

OBITUARY

SIR NORMAN (BOYD) KINNEAR, Honorary Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union, died on 11 August, 1957. Kinnear was born in Scotland on 11 August, 1882, and was descended from the famous naturalist, Sir William Jardine. He attended Trinity College, Glenalmond, and signified his great interest in birds and natural history by serving as a Volunteer Assistant at the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh from 1905 to 1907.

In 1907 he was offered the post of Assistant Curator at the Bombay Natural History Society and thus had a chance to go to India, a country he loved and on the subject of whose birds he continued to be an authority until his death. In 1913 he married Gwendolen Beatrice Millard, whose family had long been associated with India and with the development of the Bombay Natural History Society. The Kinnears have two daughters. In 1919 Kinnear returned to England and joined the staff of the British Museum (Natural History), serving first as an Assistant in Zoology, finally rising to be Director of the Museum from 1947 until his retirement in 1950 when he was knighted. He served in various capacities in ornithological societies in Great Britain, and was President of the British Ornithologists' Union from 1943 until 1948. The first post-War ornithological meeting in Europe, that of the B.O.U. at Edinburgh in 1947, was held under his Chairmanship.

Kinnear's specialty was the study of Indian birds. He was the author of numerous papers, many of them with his close friend, Hugh Whistler. He edited a "Handbook" of Indian Birds, prepared originally by Whistler, through a number of editions. His knowledge of the birds of Southern Asia was vast. He was also greatly interested in the historical development of scientific knowledge in that area and in the many persons who had played their parts in it. Shortly before his death he had contributed two articles to the Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society on the history of vertebrate zoology in India. He continued to be, in addition, Chairman of the British Section of the International Committee for Bird Preservation.

Sir Norman was a quiet, gentle man, happy to share his interests or knowledge with whomsoever should seek it, constantly anxious to be of aid to younger workers. His opinions were positive and decided, but not dogmatic. In January, 1957, he fractured his right leg and lay for over two months in hospital, but nothing daunted, was getting about on crutches, going regularly to London to work at the Museum. He never complained, and continued to be interested in all sorts of ornithological subjects until his sudden and unexpected death of a lung clot. He was a fine man, always helpful, and of him it might be said, "far may be sought erst ye can find, so courteous, so kind"—S. DILLON RIFLEY