OBITUARY

SIR MARTIN ONSLOW FORSTER, F.R.S.

TO his wide circle of pupils, friends and admirers, both in India and abroad, the sad news of the sudden and unexpected death of Sir Martin Forster which occurred at his residence in the city of Mysore on 23rd May 1945 has come as a severe shock. He was seventy-two. A few weeks prior to his death, on 8th of May 1945, he sent for publication in *Current Science* a "connected story" of the Royal Society which has been posthumously published in the last issue of the Journal. He had informed his numerous friends in Bangalore that he had planned to stay there for a couple of weeks.

Sir Martin was born on the 8th of November 1872; he received his education at the Finsbury Technical College. His academic career was punctuated by the award of several research fellowships and scholarships; in 1894 he secured the research fellowship of the Salters Company; in 1899 he became Granville scholar at the University of London. In 1915 he was honoured by the Chemical Society by the award of the Longstaff Medal. In 1905, at the early age of thirty-three, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. For about ten years (1902-13) he held the position of an Assistant Professor at the Royal College of Science, South Kensington. He served the Chemical Society as its Honorary Secretary during the period 1904-10 and was elected Vice-President, Institute of Chemistry for 1908-11.

During the last War when the British Dyestuff Industry was reorganised and consolidated, Sir Martin was invited to serve on the Directorate of the British Dyes Ltd. (1915-18). From 1918-22, he occupied the post of Director of the Salters Institute of Industrial Chemistry. He was elected President of the chemical section of the Edinburgh session (1921) of the British Association for the Advancement of Science; his presidential address to this meeting bears the imprint of his discipleship under Emil Fischer.

During one of his visits to England, Sir Dorab Tata extended a personal invitation to Sir Martin Forster to accept the Directorship of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. The administration of the Institute had, for some time past, been the topic of adverse criticism both from the public and the press; a committee of enquiry, presided over by Sir William Pope, had just issued its report and published its recommendations for the future working of the Institute. The Institute, at that time, needed a gifted administrator of far-sighted vision and outstanding ability, endowed with a sympathetic understanding of the special needs of the country. Sir Martin Forster accepted the invitation of Sir Dorab and took charge of the Institute as Director on 3rd November 1922.

The reorganisation of the Institute during that critical period was an extremely delicate and difficult task. Sir Martin had to steer clear of the strongly entrenched vested interests on the one hand and on the other, a critically-minded public who were agitating for a thorough overhaul of the administration of the Institute. With characteristic skill and determination, Sir Martin set himself to the task of reforming the Council and overhauling the staff; he brought about a "miracle" in the administration and the tutorial and research activities of the Institute. He was fortunate in securing the willing and enthusiastic co-operation of his colleagues—the late Professor Catterson Smith, Professors Norris, Simonsen and Watson—a brilliant team, who, under the inspiring leadership of Sir Martin, expanded and modernised their respective departments.

Sir Martin's Directorship, which covered a little more than ten years, marks an eventful era in the history of the Institute, distinguished by scientific achievement and technological progress. New courses, *e.g.*, Communication Engineering, were inaugurated; fresh lines of research were initiated; the necessary funds and facilities were freely and abundantly made available to the scientific investigators; Sir Martin raised the prestige of the Institute,

founded an edifice of liberal traditions of the highest academic life, created an atmosphere of confidence and contentment, and inspired the young men who passed through the Institute during the period to build up the qualities of courageous leadership and professional integrity. His greatest contribution to the scientific and industrial advancement of this country is the successive generations of young men who passed through the Institute; these are now filling positions of responsibility and trust throughout the country.

Sir Martin relinquished the Directorship on 31st March 1933 and at the gracious and kind invitation of the late His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore, he settled down in the peaceful and lovely environments of the Garden City of Mysore. During the period of his retirement he placed himself at the disposal of those who sought his counsel and help. He continued to take a keen interest in the affairs of the Institute. He was invited to serve on the Council of the University of Mysore and on the Advisory panel of the Board of Scientific and Industrial Research of the Government of Mysore.

