

OBITUARY.

DR. F. STOLICZKA, F.G.S., etc.

Palæontologist to the Geological Survey of India.

THE sad news of the death of one of the ablest and most promising of palæontologists and naturalists has reached this country by telegraph since our last publication; and, although no particulars have yet been received, there seems no reason to doubt the accuracy of the statement that Dr. Stoliczka, while returning from Yarkand, with the other members of the embassy to which he was attached as naturalist, died, among the snowy passes of the Himalaya, on the 19th June last.

Ferdinand Stoliczka was born in Moravia in 1839 or 1840. Son of a distinguished forest-officer, he acquired, from his infancy and in his earliest rambles, that love of nature and familiarity with the habits and instincts of animals which distinguished his after-life. His early education was obtained at the "Gymnasium" of Kremsier (Moravia), and thence, at the termination of his school course, he proceeded to the University of Vienna. Under the able guidance of Prof. E. Suess, he was led to devote himself to geology, and with the friendly and almost fatherly aid of Dr. Hörnes, of the Imperial Cabinet, he made his first essay in palæontology. He took the degree of Ph.D. in the University. In 1861 he became attached to the Geological Survey of Austria, under the lamented Haidinger, and continued to work actively and earnestly for that institution until he left Europe. Several valuable papers mark his early and rapid progress at this time: "On some freshwater-beds in the Cretaceous formation;" "On the Gasteropoda of the Hierlatz beds;" "On the Oligocene Bryozoa of Lattdorf," and others. In 1862 the Director of the Geological Survey of India, then visiting Europe with a special view to obtaining assistants for the staff of the Survey, offered to Dr. Stoliczka, whom he met in Vienna, with Drs. Haidinger and Suess, an appointment, which he accepted, and at the close of that year he sailed for Calcutta. Arriving in the East, he at once commenced his labours, and from that time until last year he had devoted himself with untiring zeal to the study of Indian fossils. During those few years more than 1600 pages of descriptive matter, and more than 200 large plates (quarto) of fossils, have been issued under his care. The entire series of the Cretaceous fossils from S. India, one of the most valuable and complete series ever yet published from a single limited group, has been illustrated in four very large volumes, and descriptions of Crabs from Kutch, of Frogs from Bombay, and fossils from the several geological formations of the Himalaya, have also been issued. The best proof of the value set upon Stoliczka's labours is given in the fact that the Government of India had just sanctioned double the amount of grant for these publications, so as to facilitate and expedite their issue. Nor was his work confined to the examination of fossils in the cabinet. In June, 1864, as soon as it was practicable for him, he started to the Himalaya, and succeeded in making a very wide trip across the highest passes into Thibet and back. The results of

this trip were given in a remarkable memoir in the Geological Survey of India (vol. v.), with sections, fossils, etc. In the following year he started again for the hills, and after one of the most extended and fatiguing journeys ever accomplished in one season, and crossing almost all the principal passes, and many "minor passes about 18,000 feet in elevation," the trip extending over more than six months, he returned to Calcutta. The wonderful energy and zeal of Stoliczka enabled him to go through this, but, as he feelingly says himself, "after a horrible experience of hill travelling." Still the exertion and exposure was too great for him, and he was for many months after extremely unwell, and though never interrupting his work, only able to go on with difficulty and suffering. In the spring of 1867, the only chance of his permanent recovery appearing to be a visit to Europe, and cessation of work for a time, Dr. Oldham took him with him for a six months' tour, During this time they visited most of the principal collections of geology in Europe, and he thus made the acquaintance of many till then unknown to him. Everywhere he studied these European collections with vivid interest. During this trip with Dr. Oldham, the extensive series of fossils collected by Prof. Klipstein, Giessen, was secured for the Calcutta Museum.

