

## O.D. Notes.

### Obituaries.

THE RT. HON. MR. JUSTICE JOHN STEPHEN CURLEWIS, P.C. (1876-81). In the passing on 24th August of the President of the O.D. Union at the age of 77 Bishops has lost one of her most distinguished, most staunch, and most lovable sons. As one of the obituaries put it, he lived up to the Precepts of the Law as set before us by Justinian: To live honestly, to injure no one, and to give every man his due. In 1938 Judge Curlewis—"Curly", as he was known to Bar and Bench—resigned from the high office of Chief Justice of the Union owing to failing health, which he never regained. But at the end of last year, while on a visit to the Cape, he was able to attend the Prize Giving at Bishops. John Stephen Curlewis, son of the Rev. J. F. Curlewis, of Paarl, followed his brother J. F. (Potchefstroom) to Bishops in 1876, and was joined by his younger brother George (The Wilderness) in 1880. In 1879 he matriculated; in 1881 he left on graduating with S. B. Cook (who took 1st place), the late Dr. S. R. Savage, the late Frank Molteno, and the late Ashe Windham. He was a member of the XI. and the XV. from 1879 to 1881 and in later years led Pretoria against the first English Cricket team. He was Sergeant-Major in the Cadet Corps, and shared the White Prize in 1880. For a short while Curlewis taught, and then entered the Civil Service at Cape Town. While in the Service, he passed the LL.B. He then started practice at the Bar of the Republican Supreme Court at Pretoria. There he was acting as a Judge when the Boer War broke out in 1899, and for some time presided over a special Criminal Court created for war conditions. He was Censor when Lord Roberts occupied Pretoria. After a visit to the Cape on parole, he returned to the Transvaal on special military permit to represent the Chamber of Mines before the Lyttleton Concessions Commission. In 1903 he was appointed a Judge of the newly constituted and most distinguished Transvaal Supreme Court, of which in 1924 he became Judge President. Promoted to the Appeal Court in 1927, he became Chief Justice of the Union in 1936. For two periods—in 1933 and 1937—Judge Curlewis acted as Governor-General, with the charm and friendliness that were part of him. He was made a Privy Councillor in 1937, being the second O.D. to hold such office, the late John X. Merriman having been the first. About two years ago Judge and Mrs. Curlewis had a great sorrow when their son Ivan, then the youngest Judge in the Union, died. Their son Selwyn Curlewis (1915-17) is a Captain in the S.A. Air Force. Judge Curlewis always referred with admiration and affection to Canon Ogilvie, who influenced the lives of so many Bishops men. The present Chief Justice (the Hon. Mr. Justice de Wet), after stressing his "common sense almost amounting to genius," and his "intellectual honesty," added this: "The man himself was loved by all of us for his geniality and kindliness, his charity and broadminded tolerance. He hated injustice to an individual or a class. He was truly a gentleman." As recently as April last Judge Curlewis shewed in practical form his belief in Bishops by making a second donation of £100 to the Endowment side of the Centenary Fund, in which he took a keen interest.

In paying tribute to his friend and colleague of 40 years, Sir James Rose-

Innes, a former Chief Justice, stressed his wisdom in counsel, his thoroughness, his generosity, and his "heart of gold." A phase of his thoroughness is enshrined in the remark of a member of the Bar: "Curly is still busy opposing the unopposed motions." Still another former Chief Justice, Judge Stratford, said: "Slowly one came to realise that John Stephen Curlewis had all the attributes of a great Judge — 'slowly', because of his unobtrusive modesty." A broadcast tribute spoke of his "inexorable mental and moral honesty, and infinite moral courage." To Mrs. Curlewis, who was his stay in the years of ill-health, and to her daughter and Selwyn, as to us, he has left an inspiring memory. The O.D. Union is proud to have had John Stephen Curlewis as its President. May South Africa produce generations like him.

Among the pall-bearers were: Charles Bramley, Dr. H. P. Veale, and the Hon. Mr. Justice I. Grindley-Ferris. Among other O.D.'s representing the O.D. Union were Gerald Savage (Acting Hon. Secretary of the Branch) and Henry van der Byl. Wreaths were sent from Bishops and the O.D. Union and from Transvaal O.D.'s.