

OBITUARIES

Sir Frank Stockdale, G.C.M.G., C.B.E.

THE sudden death on August 13 of Sir Frank Stockdale at the comparatively early age of sixty-six came as a shock to his numerous friends and removed one who occupied an outstanding, indeed almost a unique, position in Colonial affairs.

Frank Arthur Stockdale was born in 1883; after graduating at Cambridge, he was appointed in 1905 mycologist and lecturer in agricultural science in the Imperial Department of Agriculture for the West Indies, the prototype of the majority of Colonial departments of agriculture, which was later merged in the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture. His administrative ability early attracted attention and in 1909 he became assistant director of the newly organised Department of Agriculture in British Guiana. In 1912 he was promoted to be director of agriculture in Mauritius, and entrusted with the duty of organising the new Department established on the recommendation of the Royal Commission of 1909. So well did he perform this task that his successors were able to build with security on the foundations which he laid; this was no mean accomplishment in those days, when the importance of departments of agriculture was not invariably recognized and the most suitable form for their activities was not always clear.

In 1916 Stockdale was transferred to the corresponding post in Ceylon where, up to that time, the Department of Agriculture had not entirely fulfilled expectations. During the next few years he successfully reorganised it and gave it the form which it has since retained; incidentally, the lines he evolved provided an administrative pattern for agricultural services which was followed afterwards in many other dependencies. He also played a leading part in the establishment of the rubber, tea and coconut research schemes of Ceylon, which were the forerunners of many other crop research institutes later established elsewhere in the Colonial dependencies. The fine block of administrative offices and laboratories at Peradeniya in which the Department of Agriculture is housed were erected during his tenure of office and are a lasting monument to his activities.

In 1929 he accepted appointment as agricultural adviser to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, a post created on the recommendation of the Lovatt Committee on the staffing of Colonial departments of agriculture, which he occupied for the next eleven years. During this period he played a leading part in the organisation and development of the Colonial Agricultural Service and of the Colonial Advisory Council on Agriculture and Animal Health, of which he was the first vice-chairman. He also made numerous visits and tours to the majority of the Colonial dependencies, incidentally visiting a number of other countries. The results of these tours were summarized in a series of reports which were models of clarity of exposition, and contained suggestions, observations and recommendations which often formed the basis of future policy and developments.

Stockdale's outstanding ability and profound knowledge of Colonial conditions caused him to be selected in 1940 for the difficult and responsible post of comptroller for development and welfare in the West Indies, constituted on the recommendation of the West India Royal Commission of 1938-39. As such he was charged with the apportionment and

general administration of the grants for development and improvement of the West Indian Colonies amounting to £1,000,000 per annum under the first Colonial Development and Welfare Act. He was assisted by a team of experts in agriculture, public health, education, economics and other branches of social service, which eventually became affectionately known as the 'Stockdale circus'. The post was one of more than ordinary difficulty, particularly so having regard to the diversity of aspects concerned and the oft-times conflicting interests involved, and he discharged the duties with marked ability and considerable success.

In 1945 he returned to England to assume the post of adviser for development and welfare at the Colonial Office, in which capacity he was concerned with the examination, criticism and revision of the numerous schemes submitted by Colonial Governments and others for developments under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, a task for which he was pre-eminently fitted in virtue of his past experience.

When the Colonial Development Corporation was inaugurated in 1948, he was the obvious choice for the post of vice-chairman. About the same time he accepted office as chairman of the governing body of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, of which he had been a member for a number of years, in succession to Sir Eric Macfadyen.

Stockdale's achievements were many and covered a vast field; but it is probably in connexion with agriculture, and more particularly agriculture in its Colonial and tropical aspects, that he will be specially remembered. His knowledge in this latter regard was profound and extensive; gifted with a clear and retentive memory and a faculty for grasping essentials, he could invariably be relied upon for a sound and authoritative pronouncement on almost any topic relating to Colonial agriculture that came up for notice. He was a remarkably sound judge of character, a faculty which was invaluable in the selection of candidates for entrance to the Colonial Agricultural Service. It is certainly not too much to say that this Service owes more to him than to any other individual.

His work was for the most part on the administrative rather than on the scientific side; but that he possessed capacity for research of no mean order is shown by his early scientific work, and particularly by a paper published in 1907 in which he described a technique for producing sugar cane seedlings of which both male and female parents were known; this was the forerunner of the later work of Jeswiet in Java and Barber in India which completely revolutionized cane breeding. There is little doubt that had Stockdale not forsaken research for administration, he would in due course have gone far as a research worker.

With his great qualities as an administrator he combined tact, an unflinching sense of humour, and serene imperturbability in the most difficult circumstances. His demeanour was unassuming and he was always approachable. By those who, like the writer, were privileged to work in close association with him for a space, he will be remembered not only as an able administrator with an untiring capacity for work, but also as a friend upon whose kindness, sympathy and tact one could always rely.

He married in 1908 Miss Annie Dora Packer, by whom he had two sons and to whom he was devoted. She was his constant companion, and her death last

year was a heavy blow which it may be surmised hastened his end. His death leaves a gap which cannot easily be filled, while his many achievements will continue to bear fruit for years to come.

