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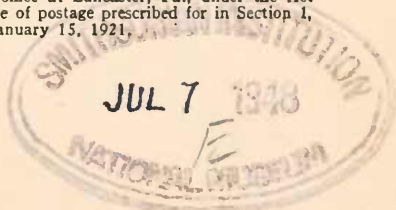
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THEODORE D. A. COCKERELL

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## Theodore D. A. Cockerell

In the death at San Diego, California, on January 26, 1948, of Professor T. D. A. Cockerell at the advanced age of 81 the biological world lost one of its most enterprising and indefatigable workers. In an age of specialization, when so many are almost compelled to wear intellectual blinders lest their interest stray beyond imposed limits, Cockerell succeeded in being a specialist in various fields. To the botanists he was known for his systematic work on plants, both recent and fossil, and for his experiments with the red-rayed sunflower, undertaken with Mrs. Cockerell, herself an interested student of biology. Conchologists recognized him as one of their brotherhood, for his childhood interest in snails and slugs was an abiding one through all his adult life and, wherever snails were part of the native fauna, whether in the mountains of New Mexico, where he was stationed for an extended time, or in the Madeira Islands, Siberia, Japan, Siam, New Caledonia, and the Lake Kivu region of Africa—to mention a few of the localities of conchological interest that he and his wife reached in the course of their world-ranging travels—he made note of these invertebrates and industriously collected them. Either singly or in collaboration with other workers like his friend, Dr. Pilsbry, he added significantly to the literature of the Mollusca. His studies of fish scales as an aid in the classification of the fishes won the attention of ichthyologists. To students of the fossils he ranked both as an invertebrate paleontologist and as a paleobotanist. And amid all these varied interests, not to mention his keen concern for sociological problems, an interest in art and poetry (he was himself endowed with the poetic gift), and the exacting labors of teaching, he yet found time to work so prodigiously in the

field of entomology that had he achieved nothing else, his studies of insects, more particularly the bees, would still be viewed as an Herculean accomplishment.

In his work on the insects he had the advantage of an early start. Born at Norwood, England, August 22, 1866, his interest in natural history, according to his own statement, was linked with his earliest memories. As a boy he amused himself by drawing up little descriptions of the insects he collected and, when he was unable to name them, he devised scientific names for them. He was still in his early teens when he found and reported on the caterpillar of the Madeiran butterfly, *Pyrameis indica occidentalis*. Lang took cognizance of the find in his book on European butterflies. Thus, having won his spurs at a very early age, it is not surprising that he donned his armor for further adventures in the field of entomology when in 1891 he was appointed curator of the Public Museum at Kingston, Jamaica. It was the Coccidae that particularly challenged his interest in this new environment, both because of their importance from the economic standpoint and because of the light they threw on evolutionary processes thanks to the "reduction and suppression, as well as the modification of, parts." In a few months' time he recorded 34 species of Coccidae from Jamaica alone, more than had previously been recorded from all the West Indies.

Cockerell had been in Jamaica only two years when there was a recurrence of an ailment from which he had believed himself cured. A change to a more favorable environment became imperative. It is strange, looking back over the life span of men of note, how often a thing that seems a disaster at the time of its occurrence may be pregnant with new possibilities and, through the exercise of a resolute will, may even be converted into a triumph. So it was with Cockerell. His transfer of domicile from Jamaica to New Mexico (where he served successively in the New Mexico Agricultural College and in the Normal University) was to open a vista of opportunity that could not have been foreseen when he sought the recovery of his health in an alien environment.

In New Mexico he found a country where Coccidae were abundant, and where nearly every species taken proved to be new. As so often happens when a man acquires the status of an expert in a given field, people started sending him specimens of Coccidae from all over the world and he thus acquired a familiarity with scale-insects and mealy bugs from regions very remote from the scenes of his activity. Some of his discoveries, like the cochineal insect *Doctylopius opuntiae*, have proved of great economic importance. In Madras this insect, it is reported, has cleared 40,000 square miles of cacti and it has been used successfully in other areas as well where the prickly-pear is an agricultural obstacle.

