

including the last at Zurich in 1938. Possibly his most important work was as a teacher and an encourager of young physiologists. He was an interesting and lucid lecturer who could interpret modern science to a lay audience.

An ardent patriot with a passionate devotion to Italy, Camis' later years were saddened by the misfortunes that befell his country. During the Italian campaign against Ethiopia, he spent nine months as a volunteer (aged fifty-six) in Somaliland studying the metabolism and diet of both natives and European immigrants. The results, which contradicted much of the teaching then current, were published by the Reale Accademia d'Italia in a slim volume entitled "Metabolismo basale ed alimentazione in Somalia" (1936). Yet little more than two years after his return to be professor at Bologna, he was pensioned

by the Italian Government on account of a Semitic strain in his ancestry. Thereupon he followed an old inclination by becoming a Dominican monk, and in June 1939 was sent to Manila in the Philippines to join the staff of the Dominican University of St. Thomas there. But his health would not stand a tropical climate and he returned after six months to the House of his Order at Bologna where, until 1943, he taught psychology in its seminary. For the remainder of the War he found a refuge from the Nazi domination of Italy in the Dominican University at Rome. After the liberation he was at once restored to his professorship, but ill-health prevented him from taking up the duties. He spent the last year of his life at the Convent of St. Dominic in Bologna, where he died. He was childless and a widower.

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NEWS and VIEWS

Prof. E. D. Merrill

ON October 14, Dr. Elmer Drew Merrill, the well-known American botanist, was seventy years of age. To mark the occasion, special numbers of the *Journal of the Arnold Arboretum* (Harvard University) and of *Chronica Botanica*—in the latter case comprising a selection from Dr. Merrill's principal general writings, with a biography and bibliography, entitled "Merilliana"—have been issued. After holding posts in his *alma mater*, the University of Maine, and in the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington, Merrill lived and worked from 1902 until 1923 in the Philippines, first as botanist to the Bureau of Agriculture and later also to the Bureau of Forestry at Manila and eventually to the Philippine Bureau of Science. For several years, while holding the latter post, he was also head of the Department of Botany of the University of the Philippines, and in 1919 he became director of the Bureau of Science. During this period he wrote the "Flora of Manila" (1912), "An Interpretation of Rumphius's Herbarium Amboinense" (1917), "Species Blancoanae" (1918), "A Bibliographic Enumeration of Bornean Plants" (1921), and the "Enumeration of Philippine Flowering Plants" (4 vols., 1923-26).

In 1924, Merrill left the Philippines to become dean of the College of Agriculture, and director of the Agricultural Experiment Station, of the University of California, being also director of the California Botanic Garden during 1927-29. The University of Maine conferred on him the honorary degree of D.Sc. in 1926. While in California he wrote "Plantae Elmerianae Borneenses", which appeared in 1929. In 1930 he became director-in-chief of the New York Botanic Garden. His important "Commentary on Loureiro's 'Flora Cochinchinensis'" was published in 1935. Since that date Dr. Merrill has held the post of professor of botany and administrator of botanical collections at Harvard University.

Philip Hill Chair of Biochemistry: Dr. Frank Dickens, F.R.S.

DR. F. DICKENS has been elected to the Philip Hill chair of experimental biochemistry tenable in the Courtauld Institute, London. This chair is an independent research post endowed by Mrs. Philip Hill

in memory of her husband. Dr. Dickens took the Natural Sciences Tripos at Cambridge, and then spent two years in research work on pure organic chemistry under the late Sir Jocelyn Thorpe. In 1923 he became an assistant in the Biochemical Department (later the Courtauld Institute) of the Middlesex Hospital, and collaborated in the important work done there on insulin and sex hormones under the direction of Prof. E. C. Dodds. In 1927 he began his interesting work on tissue metabolism. In collaboration with the late Dr. Simer, he devised a method, which has been widely adopted, for the measurement of the true respiratory quotient of isolated animal tissues. This method has the advantage of being applicable in the presence of bicarbonate and carbon dioxide mixtures. By the use of this method he was able to show that there is a distinct difference in the metabolism of cancerous and most normal tissues. Dr. Dickens has also conducted research on tissue enzymes and the inhibitory effect on them of such substances as fluoride and iodoacetic acid. He has also obtained a certain amount of evidence to show that different paths of fermentation and oxidation may be available in cells and cell extracts from that usually followed, and which is known as the Embden-Meyerhof cycle. Dr. Dickens has also shown that tumours and embryonic tissues have an unusually high content of citric acid. A study of the distribution of citric acid in the body showed that about 1 per cent is contained in the hard substance of bone, and that this is very easily influenced by dietary and hormonal conditions, and may play an important part in calcium metabolism and bone formation. During 1943-44, at the request of the Medical Research Council, Dr. Dickens undertook special research on the toxic effects of oxygen on brain metabolism. Dr. Dickens has recently published four papers on the factors which control the carcinogenic action of certain hydrocarbons.

Zoology at University College, Hull:

Prof. P. G. 'Espinasse

MR. P. G. 'ESPINAASSE has become professor of zoology at University College, Hull. The College opened in October 1928, and the following year Mr. 'Espinasse, who had just graduated in the final honour school of zoology at Oxford, was appointed