

CHARLES STEVENS was born at Dalston in 1852, and died at Ipswich on 1918 December 1.

In 1900 he entered the General Post Office, Secretary's branch, where he held an appointment for many years.

In 1906 he left London to take up duties as postmaster at Peterborough, where he remained three years, before going on to Ipswich. He retired in 1914.

He was twice married, and had two daughters and one son, who at present holds an appointment in the Indian Civil Service.

Apart from his official duties, he was most interested in music and astronomy.

He was elected a Fellow of the Society on 1899 February 10.

CHARLES THOMAS WHITMELL was born at Leeds on 1849 July 10, his father holding an appointment in the Leeds branch of the Bank of England. He attended the Leeds Grammar School, where he won a prize for Inorganic Chemistry in 1864. He received a letter of encouragement from Faraday about that time which he carefully preserved. At the age of nineteen he gained the degree of B.Sc. at London University. A year later he went to Cambridge, having obtained a Scholarship in Natural Science at Trinity College, Cambridge. In 1872 he was tenth Senior Optime in the Mathematical Tripos and first in the First Class in the Natural Science Tripos. He remained for some years taking pupils and giving University Extension Lectures. For two years he was a master at Tonbridge School. In 1879 he commenced the principal professional work of his life, being appointed Inspector of Schools under the Board of Education; his field of work was at Sheffield for a short time, then at Cardiff, where he remained till 1897; he was then transferred to his birthplace, Leeds, and remained here for the rest of his life, retiring, however, from his professional work in 1910. He was held in the highest respect and esteem by all the teachers of the schools which he visited for his courtesy, considerateness, and charm of manner.

His love for nature and science remained throughout his life. He found opportunities for travel in the Alps, Norway, United States, etc. Many notes made on these occasions were incorporated in his useful handbook on colour, published in 1888. Phenomena of colour greatly interested him, and he wrote several notes in explanation of the green flash at sunset, the white appearance of the moon in daylight, etc. He had in his house a variety of apparatus for producing curious colour effects. In astronomy also his bent lay in the direction of calculating unusual or unexpected phenomena. The transit of the half-lit moon over the half-lit earth as seen from Mars may be mentioned, also the fact that some of Jupiter's satellites can produce three total eclipses at the same conjunction to a point on the planet's surface. His series of "View Point" papers brought out many relations of this kind, and are very instructive.

He contributed papers to the *Monthly Notices*. One (70, 455) is on the maximum duration of totality in a solar eclipse, which is found to be $7^m 40^s$. Another describes the eclipse of 1900 May 28, which he observed from Naval Moral, Spain.

He also contributed numerous papers to the *Journal of the British Astronomical Association*, being for some time on the Council of that body.

While at Leeds he did much to forward the work of two societies there: the Leeds Literary and Philosophical Society, which has just celebrated its centenary (Sir John Herschel lectured to it in 1858); and the Leeds Astronomical Society (to which Sir John Herschel delivered his lecture, "The Yard, the Pendulum, and the Metre," in 1863). This society passed into a state of suspended animation, but was revived about 1892. Whitmell was in turn president of both these societies; for many years he edited the *Journal of the latter*, and contributed liberally to the cost of its production. Altogether he exercised a powerful influence for the encouragement of scientific study; this showed itself, *inter alia*, in the patient, careful manner in which he dealt with the difficulties of inquirers in the columns of the *English Mechanic*.

He had a great love of literature and poetry, and some skill in composing verses. He married in 1903, Lucy, the sixth daughter of the late Sir William Foster, Bart., of the Grove, Hardingham, Norfolk; she shared his tastes, and they became acquainted on the occasion of the eclipse expedition to Spain in 1900. During the war she wrote the poem, "Christ in Flanders," which became widely known and appreciated both at home and in the trenches. She died in 1917 May, leaving no children.

Whitmell carried on his normal work till within a few days of his death. He caught a chill early in December, to which he succumbed on December 10, at the age of 70.

He will be widely missed by a large circle of friends, who welcomed his interesting and stimulating letters. The replies to these letters were carefully preserved and bound by him, forming a valuable record which deserves a place in some reference library.

He was elected a Fellow of the Society on 1898 December 9.

A. C. D. C.

EDWARD CHARLES PICKERING was not an old man, as astronomers reckon old age, being only 73 at the time of his death on February 3 last; but he was our oldest living medallist, and with one exception our oldest living Associate. He had directed one of the leading observatories of the United States for nearly half a century, increasing its prosperity and output of work to an extent of which he himself can scarcely have dreamed when he took charge in 1877, and it is safe to say that if he had been free to choose any career the world has to offer, he would have chosen to be what he was.

He was born on Beacon Hill in Boston, 1846 July 19, his father being the grandson of Timothy Pickering of Salem, who