Current Science owes its inception largely to his genius and foresight; he presided over the inaugural meeting convened to consider the founding of the Journal and conducted the proceedings with great tact and deep sympathy. He was intimately and actively connected with the progress of the Journal whose pages he has enriched with his editorials, reviews and notes on important questions of the day.

Almost to the end, he kept himself active and alert; those of us who saw him a few weeks before his death could hardly have imagined that his end was so near. In his death, we have lost a sincere friend, an outstanding chemist, an inspiring teacher, a sympathetic adminstrator and a great gentleman. His pupils and colleagues will for long cherish his memory with gratitude and affection.

DR. STANLEY KEMP, F.R.S.

THE death of Dr. S. W. Kemp, Director of the Marine Biological Laboratory at Plymouth, on the 16th of May, has removed one of the foremost figures in the field of marine biological and fishery investigations in the British Commonwealth.

Kemp was born in 1882 and was educated at the St. Paul's School, and at the Trinity College, Dublin. He began his scientific career as Assistant Naturalist to the Fisheries Research Section of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, Ireland, which he joined in 1903. Investigation of the fauna of the Irish seas was one of the main problems of the Department and it was there that Kemp began his series of studies on the Crustacea, a group in which he subsequently became an outstanding authority. With the re-organization of the Indian Museum at Calcutta, he joined its zoological section in 1910 as the Superintendent. The constitution of the Zoological Survey of India which followed and the active collaboration of Kemp and the then Director, the late Dr. Annandale, was a period of great expansion of the activities of the Survey which produced the most fruitful results in the study of the Indian fauna. The development of the different sections of the Museum and of its two scientific journals, the *Records* and the *Memoirs*, owes much to the enthusiasm and energy of Kemp. His scientific work was on the taxonomy of Indian Crustacea, mainly the Decapoda, but in addition he devoted much time to the biological surveys of the Chilka Lake and of the Siju Cave in Assam, sharing the same enthusiasm and versatile qualities of his friend and chief, Annandale. During the Abor Punitive Expedition (1911-12) he was attached to the party as the Zoologist and Anthropologist. The expedition led to the discovery of Peripatus (*Typhlloperipatus williamsoni* Kemp) on the north-eastern frontier of India at the foot of the Himalayas.

Kemp's connexion with the Zoological Survey was cut short when in 1924 the Colonial Office constituted the Discovery Committee which he joined as the Director of Research and led the second Discovery Expedition to the Antarctic. After his return he was fully occupied with the co-ordination of the results of this Expedition in relation to Whale Fisheries and the editing of the series of Scientific Reports. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1931 and he presided over the Zoological Section of the British Association in 1937.

In 1936 the late Dr. E. J. Allen after a most distinguished period of Directorship of the Plymouth Laboratory for over 42 years expressed his desire to retire and Kemp was chosen as his successor. It is in this official position that his organizing abilities and broad vision in regard to scientific development found their full expression. Extended facilities for visiting workers and the staff were provided in a new scheme of expansion which Kemp carried out in 1939 and in the summer that preceded the outbreak of the Second World War there were no fewer than forty visiting scientific workers at the Plymouth Laboratory.

The outbreak of war created many problems for continuing the work of the laboratory but the crisis came in March 1941 when much damage to both building and equipment was done by the successive air-raids on Plymouth. Kemp himself was the worst sufferer for he lost all his personal possessions and his library along with much of his unpublished work. Through those difficult months that followed he steered the Institution with great courage and determination, losing no time to have detailed plans drawn up for the reconstruction of the Laboratory as soon as times permit rebuilding. His great ambition was to develop Plymouth into a strong nucleus for fundamental research on and training in fishery problems during the post-war period.

In regard to India he maintained an active interest in the problems relating to fishery work and did much to focus attention on this important aspect of National Planning. The last few months of his life were devoted to building up a strong organization for promoting Fisheries Investigations in the different countries of the British Commonwealth. His death is a great loss to the scientific world at a time when his mature judgment and counsel would have been invaluable in the drawing up of schemes for post-war reconstruction.

N. K. PANIKKAR.