

not affect the British fauna as a whole very much. The bulk of the English and Irish animals *must* have travelled to these islands on a land-surface which was not covered by ice, and how they did so and when, is the problem at issue. To attack this problem from a purely zoological point of view will, I think, be of great service to geological science, and will help to clear up many doubtful points as to the nature and cause of the Glacial Period.

R. F. SCHARFF.

Science and Art Museum, Dublin, January 31.

I CAN assure Dr. Scharff that I took pains to read his full memoir before venturing to discuss it, as I think he should have recognised from the fact that the passage which I quoted from it did not occur in the abstract printed in NATURE.

I readily acknowledge my inability to discuss the purely zoological questions which he has raised, and purposely avoided any attempt to do so. But as his methods have led him to conclusions as to the past geological conditions of the Irish Sea basin which are demonstrably at variance with the geological field-evidence in a crucial area, it seems desirable that a geological protest should be recorded against them.

If Dr. Scharff could be persuaded to reconsider his subject from a standpoint which should include both the zoological and

THE TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE SUN.

VIZIADURG, Monday, January 17.

THE work is so incessant here from sunrise to midnight that I have not time to give anything like an adequate idea of our doings. I may say, however, that we have been here since last Saturday week, and everything is ready for the eclipse. We have now over 120 volunteers. Captain Chisholm-Batten has taken charge of the whole arrangement, and to me, an old eclipser, it is a beautiful thing to see the splendid drill which we have commenced in eclipse form, along all lines, to-day, going on to the sound of the bugle. The observers have been arranged into twenty-one parties as follows:—

Observing Parties.

Instruments, &c.	Staff.
I. 6-inch prismatic camera	7
II. 9-inch prismatic camera	8
III. Integrating spectroscope	3
IV. Discs	18
V. Sketches of corona, without discs	12
VI. Colours of landscape	6



FIG. 1.—Camp, Saturday, January 8. Putting in concrete pillars.

the geological evidence, he might yet find some solution which would be satisfactory to the students of both sciences.

G. W. LAMPLUGH.

On Augury from Combat of Shell-fish.

In a foot-note to my letter on this subject (NATURE, vol. lvi. p. 30, May 13, 1897), I remarked that the *Khchau* (a shell-fish), applied by the Cambodians to the divination of a war, is likely to belong to the family of Paludinidæ, taking into consideration the fact that the Japanese and the Chinese of former days used some species of viviparus (= Paludina) for the same purpose. Lately, while examining M. A. Parvie's article "Excursions dans le Cambodge, &c." in *Cochin-Chine Française; Excursions et Reconnaissances*, No. 9, p. 479, 1882, I have come across a passage giving confirmation to my view. The author, giving nomenclatures of the Cambodian molluscs, identifies the native *Kechau* (which is doubtless another French form of the spelling *Khchau*) with the Latin "Paludina"; whereas the allied genus *Ampullaria* has its Cambodian name "Tal."

KUMAGUSU MINAKATA.

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VII. Shadow phenomena	8
VIII. 6-inch equatorial, with grating spectroscope	5
IX. 3¼-inch equatorial	3
X. Hand spectroscopes, with slits	6
XI. Prisms for observations of ring spectra	7
XII. Timekeepers	3
XIII. Contact observations	2
XIV. Polariscope	2
XV. Observations of temperature	13
XVI. Observations of stars during totality	7
XVII. Landscape cameras for shadow, &c.	7
XVIII. Observations of shadow bands	3
XIX. Kinematograph for eclipse	4
XX. Kinematograph for shadow	2
XXI. Coronagraph	3

Total 129

Incessant instruction has been going on since the eclipse party joined the *Melpomene* at Colombo; but in this I have had quite a subordinate part to play, for the officers are past masters in many of the subjects which concern