

## THE LATE MAJOR H. C. ROBERTS.

Griefs and sorrows come not singly. The last number of this journal wore the badge of mourning for the loss of Sir Edwin Arnold. Again, its opening pages are darkened by the loss of another councillor of the Aeronautical Society of Great Britain, who was its oldest and deeply-respected member. On May 25th last Major Herbert Charles Roberts passed from our midst. Till within a few weeks of his death Major Roberts was an active worker on the Council of the Society, untiring in his devotion to its interests.

Some secure personal fame by some work which attracts the attention of the outward world. There are others, rarer to find, who prefer to merge their individuality in a cause. Their light, indeed, shines before men, but it shines collectively and lastingly in a communion of workers. Major Roberts was one of these—always ready, well or ill, to give his time to the business of the Society, to be present in emergency, to fill an empty place, to give the benefit of his experience to those who would ask his advice. Perhaps it was his keen sense of justice and consideration of others which not only made him a valuable member of Council, but endeared him to those who had the privilege to confer with him. Ever was he ready to give to others their due. Often he would write the note of appreciation of the special work of another, the more valued in this age of rush, where there is little time to remember yesterday.

It was in 1868 that Major Roberts joined the Aeronautical Society of Great Britain, days when Glaisher was the frequent chairman of its meetings. When Glaisher retired from

actively taking part in its proceedings, Major Roberts frequently took the chair at the Council meetings, and many were the minutes signed by his hand. On several occasions in quite recent years he presided at the general meetings.

Some facts concerning Major Roberts' career outside the Society may be of interest to members.

He was the fourth son of Mr. Charles Roberts, of the Indian Civil Service, and grandson of Sir Richard Armstrong, Knight Commander of the Bath, and Knight Commander of the Tower and Sword. He was born at Palamanair, North Arcot, Madras, and brought to England two years later.

In 1845 he obtained a cadetship in the Madras Infantry, and left England to join his regiment, 41st Madras Infantry, in the following year. During his career in India he acted as aide-de-camp to Sir Richard Armstrong when the latter was commander-in-chief of Madras, and, after Sir Richard Armstrong's death, as aide-de-camp to Lord Harris, and held other important posts.

In 1856 he married Miss Elliot, daughter of William Elliot, of Madras Civil Service. In 1860 he retired from the service, and in 1874 the late Lord Derby appointed him comptroller of his house expenditure, and he held this office until Lord Derby's death in 1893.

Major Roberts was a linguist, efficient in various eastern tongues and dialects. He was Hon. Secretary of the Madras Cricket Club during the last seven years he was in Madras, also of the Madras Club for the last two and a half years. He was captain of the Madras Rifle Club from 1861 till he left India. He was a member of the United Service Club and Royal Institution.