

### Mr. J. P. M. Brenan

DR. HUBBARD has been succeeded as deputy director and keeper of the Herbarium and Library by Mr. J. P. M. Brenan. Mr. Brenan was born at Chislehurst, Kent. He was educated at Tonbridge School and Brasenose College, Oxford, where he gained first-class honours in the Final Honour School of Natural Science (Botany) in 1940, later becoming M.A. He worked as a departmental demonstrator and then as a University demonstrator in the Imperial Forestry Institute. During 1947-48 he travelled in Northern Rhodesia and Tanganyika, studying their woody plants, and was also a member of the Cambridge Botanical Expedition to Nigeria and the Cameroons, under the leadership of Prof. P. W. Richards. He joined the staff of the Herbarium at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in 1958, working in the tropical African section, of which he was in charge from 1959 to 1965. In 1954 he was awarded a B.Sc. by the University of Oxford for work on the plant-geography of tropical Africa. In 1965 he was elected botanical secretary of the Linnean Society of London. Mr. Brenan has specialized on the flora of tropical Africa, especially the families *Leguminosae*, *Comelinaceae*, *Sterculiaceae* and *Chenopodiaceae*. His first major work was, in conjunction with Dr. P. J. Greenway, *Check Lists of the Forest Trees and Shrubs of the British Empire, No. 5, Part 2, Tanganyika Territory* (1949). He was responsible, with help from collaborators, for elaborating the plants collected by the Vernay Nyasaland Expedition of 1946 (published in the *Memoirs of the New York Botanical Garden*, 1953-54). He has contributed various families to the *Flora of Tropical East Africa*, including *Leguminosae* Subfamily *Mimosoideae* (1959). He has also written numerous shorter papers on the flora of Africa, and also some on the flora of Britain. Mr. Brenan translated into English Prof. P. Jaeger's book *Le Vie Étrange des Fleurs*, published in 1961 as *The Wonderful Life of Flowers*.

Director of the Tropical Products Institute, London:  
Mr. E. S. Hiscocks, C.B.E.

MR. E. S. HISCOCKS, director of the Tropical Products Institute of the Ministry of Overseas Development, will retire from the public service on March 31, 1966. After studying chemistry in the University of Wales, where he worked with J. A. V. Butler on physico-chemical properties of solutions, Mr. Hiscocks joined the Civil Service in 1926 in the then Department of the Government Chemist and for several years collaborated with Sir Robert Robertson and Sir John Fox in researches on infra-red absorption spectra of gases and the preliminary work on the structure of diamond. He later did work on ultra-violet absorption spectra of organic compounds and, after serving in various of the revenue sections of the Department, transferred in 1939 to the Raw Materials Department, Ministry of Supply. Here he set up, and ran, the technical branch of that Department. In 1944 he was appointed secretary of the National Physical Laboratory and remained there until 1957, when he became director of the United Kingdom Scientific Mission (North America) and Scientific Attaché to the British Embassy, Washington, D.C. He returned from the United States at the end of 1960 on his appointment as director of the Tropical Products Institute. During his period at the National Physical Laboratory he was closely concerned with the adjustment of the Laboratory's organization and work to the requirements of the post-war period. During this time he wrote numerous papers on various aspects of the organization and administration of scientific work. He also organized an international symposium on the direction of research establishments, held at the Laboratory in 1956. In that year his book *Laboratory Administration* was published. During the five years he has spent at the Tropical Products Institute, Mr. Hiscocks has been concerned not only with reorganization of the Institute's work, to meet the changed

requirements of the developing countries of the Commonwealth, but also in extending its scope of operation to other developing countries in the Middle East, South America and the Pacific, during visits to those areas. He has also furthered collaboration between the Institute and various agencies of the United Nations Organisation. Mr. Hiscocks was a United Kingdom delegate to the Pacific Science Congress in 1961 and was United Kingdom delegate to the United Nations Committee for Industrial Development in 1964.

### Dr. P. C. Spensley

MR. E. S. HISCOCKS will be succeeded as director of the Tropical Products Institute by the present deputy director, Dr. P. C. Spensley. Dr. Spensley was a foundation scholar of St. Paul's School and of Keble College, Oxford, where he studied chemistry. His research after the Second World War in the Dyson Perrins Laboratory at Oxford was mainly concerned with the synthesis of organic compounds of possible therapeutic interest. Between 1940 and 1945, Dr. Spensley was on the staff of the Ministry of Supply, Royal Ordnance Factories, where he was concerned with explosives and ammunition production, smoke weapons development and standards. In 1950 Dr. Spensley joined the staff of the National Institute for Medical Research and, in the course of a working visit to East Africa, discovered a method by which a valuable, but minor, component of the sisal plant—hecogenin—could be extracted economically as a by-product of the sisal fibre industry. This process he developed further with the National Research Development Corporation and it is now operated commercially in Tanzania and Kenya to provide hecogenin for the production of steroid drugs. Dr. Spensley received a major inventor's award for this work in 1963. In 1954, Dr. Spensley was appointed to the scientific staff of the Colonial Office in the Imperial Institute and became Scientific Secretary of the Colonial Products Council. With the then director he was closely concerned with the planning which led to the evolution in 1958 of the Tropical Products Institute and soon afterwards he was made assistant director in charge of administration and development. In this post he has travelled widely and attended a number of international meetings. He assisted Sir William Slater in the organization of the British contribution to the major United Nations Conference on the Application of Science and Technology for the benefit of the Less Developed Areas, held in Geneva in 1963.

Plant Pathology in Queen's University, Belfast:

Prof. A. E. Muskett, O.B.E.

PROF. A. E. MUSKETT retired on December 31, 1965, from his chair in the Department of Mycology and Plant Pathology at Queen's University, Belfast, and from his position as head of the Plant Pathology Division of the Ministry of Agriculture for Northern Ireland. A native of Norfolk, he graduated from the Imperial College of Science and Technology, where he studied under Sir John Farmer, and went to Belfast in 1923 on his appointment as a research assistant in the Seed Testing and Plant Disease Division of the Ministry and as an assistant in agricultural botany at Queen's. He obtained his D.Sc. from London in 1938. His continued successes and promotion led to the formation in 1938 of a separate Plant Pathology Division of the Ministry, of which he became head, and led, in 1945, to his appointment to the newly created chair in the University. He was president of the British Mycological Society in 1948. In 1957 he was awarded the O.B.E. Prof. Muskett's early publications on the control of American gooseberry mildew and apple scab led to the adoption of regular spraying programmes suitable for local conditions. The toxicity of lime sulphur sprays to apple trees and the efficiency of an excess-lime Bordeaux mixture were demonstrated. Further research naturally centred chiefly around the potato, oat and flax crops, with special reference to tuber disinfection with organic mer-