



[*Frontispiece*

SIR RICHARD WINSTEDT

BORN AT OXFORD, 2nd August, 1878. Educated Magdalen College School, and New College, Oxford, elder son of I. Olof Winstedt and Sarah Castell. Second Class Honours in Moderations and Greats. Took the Joint Examination for the Home, Indian and Colonial Civil Service and became a Cadet in the Malayan Civil Service 1902. D.Litt. (Oxon), 1920. C.M.G. 1926, K.B.E. 1935, F.B.A. 1945. Hon. LL.D. (Malaya) 1951.

Married in 1921 Sarah O'Flynn, M.B., Ch.B. District Officer, Kuala Pilah 1913; Acting Secretary to the High Commissioner 1923; Director of Education, Straits Settlements & Federated Malay States 1924–31; Member of the Legislative Council, SS. 1924–31, and of the Federal Council F.M.S. 1927–31; first President of Raffles College (one of the two colleges now constituting Singapore University) 1921–31; General Adviser to the Malay State of Johore 1931–35; Member of the Colonial Office Advisory Committee on Education 1936–39; Reader in Malay, London University 1937–46; Member of the Governing Body of the School of Oriental and African Studies 1938–59, Hon. Fellow 1946; Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee for the Exhibition of Art from India and Pakistan, held at the Royal Academy of Arts, London 1947–8. Hon. Member of the S.E. Asia Institute, U.S.A.; Hon. Member of the Royal Batavian Society (now Lembaga Kebudayaan Indonesia) and of the Kon. Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, The Hague; Vice-President of Royal India, Pakistan & Ceylon Society; Vice-President of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society 1914, 1920, 1923, 1928, President 1924, 1929, 1933–5; joined Royal Asiatic Society, London, in 1912, Director 1940–43; 1946–49; 1952–55; 1958–61; President 1943–46, 1949–52, 1955–58, 1961–.

For further particulars of Sir Richard's career and for a Bibliography of his works see "Malayan and Indonesian Studies; Essays presented to Sir Richard Winstedt on his 85th birthday".

The following are tributes from friends acquainted with his career:—

(1) From LORD MILVERTON, G.C.M.G.

As one of his oldest friends and as an incurable admirer of Sir Richard Winstedt's work, I am glad to respond to the invitation of your Council with a personal tribute to his manifold achievements, and an appreciation of their value.

Honoured as he has been by his own Country and his own University of Oxford, and by Malaya, the Netherlands, Indonesia and the U.S.A., he has lent distinction to the office of President of the Royal Asiatic Society for most of the past twenty years.

A Malay scholar of international repute, author of authoritative Malay dictionaries and a host of other studies of the language, literature and history of Malaya, his intellectual activities have ranged widely over the art and literature of S.E. Asia especially. During his varied career in the East he rendered great services for seven years as Director of Education, Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States. He won the respect and abiding friendship of all classes and races. His influence with the Malay Rulers, and the late Sultan of Johore in particular, was very great.

But what manner of man lies behind the impressive record of his administrative, educational and cultural activities? Unobtrusively modest, charitable and unassuming — he has none of the intellectual arrogance which sometimes accompanies great scholarship. Possessing insatiable industry he has always filled the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds' worth of distance run.

His tolerance and good nature is combined with a kindly cynicism and unselfish consideration for others, and has won for him the affectionate respect of all who have enjoyed the privilege of working with or under him.

He is remarkable for a memory that never seems to fail, a complete absence of bitterness, pettiness or malice, a disconcerting speed of independent thought, and an ability to analyse and seize on the salient points in any issue. A witty speaker, a writer who seems often to "snatch a grace beyond the reach of art", a many-sided intellectual who has always preserved also a keen zest for the good material things of life — good food, good wine and good company; in many ways one may apply to him the lines —

"In him the grave and playful mixed
And wisdom held with folly truce,
While Nature compromised betwixt
Good fellow and recluse."

In earlier years his main recreation was sailing and he was for some time Commodore of the Royal Singapore Yacht Club.

This rather inadequate attempt to analyze a friend would be incomplete without reference to the major influence of his partner in life. Sir Richard is no exception to the rule that a successful man in whatever sphere inevitably owes an appreciable part of that

success to his wife. The quick-witted charm and inherently active and independent mind of Lady Winstedt is easily explicable by an Irish ancestry, which enables her simultaneously to laugh at, sympathize with and respect her husband, while pursuing with parallel devotion her own wide interests in medical science, health and social services. Between them they cover a broad section of civilized life.

