



## OBITUARY

### George Johnston Spencer, 1888–1966

Professor Emeritus George Johnston Spencer was born of missionary parents in Yercaud, S. India, 18 January 1888, and died at his home in Vancouver, Canada, 24 July 1966. Professor Spencer was renowned as a teacher and internationally known for his contribution to the knowledge of insects of western Canada. He attended Bishop Cotton's High School in Bangalore and undertook work at the Regent Street Polytechnic in London and the University of Manchester. His undergraduate work was also continued at the Ontario Agricultural College (now University of Guelph) and in 1914 he was awarded the B.S.A. degree at the University of Toronto. He took graduate work at Cornell University, University of Illinois, and the University of Toronto, and in 1924 was awarded the M.S. degree at the University of Illinois for a thesis on the life history and control of *Thermobia domestica*.

In World War I he served with Canadian battalions in France, Belgium, and Germany, attaining the rank of Lieutenant and being mentioned in despatches.

Between 1914 and 1928, in addition to military service, Professor Spencer turned to a number of tasks among which were Assistant to the Provincial Entomologist of Ontario, in charge of the Ontario laboratory working on the control of the European corn borer, a study of the biology of commercial crab on Vancouver Island, and field studies on *Trichogramma*. Later he studied the bionomics of grasshoppers in the Interior of British Columbia and vectors of witches broom on potatoes, as well as collecting vigorously for the Canadian National Collection.

In 1924 Professor Spencer was appointed as Assistant Professor at the University of British Columbia and in 1945 a Professor at the same Institution. Retiring in 1953, he was elected Professor Emeritus, Special Lecturer, and Curator of the Entomological Museum.

Professor Spencer was outstanding as a teacher, being able to capture the student in the first few sentences of a lecture, and hold the attention until his last point was made. His lectures were famous for their humor, liveliness, and engaging content. He inspired many students to select zoology as a career and many of his former pupils now hold prestigious and responsible positions in all areas of zoology and entomology throughout North America. When he first came to the University of British Columbia, in 1924, he was given the task of teaching histology as well as various courses on insects. He often recounted the early years teaching histology when he had great difficulty in determining whether students' staining was correctly differentiated or not: he was color-blind for red and green, but never once admitted to the uninitiated that even if their slides were perfect, he could not tell. In later years, he took great pride in commenting on the glorious Pacific sunsets, even if he could not see them!

In the early years of the University of British Columbia on its Point Grey campus, Professor Spencer played a major role in establishing the Department of Zoology, and his particular pride was the fine Entomological Museum that he established and which now bears his name. When he came to the University there were "less than a handful" of unlabelled specimens: when he left in 1966 the Museum contained over 300,000 specimens of perfectly mounted and labelled insects belonging to all Orders. Professor Spencer was a prodigious collector, even when ailing in the early months of 1966. His favorite study area was always the Dry Belt of British Columbia, an area that he insisted was "God's Own Country". His material was loaned to systematists throughout the world and as a result, today we have many species with the name *spenceri*.

He worked extensively on the ecology of range grasshoppers and published some of his findings in the Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Entomology, held in Montreal in 1956. Unfortunately, much of his research remained unpublished at the time of his death. He was very active in Vancouver and its vicinity attempting to rid the populace of insect pests. His efforts, at times not proving particularly rewarding financially, produced a wealth of biological facts which he published in the Proceedings of the British Columbia Entomological Society. The annual meetings of the above Society were always highlighted by his own inimitable accounts of his findings and travesties. He was an authority on insectophobia and a master at dealing with the general public. He was always in great demand as a public speaker and in his early years in Vancouver, was a familiar voice on local radio.

Professor Spencer was dedicated to entomology and was a member of many societies, including the Entomological Society of America, American Association of Economic Entomologists, and the Entomological Society of Ontario. He was an honorary life member of the Entomological Society of Canada and Entomological Society of British Columbia. His prestige in Canadian entomology was such that at the Centennial of Entomology celebrations held in Ottawa in September 1963, he was invited to give the main address on "A Century of Entomology in Canada". This address was published in the January-February 1964 issue of *The Canadian Entomologist* and clearly shows the strength, the character, and the humor of this devoted student of the insects.

He is survived by his wife, Alice; daughter Ann; three grandchildren and three sisters, two of whom still live in India and who he saw last on a "pilgrimage" in 1962.

G. G. E. SCUDDER

## INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

### Announcement

A. (n.s.) 75

Required six-months' public notice is given on the possible use of plenary powers by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature in connection with the following names, listed by Case Number (see *Bull. zool. Nom.* 23, pt. 4, 14 October 1966):

- 1728. Suppression of *Voluta mitra episcopalis* Linnaeus, 1758 (Gastropoda).
- 1740. Suppression of *Clupea flosmaris* Richardson, 1846 (Pisces).
- 1723. Suppression of *Sphyaena acus* Lacépède, 1803, and *Belona argalus* Lesueur, 1821 (Pisces).
- 1742. Type-species for *Cosmopterix* Hübner, 1825 (Insecta, Lepidoptera).
- 1745. Suppression of *Macrochoeta* Macquart, 1851 (Insecta, Diptera).
- 1746. Suppression of *Amphisbaena mildei* Peters, 1878 (Reptilia).
- 1748. Suppression of *Scoptes* Hubner, [1819] (Insecta, Lepidoptera).
- 1749. Suppression of *Cornufer* and *Cornufer unicolor* Tschudi, 1838 (Reptilia).
- 1750. Suppression of *Rana maculata* Daudin, 1801 (Amphibia).
- 1747. Emendation of STENOPODINAE Stal, 1859, to STENOPODAINAE (Insecta, Hemiptera).
- 1751. Suppression of *Proteocordylus* Eichwald, 1831, and *Palaeotriton* Fitzinger, 1837 (Amphibia).
- 1752. Suppression of *Phelsuma ornatus* Gray, 1825 (Sauria).
- 1753. Suppression of *Hippocampus erectus* Perry (1810) (Pisces).
- 1754. Validation of *Tectarius* Valenciennes, 1832 (Gastropoda).
- 1755. Suppression of *Hippella* Moerch, 1861 (Pelecypoda).
- 1756. Suppression of *Truncatulina dumblei* Applin, 1925 (Foraminifera).
- 1758. Type-species for *Neolycaena* de Nicéville, 1890 (Insecta, Lepidoptera).
- 1760. Suppression of *Cellia errabunda* Swellengrebel, 1925 (Insecta, Diptera).
- 1762. Type-species for *Enithares* Spinola, 1837 (Insecta, Hemiptera).

Comments should be sent in duplicate, citing Case Number, to the Secretary, International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, c/o British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, London, S.W. 7, England. Those received early enough will be published in the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*.

W. E. CHINA  
Assistant Secretary.

October 1966.

### NOTICE

The following officers for the Entomological Society of Manitoba have been elected for 1966–1967:

President—Dr. S. R. Loschiavo  
 President-elect—Mr. W. Romanow  
 Secretary—Mr. D. L. Smith  
 Treasurer—Dr. G. A. Bradley  
 Editor—Dr. L. B. Smith

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