

IV. OBITUARY NOTICES.

The *Rev. George Shirt*,¹ Senior Missionary of the Church Missionary Society in Sindh, was born at Cawthorne, Yorkshire, in 1843. Educated at the C.M.S. College, London, and the University of Cambridge, he took his B.A. degree at the latter, with honours (Oriental Tripos) in 1864. He left England for India in 1866, and was shipwrecked on his way out; but after spending four days and nights in an open boat, he and his companions in peril were picked up by a passing vessel, and landed safely in Bombay. Mr. Shirt was appointed to Hyderabad, the old capital of Sindh, and having rapidly acquired the language of the country, he laboured on till 1873, when he left on furlough to England. His stay at home was spent at Cambridge, where he was engaged chiefly in the study of Oriental languages. He returned to Sindh in 1875, and was stationed at Karachi till 1877. During these two years he compiled, at the request of the Government of India, his Sindhi Dictionary. In October, 1881, being in a bad state of health, he went to Quetta for three months, during which short period, besides carrying on his studies in Arabic, he acquired a considerable knowledge of Brahui. In August, 1882, he came to England on furlough, and again settled at Cambridge, where, besides taking an active part in parish work, he continued his Oriental studies in the University. During this period he competed for the "Brotherton Sanskrit Prize," and was adjudged equal with another, the prize being divided. In January, 1885, he returned to India through Persia, by means of which tour he added to an already scholarly acquaintance with Classic Persian a powerful knowledge of the Colloquial.

Arriving in Sindh, he made Sukkur his head-quarters, and once again took up the great work of his life, in carrying on his Translation of the Bible into Sindhi. He was spared, not only to translate, but also to thoroughly revise and test, the greater portion of the Holy Scriptures. A number of smaller books, tracts, and hymns were given by him at various times, during his twenty years' work, to the Sindhi Church. In April, 1886, he was sent, in company with Dr. S. W. Sutton, to open the new C. M. S. Mission at Quetta. He entered upon this fresh sphere of work with all his accustomed energy, working at the same time hard at Brahui. At

¹ Memoir kindly contributed by the Rev. J. Bambridge.

the beginning of June he was taken ill, and on the 16th he died, quite suddenly, and without pain. As a Christian Missionary and Pastor he was equalled by few, whilst by a diligent use of his great linguistic talents, he surpassed many in the amount of literary work he was enabled to accomplish. By Europeans and natives, Christians and Non-Christians, throughout the Province of Sindh, he was beloved and respected. Mr. Shirt was married in 1868, and leaves a widow and eight children.

In 1878 his name first appears among the Members of the Royal Asiatic Society. He was, moreover, a Fellow of the University of Bombay.

The *Hon. Sir Ashley Eden*, K.C.S.I. and C.I.E.,¹ whose death took place in London on the 9th July, was a son of the Bishop of Bath and Wells, and educated at Winchester and Haileybury. Of his life at the latter seminary nothing is worthy of remark save his comparative indifference to the results of the periodical examinations, which are popularly supposed to foreshadow the career of after-years. Passing in some way or another through these barriers of successful egress, he passed out in 1852, and joining the Bengal Civil Service, soon began to show of what stuff he was made, with the result, that in 1861, although but of nine years' standing, he was selected as Special Envoy to Sikkim. He did his work well on this occasion, and was rewarded with the Secretaryship of the Bengal Government, a post which he held for the long period of nine years, leaving his duties for a while to take charge of the Special Mission to Bhutan in 1864. In 1871 Mr. Eden became Chief Commissioner of British Burma, and in 1882 succeeded to the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal. After the regulated five years—having become in the meanwhile *Hon. Sir Ashley Eden*, K.C.S.I.—he retired from the Service, and joined the Council of the Secretary of State for India. Possessed of great determination of character, and wide experience of Bengal customs and manners, his loss in this country is well-nigh irreparable. Many who disagreed with his views will avow that he was a most powerful opponent and a most vigorous foe. He became a member of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1882, and at the period of his decease was on the Executive Committee of the Imperial Institute.

The death of *Sir Barrow Helbert Ellis*, K.C.S.I.,² removes from

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² By Sir George Birdwood, M.D., K.C.I.E., C.S.I., M.R.A.S.

the world a distinguished member of the Anglo-Indian community of London, and one of the most active Members of this Society, which he joined in 1876, and served on its Council from 1878 to the period of his decease, having been for three years a Vice-President. He was educated at University College School, and University College, London, and matriculated, in 1839, at the University of London, taking a scholarship in classics. He subsequently entered Haileybury College, from which he was appointed to the Bombay Civil Service on the 26th of July, 1843, arriving in India on the 11th December in the same year. He served from 1844 as Third Assistant-Collector, and from 1847 as Second Assistant at Ratnagiri; from 1848 as Commissioner for investigating certain claims against the Nizam's Government; and from 1851 to 1855 as Assistant-Commissioner, and from 1855 to 1857 in charge of the office of Commissioner, in Sind. This was during Sir Bartle Frere's absence in England, just before the outbreak of the Mutiny. From 1857 to 1859 he was at different times in charge of the office of Revenue Commissioner for the Southern Division of the Bombay Presidency, Special Commissioner for Jaghirs in Sind, and afterwards Acting Secretary to the Government of Bombay in the Revenue, Finance and General Departments, Government Director of the Bank of Bombay, and a Member of the Mint Committee; and, finally, for a short time, Collector and Magistrate of Broach. In April, 1860, he was confirmed as Secretary to Government, and in 1862 was made an additional Member of the Bombay Legislative Council, and Revenue Commissioner for the Northern Division of the Bombay Presidency; and in 1865 an ordinary Member of the Bombay Council. On the 2nd of May, 1870, he was selected as a Member of the Governor-General's Council; and on retiring from the Bombay Civil Service, on the 27th of April, 1875, he was appointed a Member of the Council of the Secretary of State for ten years from July, 1875. Within two years of his final retirement from the public service he died, on the 20th of June last, at Aix-les-Bains. His remains were brought home, and buried in the Jewish Cemetery at Willesden.