If one had to find one comprehensive word to express the life work of Sir Richard it would be "quality". Many years ago one of our mutual friends said of him, "Of all the men I have known he is the only one to whom I would attribute a touch of genius". From the standards he sets himself and the intrinsic talents at his command the Royal Asiatic Society is the latest beneficiary.

So there is my personal sketch of the living man behind the arid biographical details. His honours have come unsought. Long ago, warning University students against over-concern for money or position or glory, Rudyard Kipling said —

"Some day you will meet a man who cares
for none of these things,
Then you will know how poor you are."

I have been writing of such a man now. There are not enough of them.

(2) From M. C. HAY, ESQ., late of the Colonial (Malayan) Civil Service:

His many friends in the Royal Asiatic Society and his old comrades in the Malayan Civil Service will be happy to take this opportunity of signaling Sir Richard's attainment of his 85th year and his 51 years of devoted service to this Society.

He joined the Malayan Civil Service in 1902 and in his early service in Perak and Negri Sembilan acquired a knowledge of the Malay language and literature such as few English scholars have ever attained. His first important work was a Malay Grammar. Though much work had been done on Peninsular Malay, no English scholar had tackled the basic principles of the language, taking account of the kindred Indonesian languages. As Sir Raja Chulan observed in the Federal Council, Sir Richard gave the Malays what they never knew they possessed — a grammar.

His next important work was an English-Malay Dictionary, in which he thoroughly exploited the rich vocabulary which — on

certain topics — Malay possesses. This work with its wealth of literary, colloquial and dialect words would alone suffice to establish his reputation as a scholar.

Among the six dictionaries he has published is a Malay Dictionary written entirely in Malay. So he has done for Malay what Dr. Samuel Johnson did for English. He also wrote the first comparative Studies of the Pantun and of Malay Proverbs.

But his interest by no means stopped at linguistics. He has published histories of Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan, Johore, Malaya, Malay Literature, A Cultural History of the Malays and a work entitled The Malay Magician. And as Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee for the Exhibition of art from India and Pakistan in 1947 he headed the delegation to India to obtain the exhibits, and he opened the Exhibition, in Burlington House, with a talk on that art.

Originally a cadet of the administrative service, in 1921 he was appointed President of Raffles College, Singapore, and in 1924 Director of Education, Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States (continuing to hold the presidency of Raffles College, the nucleus of the present University). For seven years he guided the policy of education in Malaya and left the stamp of his personality upon it.

In 1931, he was appointed General Adviser, Johore, a post which, as His Highness Sultan Ibrahim was heard to remark on several occasions, was no sinecure. The Sultan was a strong personality himself and it required more than ordinary efficiency and strength of character to earn his respect. His Highness liked, respected and trusted Sir Richard, and his tenure of office was marked by smooth running of the government and prosperity for the State.

During his service Sir Richard earned the respect and affection of every community and when he left Johore on retirement this was manifested in remarkable degree. Every community in the State (and many outside) wished to pay its tribute in saying farewell to Sir Richard and Lady Winstedt and to congratulate him on his knighthood. The festivities extended over a month and no such send-off has ever been accorded to any other retiring Civil Servant.

Since retiring from Malaya Sir Richard has served on the Colonial Office Advisory Committee on Education, and for ten years was Reader in Malay at the University of London. In the second World War he served as a sergeant in the Home Guard, and broadcast weekly in Malay.

His honorary membership of two Dutch Societies is noteworthy, as there are only a few honorary members of the Royal Institute at the Hague and the Dutch have never before so honoured a Malay scholar from Great Britain.

He has travelled widely in the East, visiting Syria, Palestine, Turkey, Iraq, Persia, India, Siam, Indo-China, Korea, China, Japan, the Philippines and Indonesia, always on those travels paying great attention to the Art, Architecture and Archaeology of the lands visited. This is evident in the short speeches he is often called upon to make when introducing a lecturer, for there are very few subjects on which he cannot make some apt and telling personal observation. He has visited every country in Europe except Russia, Finland and Bulgaria and he has visited Canada, Alaska and the United States.

And now for the most important matter of all: his services to this Society. Having been a member since 1912, in 1940 he was elected Director, and in 1943 President. Since then, as President or as Director he has been principally responsible for guiding its affairs. His guidance through the years of financial stringency, his careful management of its investments and his energy in securing new members have resulted in its present satisfactory financial position and the revival of its vigour. That it enjoys the excellent premises it now occupies is due to his energy and foresight. In recognition of all this administrative work as well as of his scholarship he was awarded, in 1947, the Society's Gold Medal, and perhaps there was never a more popular or better earned award. Since then he has been unremitting in his efforts to further its interests. We trust it may continue for long to benefit from his wisdom and scholarship.

We offer this tribute in sincerity, affection and respect.