

ledge. One of his distinguishing characteristics was his readiness to tell everything he knew to any naturalist engaged in the investigation of the departments of zoology in which he himself had worked. He was a keen observer rather than a trained naturalist. He published little himself, but he contributed rich materials to those who knew how to make the best use of them. He was consequently a valued correspondent of many of the leading naturalists of his day, who gladly acknowledged their indebtedness to his generous aid. Nor were his observations confined to the living things of the existing creation; he searched the rocks around him for traces of former plants or animals, and found them in places where no one had ever seen or suspected them before. His keen eye detected the first relics of fossil fishes in the Devonian rocks of Devonshire, and when, after his transference to the north of Scotland in 1849, he had an opportunity of looking at the limestones of Durness, he soon brought to light a series of fossils which, in the hands of Murchison and Salter, proved of the utmost value in fixing the geological age of the rocks of the North-West Highlands. After his retirement from the public service he went to reside in Edinburgh, and devoted himself with all his old enthusiasm to the exploration of the fossil flora of the Carboniferous rocks of that neighbourhood. Nothing seemed ever to escape his notice, and hence even from the quarries and sections where many a practised eye had preceded his own he was able to glean materials which no one but himself had noticed. In recognition of his important services to the cause of natural history, the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1875 awarded to him the Neill Gold Medal. His health has for some time past been failing, and he has now gone to his rest with the affectionate regrets of all to whom the progress of natural science in this country is dear. His son, Mr. B. N. Peach, of the Geological Survey, with all his father's enthusiasm and more than his father's range of acquirement, will, we hope, for many a long year, preserve among the naturalists of this country a family name that is familiar as a household word.

PROFESSOR EDWARD MORREN

CHARLES JAMES EDWARD MORREN, whose death on the 28th ult. we announced in our last issue, was the son of Charles Morren, a Professor in the University of Ghent, and was born in that city in 1833. Shortly afterwards the father removed to Liège as Professor of Botany. The son, Edward, as he was usually called, was educated for the law, but evincing a strong tendency towards the natural sciences and chemistry, took his degree in the Science Faculty with much distinction. Owing to the ill-health of the father, Edward Morren was early called on to undertake the professorial duties, but the continuation of his licence to teach was made conditional on his undergoing a "special" examination for the Doctorate. This was the occasion of the publication of his dissertation on green and coloured leaves, by which he first became known to the botanists of Europe. After the death of Charles Morren, in 1858, the son was appointed in the father's stead, and from that day to this, the aim of the son seemed to be to walk in the steps of his father, and to complete and extend his work. Both devoted themselves not only to botany but to chemistry, and in particular to horticulture and agronomy. Both were imbued, as so many of the Belgian *savants* are, with an ardent patriotism which led them to devote their science to the practical good of the nation, and to hold up to honour and respect the work of their celebrated predecessors. Hence, from father or son, or both, we have memoirs of Dodoens, of de l'Obel, of de l'Escluse, of Fuchs, and other worthies of Flemish nationality.

Both were impressed with the necessity of extending

and adapting to the necessities of the times the system and the means of botanical education. The Botanical Institute of Liège, which Edward Morren lived to found and to see completed, was but the modified outcome and extension of the plans and schemes originally proposed by the father. The result is that Liège is now equipped with a compact and well-ordered laboratory for botanical tuition and research, such as some of our own Universities might envy. In order to perfect this institution Morren availed himself of his frequent travels to study the method of instruction followed in the Universities of Germany, and the organisation of the scientific establishments of Holland, Paris, London, and other centres. With his professorial work, his ceaseless duties in connection with official horticulture and the publication of the *Belgique Horticole*, Edward Morren necessarily found little time for the preparation of any separate work, but his memoirs and academic dissertations are numerous. The most important of them, as may be gleaned from what has been said, referred to questions of chemistry and vegetable physiology. A paper published in this country in the Report of the London Botanical Congress, 1866, comprises a most elaborate investigation into the action of sulphurous acid and other vapours on plants.

His academical discourses and popular lectures were remarkable both for their method and their matter. With the fluency and elegance of style of a practised orator, Morren combined the fulness of knowledge and accuracy of exposition of a man of science. Botanists, however, were looking forward with expectancy to a monograph of the Bromeliaceæ from his pen. It was known that the Professor had been accumulating for many years material for this purpose. His collection of living examples is, we believe, the largest and best selected in existence, and the materials in his herbarium and very extensive library (the most complete of its kind in Belgium) are in their way equally remarkable. Beyond detached fragments, however, Morren published little on this curious family.

Death has overtaken him, as it did his father, when little or not at all beyond the prime of life, and it has caused a void which only those who knew the warm-hearted, genial, liberal-minded Professor can fully appreciate.

THE WEATHER

OVER the greater part of the British Islands last month was one of the coldest Februaries on record, the mean temperature at Greenwich being only 33°·8, or 6°·8 below the average of the month. Throughout Great Britain generally, from the Grampians to the Channel, temperature was from about 5°·0 to 7°·0 below the means of the stations. But in the northern and western divisions of these islands temperature was only from about 2°·0 to 3°·5 below the monthly averages. This difference was mainly occasioned by the distribution of temperature during the second week of the month, owing to the higher temperature in the north and west accompanying the storms which prevailed in the far north during the time. Thus during the week ending February 13, the mean temperature of Parsonstown was 43°·5, whilst at Oxford it was so low as 33°·8, or nearly 10° lower.

From the middle of February, however, to the memorable snowstorm in the beginning of March, the weather-maps of Europe presented several remarkably persistent noteworthy features. The commencement of the period was marked at the Ben Nevis Observatory by forty-eight hours of singularly dry clear weather, such as occurs in connection with anticyclones and the settled weather attendant on them. Eastern and Northern Europe was now even more pronouncedly than it had been in the earlier part of the month the theatre of a widely extended anticyclone, which slowly shifted its position from day to day, and sent out from its central regions winds in all