Returning about the end of the year to Calcutta, he resumed his work, with greatly improved health, though still far from strong. But each season appeared to add to his vigour, and he continued to improve in strength. During the succeeding years he made several minor trips to Burmah, Penang, Singapore, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, to Darjeling, etc., invariably bringing back valuable contributions to the natural history of the places visited. In 1871 he spent the cold season and part of 1872 in Kutch, which he carefully examined palæontologically under many difficulties. He was able to establish several very important sub-divisions in the rocks there, and to fix their relations to European groups; and he brought back a very extensive collection of fossils. This series was in actual preparation for publication when he left Calcutta, and already a commencement had been made with the Cephalopoda by Dr. Waagen, his colleague. In the early part of 1873 he made a trip to the Andaman Islands, the Nicobars, etc., when he was very nearly lost, his eagerness of research leading him too far into the forest, from which he was only recovered after a long search by his companions in the trip. When he started on this trip, his longing hope was to visit his old colleagues in Vienna during the Exhibition in 1873, and all arrangements had been made for this. But on his return, finding that it was intended to despatch an envoy to Kashgar, to return the visit of the Yarkand envoy to the Viceroy in India, his love of travel and research was all rekindled, and he tried eagerly to seize such an opportunity of seeing countries rarely visited by Europeans, and regarding which so little was known. He at once abandoned all prospects of coming to Europe, and prepared for the journey. After considerable delay the party started, rather later in the year than is desirable, to cross the snowy passes. Dr. Stoliczka suffered very severely in this inclement and severe exposure, and it was

even reported that his strength had succumbed to the trial. But letters from him up to a period just before his starting to return led to the hope that he had quite recovered from this attack. But it was not permitted to him to reach his friends again, and he died as stated, amid some of the wildest scenery of the hills he loved so dearly, on the 19th June.

Few men have been more thoroughly saturated with the love of their pursuits and of nature than was Stoliczka. It was this which rendered his influence, always for good, much more widely felt than merely in his own department. There, too, his unremitting devotion and earnest labours were the strongest stimulant to others to do their best, in order to keep pace with him; but this influence had also made itself felt by every cultivator of natural science in India. For several years Stoliczka was Natural History Secretary to the Asiatic Society of Bengal, and it is mainly to his exertions that this Society owes its resumption of much of its early vigour. Its journal for years past is full of contributions of high value from his pen in almost every branch of natural history. How highly his services were appreciated and valued by his colleagues will be best seen in the reports of the Geological Survey and of the Asiatic Society, while his happy disposition and the genial sociality of his temperament, coupled with the inflexible rectitude of his character, rendered him a general favourite. Cut off at the early age of 35, few men will be more deeply regretted by those who had the privilege of knowing him, few will be more truly missed than Ferdinand Stoliczka.

CORRESPONDENCE.

RAISED BEACHES AND ANCIENT IRISH VOLCANOS.

SIR,—The GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE for May, 1874, has just come to hand. With reference to Mr. Hardman's paper, p. 215, paragraph second, he will find another case of raised beach and submarine peat, also on the south coast of Ireland, mentioned in Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc. Lond. vol. xxiv. p. 4; also in GEOL. MAG. 1867, Vol. IV. p. 8; May, 1868, p. 244; October, 1868, p. 484.

It would be interesting if any concordance could be found between the phenomena of the two places, though I cannot recall any evidence of three submergences at the one I refer to near Youghal.

In Professor Hull's address, in the same Number, p. 205, I presume he did not intend to notice all the volcanic eruptions of Carboniferous times in Ireland or he would not have omitted to mention Croghan Hill, near Phillipstown, thought by the late Professor Jukes to be the funnel of an old volcano. A. B. WYNNE.

MURREE, PANJAB, *June 10th, 1874.*

MR. JOSEPH PRESTWICH, F.R.S., F.G.S., has been appointed to the office of Professor of Geology in the University of Oxford, as successor to the late Prof. Phillips.

The Council of the Institution of Civil Engineers have awarded a Telford Medal and a Telford Premium to Prof. Prestwich, F.R.S., Assoc. Inst. C.E., for his paper, "On the Geological Conditions affecting the Construction of a Tunnel between England and France."