

Obituary.

Dr. A. N. Meldrum, I.E.S.

ANDREW NORMAND MELDRUM died in Edinburgh on the 14th of March 1934, as the result of an accident. He was born on March 19th, 1876, and was educated at the Royal College of Science, London, Aberdeen University and the Victoria University, Manchester. He obtained the A.R.C.Sc. (London) in 1896 and the D.Sc. of Aberdeen in 1904. Before he came to India he was a member of the chemical staff at the University College, Liverpool, and of Aberdeen University.

Dr. Meldrum joined the Indian Education Service in 1912, and was appointed to the Professorship of Chemistry at the M. R. Science Institute of the Gujrat College, Ahmedabad. In 1922 he was transferred to the Royal Institute of Science, Bombay, as Professor of Chemistry, and he was appointed Principal of the Royal Institute of Science, in 1925. He retired on reaching the age limit in 1931.

When Dr. Meldrum came to the Bombay Presidency he first devoted himself to organising the Laboratories of the M. R. Science Institute, and to improving the Science courses of Bombay University. These courses and the methods of teaching science employed throughout the Presidency owe much to him. When the foundation was laid, he turned his attention to training students in the methods of research. Many of those who are now doing research and teaching work in the Presidency were his students. He worked chiefly on the chemistry of chloral compounds, and as his knowledge of chemistry was wide, he also carried out investigations for the Department of Industries on problems of industrial interest, and studied the electrical properties of acids, such as boric acid in solution. Between 1926 and 1931, 22 students obtained the M.Sc. degree by thesis under his guidance.

He did not limit his activities to Bombay, for he served as President of the Chemistry Section of the Indian Science Congress, and he was for a time Editor of the *Journal of the Indian Chemical Society*.

During the years he was in Bombay he took an active part in University affairs, and was a member of the Senate and the Syndicate, and served on a great number of University Committees. In 1930, he was

elected Dean of the Faculty of Science. He took a prominent part on the Committee which did the preliminary work, leading to the founding of the new Bombay University Department of Chemical Technology. Dr. Meldrum was nominated by Government as a Trustee of the Prince of Wales Museum of Western India, and as a member of the Provincial Council for Agricultural Research.

Dr. Meldrum left India in 1931 amidst the hearty good wishes of his many friends for a happy retirement, in which he would enjoy a well-earned rest. A Committee was appointed to establish a memorial in his honour, and an annual prize known as the Meldrum Memorial Prize has been founded in the Royal Institute of Science. He settled down in Edinburgh, and devoted himself to these studies in the history of chemistry in which he had always been interested. He was one of the lecturers at the Priestly Celebration of the Chemical Society in 1933. He was peculiarly fitted for studies in historical chemistry, for added to a wide knowledge of science and a scholarly outlook, he possessed, unlike many scientists, a graceful English style.

He was not, however, to enjoy his retirement long. His only son died in 1933. He then decided to move to Berkshire, to be near his daughter, studying at Oxford, and he died while in Edinburgh completing the final preparations for moving. He leaves a widow and two daughters.

In Bombay educational circles he will long be missed. The Royal Institute of Science is much the poorer for his going, but the spirit which he inculcated will always remain. He has left a memory of a brilliant and painstaking teacher, who had a special pride in seeing that the foundations of the subject in the student's mind were well and truly laid, of a pleasant colleague, and of a just but sympathetic administrator. In his capacity as Principal he so bore himself, that all respected him, that most liked him, and that there were none who could deny to him the attributes of firmness, efficiency, and impartiality. Time will not dim his memory in the minds of those who had the pleasure of knowing him and the privilege of working with him.

T. S. W.