Sir Barrow Ellis was one of the ablest Revenue Officers of the Bombay Presidency, ever prolific of ability in this important department of the Indian administration, the brilliant traditions of which have been so honourably sustained in the present generation by such men as Sir B. Ellis, Mr. Pedder, C.S.I., and Mr. Peile, C.S.I.

Sir Barrow Ellis was remarkable also for the perfect confidence he

inspired in himself, and the Government he represented, among the various native communities of Western India. He was accessible to natives of all ranks and grades, who ever met with a patient and attentive hearing from him, and, where it was possible, the fullest and most cordial support. He thus endeared himself widely among them. His genuine sympathy with them is evinced by his will, in which he has left a sum of £500 to the Northbrook Indian Society, for the benefit of the Club, at No. 3, Whitehall Gardens, and the further sum of £2500 to be placed in trust for the benefit of the poor of Ratnagiri, his first official charge as an Assistant-Collector in the Bombay Presidency. Also while in Bombay on his way to England in 1875 he presented the local University with the sum of Rs. 1500 for an annual prize of books to the student who, on matriculation, passed the best examination in an Oriental language. Five years before, when leaving Western India to take up his appointment as Member of the Viceregal Council at Calcutta, public subscriptions to the amount of Rs. 7206 were invested on behalf of the Bombay University for awarding a scholarship in the name of Sir Barrow Ellis, to the student who passed the best examination in the English Language and Literature at the annual B.A. examination of the University.

In private life Sir Barrow Ellis was distinguished for his unbounded hospitality. He kept open house for all comers in India, and in this country his house in Cromwell Road was the common centre of Anglo-Indian officials from the Bombay Presidency, and of natives from every part of India. It is a remarkable fact that all the ablest Revenue Officers in India have been notable for their hospitality, and quick sympathy with the people of India; and no doubt their natural virtue in these respects, through keeping them in close touch with native feeling and opinion, has powerfully contributed to their success as administrators.

In the Asiatic Society, as in all his other offices, Sir Barrow Ellis was a thoroughly practical and useful adviser. Without any pretence to profound Oriental scholarship, he had a very fair knowledge of more than one Eastern tongue, and was a prominent promoter of education in Sind under the ever memorable government of that Province by the late Sir Bartle Frere.

The death, on the 7th August, at Malta, of *Sir Joseph Ritchie Lyon Dickson*, M.D., has deprived the Society of a valued member of more than twenty years' standing. For nearly forty years Physician to H.M. Legation in Persia—i.e. since 11th September,

1847—Dr. Dickson was well known to European residents and natives of all grades in the Shah's capital, not only for his medical skill and the readiness and kindness with which this was rendered available to his fellows, but for his intimate acquaintance with the ways and customs, and sympathy with the character of the people among whom he lived. Many visitors to Teheran during the present generation will bear testimony to the deceased officer's genial qualities, and usefulness in imparting those lessons of local experience which are invaluable to travellers and diplomatists. His place of residence was always to be distinguished by groups of patient candidates for treatment and advice seated outside the door; and the fluency with which he spoke Persian, as also his intuitive grasp of its idiom, were remarkable. Sir Joseph Dickson accompanied the Shah on his visit to England in 1873, and on the 30th June of that year received the honour of Knighthood.

V. EXCERPTA ORIENTALIA.

The first number of part i. vol. lvi. of the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* contains a brief account of Tibet from "Dsam Ling Gyeshe," the well-known geographical work of Lama Tsan-po Nomian Khan of Amdo, translated by Sarat Chandra Dás, C.I.E., and Sítá's Window, or Buddha's Shadow Cave, by S. J. Cockburn, Esq., M.A.S. Bengal. Mr. Sarat Chandra Dás is a most painstaking and intelligent Government servant, honourable mention of whose name has already been made in these Notes. His present paper is a reprint from an official report, but valuable in more than an official sense. The second paper, though very brief, is replete with epigraphic interest. The writer would identify the cave to which he refers with the "lofty stone cavern of a venomous dragon, in which Buddha was supposed to have left his shadow, and the spot visited by Hwen Thsang in the seventh century." Mr. Cockburn was enabled to copy the inscription above the door by using an astronomical telescope. He had first discovered it through his own glass, for it is, to all intents and purposes, invisible to the naked eye.

An extra number of the *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* is given up to Prof. Peterson's third Report on the Search for Sanskrit MSS. in the Bombay Circle during 1884-86. To this is added an Index of Books for the three Reports, and three valuable Appendices, the first of which is an illustrative and elaborately-prepared catalogue of the Palm-leaf MSS. in the Temple at Santinath, Cambay; the second supplies extracts from books preserved in libraries at Ahmadabad, Boondi, Kotah, Indore and Cambay; and the third relates to the Manuscripts acquired for Government.