

OBITUARY

SIR BRYCE CHUDLEIGH BURT,
Kt., C.I.E., M.B.E., B.Sc., I.A.S. (Retd.)

WE very much regret to record the death of Sir Bryce Burt, retired Vice-Chairman of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research in England in January 1943 at the age of 62.

Sir Bryce was born in April 1881 and graduated from the University College, London, in 1901 with first class Honours. While a student in the University, he was a Clothworker's Exhibitioner in Chemistry. After graduating he was for a couple of years (1902-1904) assistant lecturer in Chemistry at the Liverpool University. From 1904-1907 he was at Trinidad, British West Indies, as assistant Government Chemist and lecturer in Tropical Agriculture. He joined the Indian Agricultural Service in India in January 1908 and was posted to United Provinces as Deputy Director of Agriculture and this post he held for a period of thirteen years until 1921. During this period for a term of three years (1912-1915) he did the duties of the Director of Industries of the Province also in addition to his agricultural work. When the Indian Central Cotton Committee was constituted in 1921, he was appointed its first Secretary, which post he held for seven years, until 1928. After this he was appointed for the short period of a year Director of Agriculture in Bihar and Orissa and was later appointed the first Agricultural Expert to the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research (since changed into Agricultural Commissioner to the Government of India) when it was started. He acted for two short periods as Vice-Chairman of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research and became the permanent Vice-Chairman in October 1935 when Sir T. Vijayaraghavacharya retired. In 1932 he went to Ottawa for five months as the official Adviser to the Indian Delegation to the Imperial Economic Conference. Later, he was one of the Advisers to the Indian Trade Delegation in 1937. He retired and left India in April 1939 after

thirty-one years of service and having reached the highest post open for a person belonging to Indian Agricultural Service. After retirement, when war started in September 1939, he joined the Food Ministry and was working in it as the Director of Animal Feeding Staff until the time of his death.

One outstanding feature of Sir Bryce Burt was his organising capacity with a mastery of details and this was apparent from his work, particularly in the two new bodies, the Indian Central Cotton Committee and the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research. He was a man of extraordinary energy and his knowledge of things was encyclopaedic which was the result of his varied activities in the early years of his service. People who had worked with him in U.P. in the early years used to say that Burt was always a busy body, would never spare himself nor let others associated with him take things easy. To quote the words of the reviewer of his career in India when he retired from service in 1939, "Probably no single man has so deeply influenced Indian Agriculture in so many directions as Sir Bryce Burt did". The setting up of the agricultural marketing organization and the promotion of technological research directed to elucidating the factors determining quality in agricultural products might be said to be two of the outstanding features of his activities.

As Chairman of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, he was *ex-officio* Chairman of so many bodies, namely, the Indian Central Cotton Committee, the Indian Central Jute Committee, the Indian Lac Cess Committee, the Indian Coffee Cess Committee, and both wings of the Board of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry in India. He took great interest in the development of Soil Science and was largely responsible for starting the Indian Society of Soil Science. He was a foundation fellow of the National Institute of Sciences in India and one of the Editorial Co-operators since the

inception of *Current Science*. He was a familiar figure at the various sessions of the Indian Science Congress Association and was the President of the Agricultural Section in 1924.

By his vast knowledge of things connected with every branch of Agricultural Science, he commanded the esteem and regard of all the Agricultural Officers throughout India. He was always a sound judge of men and was easily approachable and kind to the junior Agricultural Officers. Anyone who went to him for consultation and discussion always returned with additional knowledge to his benefit.

Government was not slow in recognising the value of his work and honours bestowed on him were numerous—Kaiser-i-Hind Medal in 1912, M.B.E. in 1919, C.I.E. in 1930 and Knighthood in 1936.

We offer our condolences to Lady Burt and the family of late Sir Bryce Burt.

MR. V. S. SAMBASIVA IYER,
B.Sc., L.C.E.

WE regret to report the death, on 10th January 1943, at Madras, of Mr. V. S. Sambasiva Iyer, retired Professor of Geology, Central College, Bangalore. After passing the B.Sc. and L.C.E. examinations of the Bombay University, Mr. Sambasiva Iyer joined the Mysore Geological Department as one of the Probationers and soon rose to the position of Assistant Geologist. He was appointed Professor of Geology in the Central College in the year 1914, which post he held till his retirement in 1920. Even after his retirement from official service he continued to be an active field geologist and took a prominent part in the development of the mineral resources of South India. By his pleasant and amiable disposition and his unostentatious and simple habits, he had endeared himself to all his students, friends and colleagues alike.

RESEARCH PAYS

RESEARCH pays in hard, cold cash, Eugene Ayres of the Gulf Research and Development Company told the meeting of the American Chemical Society recently. He explained a numerical yardstick which he has developed, which gives an estimate of the differences in costs between industrial processes put into operation without waiting for preliminary experimentation and those that are given the benefit of research in laboratory and pilot plant, together with proper patent procedures, before they are started. If a given industrial problem is carried through all three steps of research, patent procedures and pilot plant experiments, the total cost of "make-ready" is considerably less than half that involved in rushing into full production without the preliminary steps. How necessary the pilot-plant stage is also shown up in the table. With laboratory research and patent procedure, but omitting pilot

plant the costs were substantially greater than those of complete preparation, though still substantially less than those of no preparation at all. Mr. Ayres cited the case of a company that found it necessary to go into the manufacture of a new chemical in a hurry: "There were no large-scale precedents for this operation, but two good process ideas were offered by the Research Department. Because of the emergency, it was decided to commercialise one idea without any research while the second idea was carried in orderly fashion through laboratory and pilot plant. Despite the delay occasioned by months of research, the second idea resulted in a smoothly operating plant before the first and at much lower development cost. The first idea was then sent back to the Research Laboratory and a year later superseded the second."—FRANK THONE.

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