

SOME DISTINGUISHED EARLY MEMBERS

By A. T. CARR.

Henry Caracciolo, the Founder of the Society, was a small energetic and charming man. His interest in Natural History was very wide, and although he could win prize essays on a walk through the hills, besprinkling his poetic descriptions with intimate observations on the botany of the country and the bird and insect fauna, particularly the butterflies, he may well be most remembered for his work on the bats of the colony. Of all these men, whose memory we commemorate today, Caracciolo seems to me the quintessence of the ardent naturalist. Knowing and appreciating the varied manifestations of nature around him, he preserved in him, to his last days, a rare peace of spirit and a joyful oneness with his colleagues and his surroundings.

Broadway was an exceptionally fine man. Entirely unselfish in spirit, he was always willing to share his vast knowledge of the botany of the island with other interested persons. He, too, was interested in various aspects of natural history, such as butterflies, dragonflies and fresh water creatures other than fish. He did much work on the cacti and indigenous orchids, the ferns, the bromeliads and the mosses. I shall never forget his joy at discovering a new species of moss in a drain in Oxford Street. He was regarded, and justifiably so, as a walking encyclopaedia on the botany of these parts, as Ulrich was so regarded in the field of entomology and zoology.

Ulrich was an extraordinary man. Quiet, reserved, unhurried. He was not an engaging speaker versed in the artifices of the public exponent, but if one but spared attention to what he was saying, one unmistakably found that the man possessed apparently unfathomable depths of knowledge of the rich continental fauna which this island possesses. His special fields seemed to be insects and reptiles. Ulrich's name is associated with and given to an insect, a type of thrips (*Liothrips urichi*) which figures in the text-books as one of the finest examples of biological control on record. He had discovered these tiny insects feeding on a species of plant (*Clidemia hirta*) in his backyard. Ardent naturalist that he was, he kept them under close observation, and subsequently published full details in a bulletin of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, of which he was lecturer in Entomology. His findings came to the attention of the Agricultural Authorities in Fiji, and the Fijian Government sent an emissary in 1930 to procure thousands of the tiny creatures, for use there with complete success in the biological control of the weed which had become a serious pest, and which had hitherto resisted all attempts at eradication or control. With Ludolf Wehekind, a former President, who is happily still with us, he was able to demonstrate that the vampire bat (*Desmodus rufus*) was a bloodlapping creature and not blood-sucking as was commonly supposed.

I well remember the late Dr. Adamson, Professor of Entomology at the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture—himself a scientist of world repute—saying to me on one occasion “Ulrich possesses a great fund of valuable information, but he does not care for writing. It is a pity he has not his Boswell.” Although Ulrich did much work on the snakes of the island, pride of place in this field goes to R. R. Mole.

Mole, who had spent some thirty odd years in the study of the life history and habits of the Trinidad Snakes has left us the only standard work on the subject "The Trinidad Snakes," an abridged version of his more detailed book in manuscript form possessed by a few members of the Club, and an abridged version of what he had published in the Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London on 31st March 1924. Aspiring naturalists in the Society may bear in mind that many gaps are yet to be filled in the knowledge of the habits of our snake fauna, and whilst they may not be capable of such length of devoted application to a single subject, useful work may still be done on a single species at a time among the 43 species indigenous to the island.

P. L. Guppy came from a family of scientists and naturalists. He devoted some 30 years of his life to the study of the fresh water fishes of Trinidad, and his compilation of facts and observations on the subject is still in manuscript form, and is at present in the Library of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture at St. Augustine. He also evinced considerable interest in butterflies and marine fishes, and his excellent water colour drawings still adorn the walls of the Royal Victoria Institute Museum.

T. I. Potter was another rare personality. A small man, he was extremely affable and extremely versatile. Under his presidency, I spent my most formative and profitable years. His was not the specialist devotion of Mole, but rather the all-embracing appreciation of Caracciolo. His particular interest, if one might single out something from his wide and varied interests, was orchids, both exotic and indigenous. However, in 1942 he published a work entitled "Fruit—native and introduced—in the Island of Trinidad, B.W.I.", and it is a matter for regret that Broadway, Ulrich and himself did not publish considerably more than they did. Nevertheless, Potter's familiarity with several aspects in the field of natural history, made him a most virile and informed president of the Trinidad Field Naturalists' Club, catering as it did (and does) to the tastes of both scientists and nature lover alike. His intimate knowledge of historical and geographical aspects of the island, spiced with rare anecdotal details on personages and things, made him highly appreciated and dependable at meetings and an intellectually satisfying leader on the Club's biological excursions. It may be conceded that under his long leadership, the Field Naturalists' Club attained its peak of popularity in the colony.

THE SULPHUR AND WHITE-BREADED TOUCAN

By E. M. CHENERY.

In Trinidad there is only one representative of the sixty odd members of the toucan family, this being the Sulphur and White-breasted Toucan, *Ramphastos vitellinus* Licht., which also occurs on the mainland. Whilst the bird itself is not often seen its raucous cry may be heard throughout the year from the motor roads cut through the primary rain forests of the island. Occasionally a pair may be seen in undulating flight over the roads or hopping in the tree tops; but rarely without the aid of field glasses can a good view be obtained. It is then that their striking coloration can be best appreciated,—the sky blue ring