

ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE, O.M., D.C.L., F.R.S.—The death of Alfred Russel Wallace on November 7, 1913, broke the last link with the band of illustrious Englishmen who made Evolution the watchword of the latter half of the nineteenth century—Darwin, Hooker, Huxley, Spencer, and Wallace himself.

The details of Wallace's long, happy, and varied life are so well known that it would be inappropriate to repeat them on the present occasion. I prefer to speak of his special association with the Linnean—to him, there is reason to believe, the dearest of all scientific societies. He was proposed in 1871, the Form of Recommendation, first read on November 2, being signed by Bentham, Stainton, Hooker, Newton, Flower, Gray, and six other Fellows. The election took place on January 18, 1872. But Wallace's connexion with the Society was much earlier than this; for in addition to the epoch-making papers in 1858, he had

read his important memoir on "Mimicry in the Malayan Papilios" in 1864. Wallace's share in the joint papers was his greatest scientific achievement; while, in the second publication, he was the first to extend the principles set forth by his old fellow-traveller, H. W. Bates, to the East, and to discuss and throw new light on certain important aspects of Mimicry which had up to that time escaped attention—I specially refer to polymorphism in Mimicry and to the presence of Mimicry in the female. Not only was the parent theory of Natural Selection first brought before the scientific world by the Linnean Society, but the daughter theory of Mimicry, which formed and still forms its most striking illustration and defence, was first made known by Bates, then extended by Wallace, and later by Roland Trimen, through the same channel. Mimicry always possessed an intense fascination for Wallace, and I remember how he wrote to me soon after my election as Hope Professor, urging that the whole resources of the Hope Department should be devoted to this subject.

The last paper communicated by Wallace to a scientific society was read by him before the Linnean on June 18, 1896. The subject was "The Problem of Utility," and, as he has himself explained\*, his "purpose was to enforce the view that all specific and generic characters must be (or once have been) useful to their possessor, or, owing to the complex laws of growth, be correlated with useful characters. . . . I endeavoured to show that the problem is a fundamental one, that utility is the basic principle of Natural Selection, and that without Natural Selection it has not been shown how *specific* characters can arise."

I recall with the greatest pleasure meeting Wallace at breakfast at Prof. Meldola's the morning after the meeting. He showed not the slightest trace of fatigue after the journey and the effort of reading the paper. The party, which also included Francis Darwin, sat and talked until far into the morning. Finally, as Wallace rose, he said, with the greatest animation, "Well, I should like to go on in this way all day!"

It is a piece of remarkable ill-luck that the Linnean Society does not possess a noble representation of one of our greatest Fellows—a splendid companion to the Darwin we know and love so well. Ten years ago the Hon. John Collier generously offered to paint a portrait of Wallace, and even, if it were necessary, to stay at Broadstone for the purpose. I told Wallace of the offer, and tried to persuade him to accept it. Others tried also, but no one could induce him to sit. "My portrait is just appearing in 'Black and White,'" he said, "and I am sure nothing could be better than that." The Linnean Society and the whole world of science and letters are the poorer for his decision.

Nothing would have pleased Wallace better than the thought that the books in his library, which bear the imprint of his personality, should find the permanent home in the Linnean Society

\* 'My Life' (London, 1905), ii. p. 215.

now assured to them by the generosity of Mr. T. H. Riches. Many years ago he sent me E. D. Cope's 'Origin of the Fittest,' saying that he had read it and had no further use for it. I suggested that he should present it to the Library of the Hope Department, but he would not consent until he had first ascertained that the Linnean Society already possessed a copy. I well remember, too, how cordially he agreed with my suggestion that G. W. Sleeper's booklet should be placed in the Linnean Library.

The culmination of Wallace's life, July 1, 1908, was also intimately bound up with the Linnean Society. The admirable Memorial Volume, issued by the Society, makes it unnecessary to refer to the events of that great day, which will assuredly live as an abiding inspiration in the memory of everyone who was fortunate enough to be present.

Wallace himself, although he was eminently sociable and delighted in converse with his friends, was strongly averse to publicity and ceremony of every kind; and I think that his appearance on that momentous anniversary was due to a sense of duty, and not from pleasure. He felt that it was a unique opportunity of paying homage to the mighty genius whose name had been, and will ever be, associated with his own\*.

[E. B. POULTON.]

[The subject of the foregoing memoir was born at Usk, in Monmouthshire, 8th January, 1823, and was therefore in his 91st year at the time of his death.]

\* See also the Obituary by the present writer in 'The Zoologist,' Dec. 1913, p. 468, parts of which have been adapted for incorporation in the above notice.