

OBITUARY NOTICES

**Lieut.-Colonel J. Stephenson, I.M.S., M.B., F.R.C.S.,
D.Sc., F.R.S., C.I.E.**

Born in 1871, educated at Manchester, Bachelor of Science of London at the age of 19, John Stephenson graduated as Bachelor of Medicine at Manchester and London with highest honours. After holding two resident hospital appointments, he entered the Indian Medical Service in 1895. He did five years' military duty, and was then appointed Civil Surgeon in the Punjab. It was characteristic of him that, during his first period of leave, he worked for and obtained the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. He was appointed Professor of Biology in the Government College, Lahore, in 1906, and the rest of his service was passed in the College, of which he became Principal in 1912. The C.I.E. was conferred on him in 1919, and he left India in 1920.

Colonel Stephenson was a man of very varied talents; with the highest medical qualifications, a keen scientific outlook, and a charm of manner such as few men possess, there is no doubt that in the practice of his profession he would have gone very far. But he made the study of Biology his life-work, and his election to the Fellowship of the Royal Society in 1930 marks the value of his contribution to that Science. Elsewhere tribute has been paid to his professional and scientific attainments; here it must suffice to note that, after twenty-five years' service in India, he was for ten years lecturer on Zoology in Edinburgh University, and for the last three years was doing important work as editor of the *Fauna of British India*. A Fellow of the Linnean and Zoological Societies, he was taking an active part in the work of both. Though in indifferent health for a number of years, he retained to the end his zeal for work.

To members of this Society, which he joined in 1906, another branch of his activities makes more appeal. As an Oriental scholar he had made his mark, and, but for his strong sense of duty, would have devoted yet more of his time to Oriental studies. He possessed in an unusual degree the gift of tongues. Within a few weeks of his arrival in India he passed his first language examination, and before the end of his first year had taken the Higher Standard in both Hindustani and Persian. The High Proficiency Persian came later, and he spoke fluently Pashtu and Punjabi, and acquired a considerable knowledge of Arabic. Only a few years ago he was deputed by the Government of India to attend an international Science Congress in Italy. At the time he had no knowledge of the Italian language, yet after a few weeks' stay in the country he was able to act as interpreter between the Italian and English-speaking delegates.

His first serious work as an Orientalist was the editing and translation of the first book of the *Hadiqatu-l-Haqiqat of Sana'i*. The subject in itself is difficult enough, but the difficulties were much increased by the disorder into which the text had fallen. The translation was nearly completed from lithographs of the text obtained from Lucknow and Bombay, no manuscript being available in India. Later the heavy work of collating these and five manuscripts in the British Museum and India Office Libraries, only two of which showed any close agreement, was undertaken during a period of leave in England. The work was completed in 1908, but was not published till 1910. Printed in Calcutta, it does not seem to have met with the recognition it undoubtedly deserves, if only as the first translation into any European language of the most important work of one of the earliest exponents of Sufi doctrine. The collation of manuscripts and editing the text must have been an immense labour; but the result justifies Colonel Stephenson's claim that he had, at least in some cases, restored the original order of the lines and made sense where before it was wanting.

In 1928 appeared, as vol. xxx of the New Series of the Oriental Translation Fund the Zoological Section of the *Nuzhatu-l-Qulub* of *Hamdulla al-Mustaufi*, edited, translated, and annotated by Colonel Stephenson. This also was begun from a lithographed copy obtained in India, later collated with six manuscripts in Europe. A full review of this work, by Professor Nicholson, appeared in the Society's JOURNAL in January, 1930, to which I can only add an expression of the debt due to the author from those interested in the history of medicine.

Several reviews by Colonel Stephenson in the JOURNAL are not only admirable in themselves, but demonstrate what manner of man the writer was and bear witness to his scientific insight, his philosophy, and his intense interest in humanity in all climes and ages. These were all essential parts of him, but perhaps those who were privileged to call themselves his friends will remember, with the keenest sense of loss, his innate courtesy and kindness and his understanding sympathy.

G. MACI. C. SMITH.

Professor A. H. Sayce

An admirable account of the life and work of Professor Sayce was printed in the *Times* of 6th February, and an interesting estimate of his career in Oxford by colleagues at Queen's in *The Oxford Magazine* of 16th February. Having been asked by the President and Council to contribute an obituary notice of the great Orientalist to the JOURNAL of the Royal Asiatic Society, I have chosen to turn rather to personal reminiscences and impressions covering half a century.

I well remember my first meeting with Sayce, the hesitating climb up the college stairs and the tap at his door, immediately answered by the great man himself, who conducted me to a chair with charming courtesy and eventually invited me to