When reference was made in a previous paragraph to the achievements in entomology that transfer to New Mexico would bring in its train, it was not the extension of Cockerell's studies on the Coccidae, important as these were, that this writer had primarily in mind. What he envisioned was the tremendous field of unexplored opportunity presented by the native bees of the Rocky Mountain region that were waiting, as though they had been placed under a spell, for the magic touch of a keen student to reveal their many points of interest. Cockerell flung himself into this task with zeal. He was first attracted by the little bee *Perdita luteola*, which in the summer and early fall of southern New Mexico was visiting in numbers the yellow Compositae that it resembled in color. This prompted him to investigate the genus to which the little bee belonged. At the time he began his studies only 17 species had been described and only 15 of these were valid. In a year's time he had brought this total up to 70, and 49 of his new species were based on specimens collected in New Mexico. "From this time onward," wrote Cockerell, "I have never ceased to work on bees, and have published 5,480 new names for species, subspecies, and varieties, and 146 names for genera and subgenera."

The lines just quoted were written ten years ago. Since then Professor Cockerell has not been idle, as his publishing record reveals. Even up to the end and under severe handicap he was working on the bees of Honduras, hoping to make known the

interesting forms he collected in that country. But even if one does not add to the 5,480 bees described up to 1938 the residue of the last decade, the total is stupendous. No other student of the bees from the earliest days of classification to the present can offer a comparable total.

Some of the forms Cockerell described other workers have from time to time seen fit to place in the synonymy and it is likely that over the years some of the remaining species and subspecies he erected will be challenged by those who adopt a different interpretation. However, even after allowance is made for possible casualties, there will still remain, it is safe to predict, an awesome total of valid forms as a monument to the tireless industry and discernment of this devoted student of the bees.

In all of this dedication of effort to the study of natural forms Professor Cockerell had not only the sympathetic interest, but the active support of his wife, who participated in his expeditions to far places, engaged in collecting, and was helpful in many ways. She was co-author of some of his papers and frequently shared the lecture platform with him in presenting subjects in which they were both interested. The number of species that have been named *wilmattae* further testify to this partnership of joint interests, which extended through a married life that nearly attained its Golden Anniversary. During nearly this entire span Professor Cockerell's vocational activities were carried on at the University of Colorado, with which he became associated in 1903, achieving the rank of professor three years later and that of emeritus professor in 1934.

The vast number of papers and longer works, like his *Zoology*, which Cockerell published in the course of his life span, might seem to leave little time for more informal writing. Yet he revealed his warm-hearted interest in friends and co-workers, distant and near, by letters that were treasured by the recipients not only for their scientific and personal content, but for the sprightly little drawings with which they were often embellished. Here his sense of humor and playfulness found one of its delightful outlets. He was always interested in what the other person was doing and, if there was any way in which he



could further a piece of research, he aided generously. The breadth of his achievement gave him a comprehending viewpoint regarding life. One was aware in his presence not only of mental keenness, but also of mental calm and poised judgment and kindness withal. He never seemed hurried, but he never wasted time. His personality will be remembered vividly by all who knew him. As for his scientific publication, one likes to apply the imagery that he conjured up to express the influence of the printed word: "Like the light of the stars, it will arrive as if new, when perhaps the original source is no longer luminous."

HERBERT F. SCHWARZ,  
American Museum of Natural History

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### Dr. Alfonso Dampf Tenson (1884-1948)

It is with profound shock and regret that we have learned of the death of Dr. Alfonso Dampf, distinguished entomologist in Mexico. Dampf passed away in Mexico City on March 17, 1948, from cancer of the liver.

Dampf was born on the Baltic island of Dagö, in the village of Kertell, Esthonia, on December 3, 1884 (Old Calendar November 20), the son of Michael Dampf and Maria Tenson. He studied at the University of Königsberg between 1904 and 1909, receiving therefrom the Doctor's degree. Between 1907 and 1912 he served as assistant in the Zoological Museum and Institute of the University of Königsberg, in the latter year being appointed 1st Assistant in the same Institute. Between 1913 and 1919 he served as Government Entomologist of the then German East Africa. Between 1920 and 1923 he resumed his position as 1st Assistant at the Zoological Museum and Institute, lecturing in Applied Entomology.

It was in 1923 that he arrived in Mexico, where he was to spend the remainder of his life, becoming a naturalized citizen of the Republic in October 1941. Dampf's various high positions in Mexico included Chief Entomologist, Mexican