
J. P. VAN DER STOK

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On 29th March last, at the age of 83, died Dr. Johannes Paulus VAN DER STOK.

After taking at an early age the degree of Doctor of Physical and Natural Sciences, VAN DER STOK taught for two years at the High School in the Hague, then proceeded to the Netherlands East Indies where, in 1877, he started his scientific career as Sub-Director of the Royal Magnetic and Meteorological Observatory of Batavia; he was Director of that Institution from 1882 to 1899. Under his direction the Observatory attained its full vigour; he devoted himself to the study of periodical phenomena in meteorology and terrestrial magnetism, and between 1890 and 1896 published a series of 16 dissertations on tides, which form his *chef-d'œuvre*. He was the first to apply and expand DARWIN's method of harmonic analysis, and by organising suitable observations he completely solved the problems of the extremely complicated tides of the Netherlands East Indies, making it possible thenceforward to establish tidal predictions which have proved of great importance for navigation; his studies on tides enjoy a world-wide reputation. On his 70th birthday he received the "De Ruyter" Gold Medal. From the practical point of view, the results of his work are collected in part in the Atlas, *Wind, Weather, Tides and Tidal Streams in the East Indian Archipelago* (1897); and in his treatise entitled *Elementaire Theorie der Getijden* he expounded the basis of tidal calculations and recorded a great series of harmonic constants. As concerns the southern part of the North Sea, his work *Etudes des Phénomènes de Marée sur les Côtes Néerlandaises* must not be overlooked.

On his return to the Netherlands, VAN DER STOK became Director of the Division of Oceanography and Maritime Meteorology of the De Bilt Institute, from 1899 to 1923. During this period the Division published its well-known atlases of the Indian Ocean and started those of the Atlantic Ocean. At first, VAN DER STOK pursued his tidal studies; afterwards he developed great activity in the domain of climatology and meteorology. He described the climate of the Netherlands in a series of articles, and in the case in point he made use of new methods, notably the use of wind frequencies and vectors. His *Klimatologie van de Noordzee* is a very detailed work.

He was also a very active member of the State Commissions for the "Nieuwe Waterweg" and the Zuyder Zee, and his last great work was to edit the jubilee edition of *De Zeeën van Nederland Oost-Indië*.
