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GODFREY WILSON

THE African world has suffered a grievous loss in the death of Godfrey Wilson, in May 1944, on active service with the South African Army. Those of us who knew him when he began his anthropological career in 1932 have a vivid memory of the zest and freshness with which he attacked a new field of knowledge and the promise which he showed of a distinguished career alike in field-work and in the academic sphere.

He held a studentship of the International African Institute from 1932 to 1934, working under the late Professor Malinowski in the Anthropology Department of the London School of Economics. He was in fact one of the first of a group of students selected by Dr. J. H. Oldham and Professor Malinowski to carry out a special programme of study and field-work on the problems of culture contact. In 1934 he first went to Africa, with a Rockefeller Research Fellowship to do field-work among the Nyakusa in Southern Tanganyika and their allied tribe the Ngonde in Northern Nyasaland. In 1935 he married Monica Hunter, who had published her *Reaction to Conquest* under the auspices of the International African Institute, and who held one of the Institute's Research Fellowships to investigate a special aspect of culture contact in her husband's field.

In 1938 Godfrey Wilson was appointed Director of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute in Northern Rhodesia. This gave him an opportunity of setting up and insisting on those standards of scientific scholarship which he believed ought to be characteristic of any research institute. This hall-mark of scholarship was evident in the publications, known as the Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, to which he and his wife contributed a series of studies which have aroused widespread interest both in the African Continent and among anthropologists elsewhere. His 'Essay on the Economics of Detribalization in Northern Rhodesia' (in two parts) brought to the fore the nature of the social and economic conflict in a country where up-to-date industrial development and primitive agricultural production existed side by side. Critics may have taken exception to his relating of these local Northern Rhodesian problems to the wider aspects of world economics; but such outspokenness and breadth of view were characteristic of all Godfrey Wilson's work, and his sound

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scholarship compelled people who differed from him radically to listen to what he had to say.

In an article¹ published in this journal he described the aims of the social anthropologist, and the principles which should guide him, in words which might well be applied to his own work: 'It is the proper virtue of applied anthropology to be both useful and true, to combine practical relevance with scientific accuracy and detachment. Like all virtues, this is difficult but not impossible of attainment. Its attainment depends upon a thorough-going realization of the limits of scientific method in its application to human affairs and a wholehearted acceptance of those limits.'

His fearless criticism of certain administrative and economic policies led sometimes to open conflict, for he was incapable of toning down his findings, or his opinions which were based on them, to suit official views. The path of the anthropologist who states honestly the facts which he finds and the conclusions which he, as a scientist, draws from them, is never an easy one; for the human beings and their environment which he studies are also the raw material of colonial policy.

We all hoped that Godfrey Wilson would inspire the young anthropologists of the future with that same intellectual integrity and adherence to scientific method which he showed so clearly in his own field of work and in his publications. He had much to give in a field where experienced workers and scholars are all too few.

Our heartfelt sympathy goes to his wife, who is in South Africa with their two children, and to his parents in Edinburgh.

M. H. R.

MRS. RHEINALLT JONES

WE have received news from Witwatersrand of the death, on 25 April, of Mrs. Rheinallt Jones, honorary lecturer in Bantu Languages at the University of the Witwatersrand and joint founder with her husband, Senator Rheinallt Jones, of the South African Institute of Race Relations. Mrs. Rheinallt Jones, who had had wide teaching experience in South Africa, was in charge of the Institute's educational and health work. She devoted her life to native welfare work, especially education; in addition to her numerous activities connected with clubs for native girls, she held office for many years on the standing education committee of the International Women's Council, was national adviser on Native Affairs to the National Council of Women, and last year published a ten-year plan for progress in native education, which attracted widespread attention.

Mrs. Rheinallt Jones had also studied problems of native land tenure, her knowledge of which was based on actual experience of the reserves especially in the Transvaal.

Members of the Institute and all friends of Africa will deeply regret her loss.

¹ 'Anthropology as a Public Service', *Africa*, vol. xiii, no. 1, January 1940.