

II. OBITUARY NOTES AND BIOGRAPHIES

We are very sorry to learn that Mr J.M. Black, the father of South Australian botany, passed away suddenly but in full harness after a short illness in his 97th year, medio December 1951. Dr Black was born in Wigtown, Scotland, and received his early education there, finishing in Dresden, Germany. He arrived in South Australia in 1877 and farmed for 5 years. Between 1883 and 1902 he held varied and finally important positions on the staff of "Hansard", "The Register", and "The Advertiser". Having achieved the highest position possible in this field he retired to devote full time leisure to the study of native and naturalised plants growing in S. Australia. He achieved considerable fame for by 1929 he had completed his four part work "Flora of South Australia", one of the most critical Floras of that continent. In 1930 he attended the International Botanical Congress and the Linnean Society made him an associate. During subsequent years he was awarded many honours by various Australian scientific associations some of which include the Sir Joseph Vercoe Medal, Mueller Medal, Natural History Medallion, and the Clarke Memorial Medal. He was awarded an M.B.E. in 1942.

In 1927 he was appointed honorary lecturer in systematic botany at the University of Adelaide. At the age of 80 he produced part one of the 2nd edition of his Flora, part two coming out in 1948.

It is a considerable loss that Mr Black was not able to complete his work but undoubtedly a considerable victory for a person within one lifetime to reach the highest positions in his profession and his "hobby". It is fortunate that Prof. J.B. Cleland and Miss Dr C.M. Eardley of Adelaide University have undertaken to complete part 4 of the 2nd edition. Part 3, to which Mr Black was working right up to the end and on which he had completed his notes to Plumbaginaceae will be issued immediately.

Mr Black was always quiet and unassuming, never wishing to be forceful although his decisions when giving determinations were always concise.

It has been my good fortune to meet Mr Black at Adelaide in 1950 and this Bulletin had the privilege to reproduce a photo of him on the cover of number 7, amidst his friends. We will remember him besides for his wide critical knowledge, for the unselfishness with which he served botany, and for the kind way in which he conveyed his knowledge to his juniors.

Nov. 19, 1951, Dr K.W. Dammerman, former director of the Botanic Gardens at Buitenzorg, 1932-1939, died suddenly at Voorburg, Holland, aged 66. Dr Dammerman is well-known for his many important works on the economic, systematic and geographic zoology of Indonesia.

Malayan Forestry lost several of its former important members. Mr James Gilbert Watson, well-known for his work

in mangroves in Malaya, died Jan.6, 1950, aged 60.

A short biographical note was written in honour of the Hon'ble Mr B.J.C.S. Spurway, M.B.E., when retiring as conservator of Forests Sarawak (Mal.For.14,1951,104).

An obituary note on the late John Phillips Mead, late director and adviser on Forestry S.S. & F.M.S., 1935-1940, appeared in the Mal.For.14,1951, 58-59.

A series of papers has been published in honour of the prominent Japanese botanist, the late Prof. Keito Shibata (1878-1949), in Misc.Rep.Inst.Nat.Resources nos 17-18, Nov. 1950.

A biography on the great Swedish botanist L. von Post (1884-1951) was written by Dr O.Selling in Svensk Bot.Tidskr. 45, 1951, p.275-296.

We regret the death of the great Russian taxonomist B.A. Fedtschenko on whom an obituary note appeared in Kew Bull. 1951, p.28; a bibliography has been published in Sovyetskaja Botanica 1940, no 3.

On the life and work of the late Prof. Ludwig Diels, formerly general director of the Botanic Gardens & Museums at Berlin-Dahlem, a biography was written by Dr J. Mildebrad in Bot.Jahrb. 74,1948,173-198, incl.portr. and bibliography.

An obituary note on Prof.Dr J. Mattfeld was written by Prof. Markgraf in Taxon 1,1951,33-34; Dr Mattfeld made some excellent, critical studies on Papuan Compositae.