H/6
H. TEMPANY

In my recollection Sir Frank will remain always as a man possessing the qualities of sympathy, patience and understanding in rare degree. To the Colonial Development Corporation he was many things besides. His good name in the Colonies was a great asset. Doors opened to him readily. Of knowledge in Colonial agriculture, horticulture and topography he was an encyclopædia. Whenever new schemes were under consideration his mind rapidly surveyed the initial, often daunting, obstacles of preliminary experiment and investigation. If a new crop were mooted, on new ground, his advice as a starting point was often something like this: "Yes, it should be all right if the rainfall is not higher than 70 in.; but if, as I suspect, it is 100 in. or more, the crop will suffer from such-and-such disease." There was no consciousness of superior merit in his voice as he imparted his quiet advice, the distilled essence of his own knowledge and life's experience. As an agricultural expert alone, his value to the Corporation was beyond compute; but he was not content to limit his duties even to this broad sphere. As deputy chairman he played a routine part in nearly every scheme which was undertaken. More than that, he served as chairman of the Corporation's subsidiary in East Africa, and the effort of travel in that region in no way discouraged him from fulfilling his obligations there. To the end he remained eager for work—and it is by his work that he will still be remembered long after those who knew him as a sterling colleague and a kind friend have themselves passed away.

TREFGARNE

H/6
Mr. E. E. Green

MR. E. E. GREEN, who died at Camberley on July 2, was well known as an authority on the Coccidæ and as Government entomologist in Ceylon. No 'expert' employed by the Ceylon Government was so well known to the planting community as 'Pouchee Green' as he was called. 'Pouchee' is the Tamil word for an insect. Green, who was born in Ceylon in 1861, was not trained as an entomologist. His father, Mr. John Philip Green, of Colombo, sent him to Charterhouse for his education. Returning to Ceylon in 1880, he became a tea planter. In 1886 the coffee industry in Ceylon was threatened by the green scale bug, a pest which seemed likely to put an end to the industry. Green, who had an inborn love for natural history, turned his attention to this pest and published a paper on the species, which was printed by the Government of Ceylon.

The Planters' Association was impressed by Green's work, and he was invited to visit estates and advise on methods of dealing with pests, and a few years later, in 1897, Green was appointed Government entomologist. The post was at first honorary, but later he became economic entomologist at the Peradeniya Botanic Gardens. This was his most active period. Being a man with private means, he was able to take leave in England at his own expense, when his studies made this necessary. In 1913 the Ceylon Government placed the scientific officers at Peradeniya under a new department, the Agricultural

Department. Green, who was then fifty and suffering from malaria, retired at this time.

In England, Green settled at Camberley and devoted his time to his favourite group, the Coccidæ. In these he became an international authority and spent much of his time naming collections from all over the world for his numerous correspondents. All this work was done at his own expense, often for Government departments. While intolerant of most professional entomologists, he was extremely helpful and generous to these correspondents. The coloured plates of his great work, the "Coccidæ of Ceylon", were drawn by himself. The book was issued in five parts over a period of twenty-six years and remains his chief monument. His interest in entomology was general and he wrote more than four hundred papers. In 1923 the Royal Entomological Society honoured Green by making him president. He leaves a widow, two sons and a daughter.

5/6
Prof. A. Lo Surdo

ITALIAN geophysics lost one of its most notable leaders on June 7 with the death, at the age of sixty-nine, of Prof. Antonino Lo Surdo, founder and director of the National Institute of Geophysics at Rome. Born in Syracuse, he graduated in physics at Messina. The great Messina earthquake of 1908 robbed him of all his family, save a brother, a loss that cast a shadow of sadness over his whole later life, in which he contracted no further family ties. He taught and carried out research at Messina and, from 1919, at the University of Rome, where he held the chair of physics until his death; he gave great attention to experimental demonstrations in his teaching.

By very delicate measurements Lo Surdo disproved Landolt's theory that chemical reactions were accompanied by an appreciable variation of mass; and among other spectroscopic studies, he independently, and at about the same time as Stark, discovered that electric fields affect the spectra of gases emitting radiation. He also worked on interference and other properties of microwaves, on binaural hearing and acoustic physiological properties of the human ear, and on thermionics.

In later life Lo Surdo devoted himself increasingly to geophysics, in many branches. When the Italian National Research Council was initiated at the end of the First World War, he secured the foundation under its auspices of the National Institute of Geophysics, which later became an independent body; it has supported many geophysical stations and projects in Italy, and in particular has greatly developed the Rome seismological station. Very recently he founded the beautifully produced *Annali di Geofisica*. He was present at last year's assembly of the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics at Oslo, and those who met him there will grieve to learn of his death.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Dr. G. S. Baker, O.B.E., the first superintendent of the William Froude Laboratory, National Physical Laboratory, on August 16, aged seventy-one.

Prof. A. Borvin, director of the bacteriological laboratory of the National Centre of Scientific Research, Strasbourg, on July 10.

Mr. H. O. Newbould, fellow and mathematical tutor of Merton College, Oxford, aged fifty-two.