

## CENTENARIES

By S. R. Ranganathan, M.A., L.T., F.L.A.  
(University Librarian, Madras)

## Dale, Samuel (1659–1739)

**SAMUEL DALE**, a British botanist and physician, was apprenticed for eight years to an apothecary, and he established independent practice, about 1688. His critical knowledge of plants and drugs was acknowledged by eminent scientists of his day.

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO MEDICINE

His chief work was the *Pharmacologia or an introduction to the materia medica* (1693) which went through several editions even long after Dale's death. It was the first systematic work of importance on the subject.

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATIONAL SCIENCE

His second great work took the form of an appendix to the second edition (1730) of Silas Taylor's *History and antiquities of Harwich and Dovencourt*. He built up a herbarium of great value. He bequeathed this to the Apothecaries' Company and it is still preserved in the British Museum.

GENUS *Dalea*

Nine of his papers were published in the *Philosophical transactions* of the Royal Society. His services to Botany made Linnaeus immortalise his name in the leguminous *Dalea*.

Dale died June 6, 1739.

## Cunningham, Allen (1791–1839)

**ALLEN CUNNINGHAM**, an Australian botanist, was born at Wimbledon, Surrey, on July 13, 1791. He was educated at Putney and trained for the law by a Lincoln's Inn conveyancer. Finding these studies uncongenial, he became assistant to Acton, the manager of Kew Gardens. In 1814 he was appointed Botanical Collector to the Royal Gardens. Having spent two years in Brazil, he reached New South Wales in 1816. He spent the next sixteen years in explorations and botanical researches, having been attached to P. P. King's survey party from 1817 to 1822.

## HIS PUBLICATIONS

His notes on the botanical results of the survey occupy nearly 40 pages of King's *Narrative of a survey*. It was considered important enough to be issued separately in German as *Einige allgemeine Bemerkungen über die Vegetation, vorzüglich der Nordwestküste von Australien* (1829). Six other papers of Cunningham were published in different periodicals.

## AS COLONIAL BOTANIST

Having spent about four years in England to arrange and name his specimens at Kew,

he succeeded his brother in 1835 as Colonial Botanist; but he resigned in 1837 as he found that his duties included too much uncongenial work and actual gardening, the government officials having formed the habit of procuring their supply of vegetables from the botanical garden. But the Governor was anxious to retain his services and ordered the abolition of the "Cabbage Garden" practice. But Cunningham demanded the position of government botanist, with no responsibility for the botanical gardens and *carte blanche* as to the disposal of his time. As it was felt that the last condition might prove a dangerous precedent, he was offered as an alternative, six months' leave every year to prosecute explorations. But the negotiations fell through and Cunningham went away to botanise in New Zealand, from where he returned to Sydney in a deplorable state of health and died, June 27, 1839.

## Bell, Horace (1839–1903)

**HORACE BELL**, a British Indian engineer, was born in London, June 17, 1839. Having received his early education in France and at Louth in Lincolnshire, at the age fifteen, he was placed as a pupil with a civil engineer in Westminster. But recognising, even at that age, the need of thorough grounding in the profession he wished to follow, he went to Glasgow where he entered the firm of Messrs. D. Cook & Co., as an apprentice. Afterwards he worked in Caledonian Railway shops. In 1859 he got employed in London. Three years later, he was successful in open competition for an appointment as an assistant engineer in the Indian Public Works Department.

## AS INDIAN ENGINEER

He was posted, in the first instance, to the Central Provinces, where he worked on the construction of the Grant Deccan Road connecting Calcutta and Bombay. In 1870 he was sent on railway survey work to the Wardha valley and successively worked in the construction of several railways such as Indore (1870), Punjab Northern (1874), Rajputana (1875), Neemuch (1878), Great Western and the Moghul-Serai Railways.

## NILGIRI MOUNTAIN RAILWAY

On retirement, he established himself as a consulting engineer in London and as such, he guided the design and construction of the Nilgiri Mountain Railway, a rack railway of meter gauge, opened in 1899.

Bell died in London, April 10, 1903.