

PHILIPPUS LODEWICUS LeROUX, 1897-1962

Dr. P. L. LeRoux, D.Sc., M.R.C.V.S., who died suddenly in Suffolk on the 12th May, 1962, was the eldest son of Philippus Lodewicus LeRoux, a Huguenot by descent, who farmed at Worcester, Cape Province, South Africa. There he was born on the 7th November, 1897. His early education was at Rawsonville Public School, Worcester, the South African College High School and the South African College, Cape Town. He then proceeded to Edinburgh where at the Royal (Dick) Veterinary College he qualified as a Member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and at the University graduated B.Sc. in 1923 and D.Sc. in 1936.

After qualifying in Edinburgh he returned to South Africa where he held appointments from 1924 to 1946 in the Union of South Africa and in Northern Rhodesia. From 1924 to 1930 he was Veterinary Research Officer in the Division of Veterinary Education and Research Agricultural Department, and was Lecturer in Veterinary Hygiene, Animal management and Veterinary Helminthology in the University of Pretoria. He then became Veterinary Research Officer (later Senior Veterinary Research Officer) in the Veterinary Department, Northern Rhodesia, where he remained until 1946. In 1947 he was appointed Lecturer in Helminthology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and during his service at the School was promoted to Senior Lecturer in 1950 and in 1957 the University of London conferred on him the title of Reader in Medical Parasitology, which he held at the time of his death.

Dr. LeRoux had an unrivalled range of technical knowledge and practical experience both of pure and applied helminthology and, in my opinion, was one of the leading helminthologists in the British Commonwealth. He was a man of enormous energy and enthusiasm, with an uncanny gift for detecting and unravelling unsolved problems.

As Veterinary Research Officer in Northern Rhodesia and subsequently during his appointment at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine he made several extensive collecting tours of countries in South Africa which resulted in the publication of a large number of important helminthological contributions by himself and by science graduates working for a higher degree in his laboratory. In these and other ways he established invaluable personal contacts with the younger as well as the senior helminthologists throughout the Commonwealth and other countries.

Students and members of the Staff at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine often spoke to me of his consideration

and helpfulness. He had a likeable personality and a sense of humour but when he thought that the subject or occasion demanded it, he could express himself with a vigorous directness one not infrequently finds in those reared in a less inhibiting atmosphere than that of England. He was the "complete helminthologist" equally at home with a knotty problem in taxonomy as when conducting a gory *postmortem* on a buffalo in search of helminths. He had an aptitude and love for the discipline of systematic work as well as a flair for experimental investigation which in later years was his principal preoccupation, especially in connection with extensive schistosome infections in molluscan vectors in the School's aquarium, which he personally supervised.

Dr. LeRoux's publications are too numerous to itemise here. He published 51 papers on helminthological subjects and gave 59 demonstrations at Laboratory Meetings of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene. The range of his interest in parasitology generally, and his versatility are illustrated by his contributions to protozoology, entomology and virus diseases which totalled 33 original articles. In later years he tended to adopt Charles Darwin's dictum that "a naturalist's life would indeed be happy if his task were solely to observe and never to write" with the result that many of his original observations were never recorded.

In 1956 and 1959 he was temporarily assigned to FAO and toured the Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, N. Rhodesia and S. Africa and in 1961 he assisted in organising a FAO Regional Training Centre on Livestock Parasitology in Burma.

In June, 1962, Dr. W. Ross Cockrill of the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations, wrote thus of him in the *Veterinary Record*—"He was an enthusiast who combined an encyclopaedic knowledge of Parasitology with an extraordinary ability to impart something of his zeal and imagination to others. It was this quality which enabled him to make such an outstanding success of the last assignment he undertook for FAO as one of the small band of instructors who ran the Training Centre in Livestock Parasitology held at the Veterinary College at Insein, Rangoon towards the end of 1961. Many of the trainees who came from 14 countries and all his colleagues at the Burma Centre have expressed their appreciation of his services."

It is fitting to conclude this tribute to a remarkable man and an outstanding scientist by quoting once more from Dr. Cockrill :—
"He served his profession with honour and distinction and both the profession and his friends are greatly the poorer for his passing."

R. T. Leiper