indeed of the names commonly employed—to the very great annoyance of every working lepidopterist of the day. Nevertheless, the list is in constant use even now.

About this time Mr. South's interest in the Microlepidoptera appears to have brought him into touch with John Henry Leech, to whose "British Pyralidæ" (1886) he contributed a number of notes. The association developed, only to be broken by the death of Leech in 1900. During this period he acted as a kind of curator and adviser to Leech, whose interest in the Far East eventually led to the publication of the "Butterflies of China, Japan and Korea" (1882-1894), in the production of which all the spade work was done by South. This was supplemented by the publication elsewhere of the descriptions of a very large number of eastern Heterocera new to

science. In order to acquire an outlet for this work, Leech purchased the *Entomologist* in 1890 and appointed South to the editorship, which he retained until 1924. For many years after Leech's death, South continued to work at the Far Eastern fauna, chiefly in collaboration with Wileman, jointly with whom he published a number of papers.

In 1906 there appeared South's "British Butterflies", the first of the three handy little volumes of the Wayside and Woodland Series, which are now standard works on our British Lepidoptera, and have made his name familiar to amateur and professional alike. The volumes on the moths appeared in the following years (1907 and 1908). Although the appeal of these volumes was directed to the beginner, both text and illustrations were so excellent that they at once achieved an immense and deserved popularity, which is not likely to desert them for many years to come. Undoubtedly it is by these volumes and by his long and successful editorship of the *Entomologist* that Mr. South's name will be remembered amongst British lepidopterists long after those of us who had the pleasure of knowing him as a charming and courtly gentleman, an enthusiastic and painstaking entomologist, an excellent companion, and an honoured personal friend, have passed over where he has so lately gone.

MR. ST. GEORGE LANE FOX PITT

By the recent death of Mr. St. George Lane Fox Pitt at his residence in South Eaton Place, at the age of seventy-five years, we lose one of the few remaining pioneers of electric lighting. He was the second son of Lieut. General A. H. Lane Fox Pitt-Rivers, a distinguished anthropologist and archaeologist, who presented his collections to the University of Oxford. In his early days, Lane Fox Pitt (his father took the surnames of Pitt-Rivers for himself and that of Pitt for his family) devoted himself to scientific research and mechanical invention. In 1878 he took out a patent for the method of running incandescent lamps in parallel. This patent, being one of the earliest in electric lighting, has been often quoted in the law courts.

He also took a leading part in improving incandescent lamps. The early glow lamps had carbon filaments in a vacuum glass bulb. These filaments were connected with the mains by 'leading-in' wires passing through the glass. These leading-in wires were made of platinum, which has the same thermal coefficient of expansion as glass. Great difficulty was experienced in connecting the filaments and the platinum wires. The connexion was at first a simple mechanical one, the filaments being merely clamped to the wires. This joint, however, was not satisfactory, as it often worked loose. One of the earliest methods Lane Fox Pitt employed to get over this difficulty was to use a hollow carbon tube into which the platinum wire was inserted.