

Obituary.

REV. T. R. R. STEBBING, F.R.S.

THERE must be very many students of the Crustacea scattered all over the world who will read with a sense of personal loss that the Rev. T. R. R. Stebbing is dead. Some of us who are now grey-haired look back to the time when we first discovered the unfailing kindness and patience which allowed the most ignorant beginner to dip into his endless stores of knowledge, and find it hard to realise that we can no longer 'ask Stebbing' when we come to some particularly knotty point in nomenclature or bibliography.

Thomas Roscoe Rede Stebbing was the son of the Rev. Henry Stebbing, D.D. He was born in London on February 6, 1835, and was the seventh in a family of thirteen, several of whom inherited the literary tastes and abilities of their father. From King's College School he went to Lincoln College and later to Worcester College, Oxford. His academic career was distinguished, but his studies were exclusively classical and literary. He obtained a second in *Lit. Hum.* in 1856 and a first in law and modern history in 1857. In 1858 he took orders, being ordained, it is interesting now to recall, by the Bishop of Oxford, Samuel Wilberforce. Masterships at Radley and Wellington were followed by a fellowship and tutorship at Worcester College, of which he was in turn vice-provost and dean.

Stebbing resigned his fellowship in 1867 on his marriage with Mary Anne, daughter of W. W. Saunders, F.R.S., the well-known entomologist, and took pupils, first at Reigate and afterwards at Torquay. At Torquay he became acquainted with some enthusiastic local naturalists, among whom was William Pengelly, under whose inspiration he began to take an interest in natural history. He has told how it was that, already in middle age, he was led to the serious study of zoology. "Having become much interested in Natural Science, and having also been trained in the strictest school of evangelical theology, I had conceived it to be a duty to confute the vagaries of Darwin. But, on reading the 'Origin of Species,' as a preliminary, it has to be confessed that, instead of confuting, I became his ardent disciple." He threw himself into the controversy then raging, and a volume of "Essays on Darwinism" published in 1871, as well as a letter to NATURE in April of the same year, replying to a scornful *Times* review of the "Descent of Man," drew upon him, as we may gather, a good deal of ecclesiastical hostility. From then onwards he continued his advocacy of a liberal theology in essays and magazine articles, some of which are reprinted in his "Faith in Fetters" (1919) and "Plain Speaking" published only a few months ago. Some of these essays now read like echoes of "old, unhappy, far-off things,"—so far off, at any rate, as Dayton, Tennessee!

It was a desire to become acquainted at first hand with some of the facts of Nature on which the evolution theory rested that led Stebbing to take up the study of Crustacea. After some early papers on British species he was entrusted, on the recommendation of his friend Canon A. M. Norman, with the description of the Amphipoda obtained by the *Challenger* expedi-

tion. He gave up teaching in order to devote himself to this task, and after some six years' work he produced his report (1888), which fills three of the large quarto volumes of the *Challenger* series. It is not too much to say that this report set a new standard for systematic carcinology, especially in its admirable bibliographical introduction, giving a critical analysis of everything that had been written on the Amphipoda down to the year of its publication. This report and the scarcely less important volume on the Gammaridea contributed to "Das Tierreich" (1906) are Stebbing's best-known works, but a long series of memoirs and lesser papers, extending over more than half a century, contained contributions of fundamental importance on every order of the Crustacea.

Occasional more popular articles and addresses, as well as his "History of Crustacea" (International Science Series, 1893) and the "Naturalist of Cumbriae" (1891), a biography of Dr. David Robertson, give scope for the play of a whimsical and almost boyish sense of fun.

'Scholarly' is the adjective that comes first to the pen in writing of Stebbing's work. Trained exclusively in the disciplines of the older learning and turning to the study of science only in mature life, he brought to it that feeling for antiquity, that sense of the historical perspective of knowledge, which is often wanting in those whose education has been definitely scientific. His erudition seemed boundless, but he wore it with so unaffected a modesty that rash controversialists, less well equipped, were sometimes lured on to their confusion.

Stebbing was elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 1896. He served as a vice-president of the Linnean Society, and later (1903-1907) as zoological secretary. He took a prominent part in the movement for the admission of women to the fellowship of the latter society, and his wife, an accomplished botanist, was one of the first group of ladies admitted. Of the many honours that came to him, none was more valued than the Linnean medal awarded to him in 1908.

Mr. Stebbing died at Tunbridge Wells, where he had resided for many years, on July 9.

W. T. CALMAN.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Dr. R. H. Clarke, formerly demonstrator of physiology at St. George's Hospital, London, author of an atlas of sections of the brain of the cat and monkey published in the *Journal für Psychologie und Neurologie* and joint author with Victor Horsley of a number of papers in *Brain*, on June 22, aged seventy-five years.

M. Albert Frouin, for many years in the physiological research laboratory of the Pasteur Institute, Paris, who has worked on the physiology of digestion, the biochemistry of bacteria, the tubercle bacillus, and particularly the antitubercular action of the salts of the rare earths.

M. Albert Viger, for thirty years president of the French National Horticultural Society, and seven times Minister of Agriculture, on July 8.