

SIR RICHARD WINSTEDT

Sir Richard Winstedt, who died at the age of 87 on 2nd June, 1966, was a man of rare personal qualities, to whose many-sided achievements it is difficult to pay adequate tribute in a limited compass. He combined a distinguished career in the public service with a reputation for scholarship in many branches of Malayan studies which few of us can but envy, and as Director and then President of the Society for more than two decades which included the war and its aftermath bore the chief burden of its affairs through that uniquely difficult period.

Richard Olaf Winstedt was born in Oxford on 2nd August, 1878. He was educated at Magdalen College School and New College, and in 1902 entered the Malayan Civil Service as a cadet. There he inherited a tradition which from Raffles onwards had produced administrators who were also scholars of broad vision, and his rise in the service was matched by an ever-growing achievement as grammarian, lexicographer, and historian in the older and larger sense of that word. Neglected as most fields of Oriental studies then were in British universities, this contribution could have been made in no other way; but Winstedt's publications would have ensured him a respectful hearing if he had spent all his life in a college. The story may be apocryphal that he undertook his *Malay grammar* as a diversion for the long weeks of convalescence after an illness; the insights of the work suggest a characteristic self-depreciation in the anecdote; but certainly thereafter he never looked back. A series of notable dictionaries culminated in the monolingual Malay dictionary which appeared, witness to his unflagging energy, in his 82nd year. The *History of Malay literature* of 1940 had crowned an equal endeavour in the field of literature and folk tales. In *Shaman, Saiva and Sufi* (1925), and its later expansion *The Malay magician* (1951), he traced the diverse elements found in popular religious practices. And his unrivalled knowledge of Malay language and culture enabled him to surpass any predecessor in the way in which he drew on both Western and vernacular sources, as well as oral traditions, in his *History of Malaya* (1935) and those mines of detailed local information, the histories of the states of Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan, and Johore.

These were merely the outstanding landmarks in a voluminous output of books and periodical articles, the author of which was not too proud, when the need arose, to compile school textbooks for local use. His specific connexion with educational affairs began when he was made the first President of Raffles College in 1921, the same year as saw his marriage to Sara O'Flynn, M.B., Ch.B. The marriage was a remarkably fortunate one, and to the part she played in his subsequent career many have paid tribute. In 1924, after a short period as Acting Secretary to the High Commissioner, he added to his presidency of the college the office of Director of Education, Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States, and membership of the Straits Settlements Legislative Council. He was created C.M.G. in 1926, and in 1927 became a member also of the Federal Council of the F.M.S. His last four years from 1931 to 1935 were spent as adviser to the Ruler of Johore, and brought him the honour of K.B.E. and a valediction, it is said, such as had been accorded to no other retiring civil servant.

This, however, was by no means the end of Sir Richard's activity, for he now accepted appointment as a Lecturer at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of

London. He was Reader in Malay in the University from 1937 to 1946 and thereafter an Honorary Fellow of the School, and from 1938 to 1959 served on its Governing Body, latterly as representative nominated by the Malayan and Singapore governments.

He joined the Royal Asiatic Society in 1912 and was alternately its Director and President from 1940 to 1964. Bare facts can do little to invoke the embracing devotion with which he watched over the Society's interests during those often critical years. But two of his undertakings may be mentioned: the mission to secure works of art from India for the memorable Winter Exhibition of 1947 at the Royal Academy, and the part he played in connexion with the XXIII International Congress of Orientalists at Cambridge in 1954. The award to him of the Society's triennial Gold Medal in 1947 was in the circumstances doubly appropriate.

He was the recipient of many other academic and learned distinctions, including—besides the Oxford degree of D.Litt., to which he proceeded in 1920—the Hon LL.D. of the University of Malaya and honorary membership of the Koninklijk Instituut voor de Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde in The Hague, the Koninklijk Bataviaas Genootschap, and the Southeast Asia Institute of the U.S.A. His 85th birthday was marked by the presentation of a *Festschrift* volume, *Malayan and Indonesian studies* (where a full list of his writings will be found), and of special numbers of *JRAS* and the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*.

H. L. SHORTO.

DR. ARTHUR WALEY

With the death of Arthur Waley on 27th June, 1966, we have lost one of the greatest of western Orientalists and a scholar of a rare kind. He had been a good classical scholar at Rugby and Cambridge, early in the century, and he is by no means alone in having used such a training as the basis for a career in Orientalism. But it is rather the depth and completeness of his temperamental aptitude for Oriental studies that fill us with a mixed sense of incredulity and gratitude, when we learn, from the 1962 edition of *170 Chinese Poems*, how fortuitous was his entry into sinology. This casualness, moreover, to some extent characterizes his subsequent career as an Orientalist, leading him into a greater variety of subjects than is normal in this wide field. He started, as he has told us, as an amateur, in the sense of unprofessional, with the simple motive: "I wanted my friends to share in the pleasure that I was getting from Chinese poetry"; and this desire to share, sometimes with didactic or even admonitory intent, continued to motivate the wholly professional Orientalist that he became. His professionalism came to be based, not on some scholastic speciality nor on the exigencies of an academic appointment—he never held one—but on a mastery of the Chinese and Japanese languages in most of their multifarious varieties. He acquired a fair degree of this mastery with remarkable speed. Within some four or five years of starting, unaided, on his linguistic studies, he had published *170 Chinese Poems* (1918) and *Japanese Poetry: the Uta* (1919). It is significant of his own fearless approach to his work that in the latter book he included some notes on Japanese grammar, on the assumption that other people, with such help, would be enabled to read some *uta* as easily as he had come to do.