

time the bed of a torrent, he has found the teeth and bones of thirty more individuals. These skeletons of old and young Elephants are met with jammed between large blocks of stone, in a way that clearly shows that the carcasses must have been hurled into their present situation by violent floods or freshes. He has now brought together almost the complete skeleton of this wonderful little representative of an order of quadrupeds, to which we had, until the Fossil Maltese Elephant appeared, applied the word *gigantic*. There can be no doubt, however, that it scarcely exceeded a small pony in height.—*Malta Times Supplement*, March 16, 1865.

Professor AGASSIZ intends to undertake a Scientific Exploring Expedition to the Tropics, with eight scientific companions, for the purpose of testing the Glacial theory suggested by him, which, if correct, will enable the observer to mark as upon a thermometer the change in temperature the earth has undergone. As one of the results of the expedition, he expects to bring home the largest collection of tropical specimens that has yet been collected. The Emperor of Brazil will, it is expected, furnish unwonted facilities to the Expedition. The expenses of the party (from 2,500 to 3,000 dols. each) will be defrayed by the liberality of Mr. Nathaniel Thayer, of Boston.—From the '*Boston Traveller*.'

 OBITUARY.

SIR JOHN RICHARDSON, C.B., M.D., D.C.L., F.R.S., &c. &c.—To the list of those distinguished men who have been lost to science during the past year, must now be added the name of the Arctic Explorer, Sir John Richardson, C.B.

Born at Dumfries in 1787, of which town his father Gabriel Richardson was Provost, he was educated in its Grammar-school, and thence, in 1801, he entered the University of Edinburgh, where he graduated as an M.D. in 1816. He entered the Navy as an Assistant-Surgeon in 1807, and served at the bombardment of Copenhagen, and during the war with the United States in Canada and Georgia, as Surgeon to the 1st Battalion of Marines.

In 1819, he accompanied Captain (afterwards Sir John) Franklin in his overland Arctic expedition as Surgeon and Naturalist; and again in his second expedition in 1825, when he commanded two boats, with which he discovered a passage between the mouths of the Mackenzie and Coppermine Rivers. After nearly two years of severe toil, he returned in 1827, and published an account of the part he took in the enterprise: his narrative is attached to the great work produced by Captain Franklin.

He became, in 1838, a Physician to the Fleet, and, in 1840, Inspector of Naval Hospitals. He was knighted in 1846.

In 1847, in consequence of no tidings coming of the '*Erebus*' and '*Terror*,' then in the Arctic regions under command of Sir John Franklin, K.C.H., who had sailed from England on May 19,

1845, three expeditions were sent out by the British Government, the command of one of which was given to Sir John Richardson.

This, like his former expeditions, was overland. Accompanied by Mr. John Rae of the Hudson's Bay Company, he, in July 1848, descended the Mackenzie River, and explored the coast between its mouth and that of the Coppermine River. In 1849, he proceeded to the Great Bear Lake, and afterwards to Great Slave Lake, whence his party returned by their former route to Canada.

In 1851, he published his 'Arctic Searching Expedition: a Journal of Boat-Voyage through Rupert's Land and the Arctic Sea, in search of the Discovery Ships under command of Sir John Franklin,' &c.: 2 vols. 8vo.

Besides this, especial mention must be made of his great zoological work, the 'Fauna Boreali-Americana,' 4 vols. 4to., 1829–37 in the labour of which Swainson and Kirby shared. He also described the 'Fossil Mammals' for the Zoology of H.M.S. 'Herald,' Captain Kellett, R.N., C.B., Commander.

His last important literary work was the article 'Polar Regions,' in Black's Cyclopædia, since published separately in a large 8vo. volume.

Most of his valuable collection of zoological specimens, first lodged in Haslar Hospital, Gosport, are now in the British Museum; and upon the occasion of his last visit, he presented to the Geological Department a fine series of Fossil Leaves obtained from a bed of pipe-clay associated with coal-beds of Tertiary age on the Mackenzie River, between Fort Norman and the mouth of the Bear Lake River. This coal is constantly on fire, from spontaneous combustion, at some part of its exposed surface, and the pipe-clay has become porcellanous from the intense heat of the subjacent coal. Sir Alexander Mackenzie observed these beds on fire, emitting much smoke and flame, in 1785;* and they were still burning in 1849. Sir John Richardson gives two plates, in his 'Arctic Searching Expedition,'† of these leaf-impressions on the surfaces of indurated pipe-clay from this interesting deposit. The specimens have been examined by Dr. O. Heer of Zurich, who was able to identify several species of trees now quite unknown in these extreme northern latitudes. Among them were—*Corylus grossidentatus*, Heer; *Hedera Richardsoni*, Heer; *Acer otopteryx*, Göppert; *Taxites acicularis*, a species of *Salix*, and seeds of *Sequoia Langsdorfi*. Mr. J. Walter Tayler has noticed a similar formation at Omenak Fiord, North Greenland, specimens from which may be seen, with those from the Mackenzie River, in the British Museum.

Sir John Richardson died on the 5th June, at Lancrigg, Grasmere, in his 78th year.

* See Sir Alexander Mackenzie's description, in his Voyage of Discovery down the Mackenzie; also Appendix to Sir John Franklin's Second Overland Expedition.

† Vol. i. p. 186 *et infra*; and ii. p. 403.