News and Views

Sir Sidney Harmer, K.B.E., F.R.S.

SIR SIDNEY HARMER, who received the Linnean Medal at the anniversary meeting of the Linnean Society on May 24, has had a long and distinguished career as a zoologist, and is still actively engaged in research. His published works deal for the most part with two widely different groups of animals, the Polyzoa and the Cetacea. His first paper (1884) described the anatomy of *Loxosoma*, and his most recent, issued this year, was the third instalment of his great report on the Polyzoa of the *Siboga* expedition. Perhaps his most outstanding contributions to science have been the demonstration of the chordate affinities of *Cephalodiscus* (published in an appendix to McIntosh's *Challenger* Report, 1887), and his discovery of embryonic fission in cyclostomatous Polyzoa (1893). While superintendent of the University Museum of Zoology, Cambridge, Harmer, in collaboration with the late Sir Arthur Shipley, planned and edited the great "Cambridge Natural History", the ten volumes of which appeared between 1896 and 1909.

IN 1909 Harmer left Cambridge to become keeper of zoology in the British Museum (Natural History), and ten years later he was appointed director of that institution. Shortly after he went to the Museum, he devised a scheme, with the co-operation of the Board of Trade and the Coast Guard, for recording the occurrence of Cetacea stranded on the British coasts, and in the course of twenty years a vast amount of information has accumulated in regard to the distribution, migration, and seasonal occurrence of the various species. Much of this information, but not the whole of it, has been embodied in the ten reports published by Harmer. From the beginning of his association with the Museum, Harmer also took a leading part in pressing on successive governments the urgent need for the regulation of the whale fisheries, particularly in the Antarctic. His efforts were largely responsible for the organisation of the very important scheme of oceanographical research now being carried out by Dr. Stanley Kemp and his staff for the "Discovery" Committee, an undertaking which can only be compared in importance with the *Challenger* expedition.

Prof. W. B. Scott

THE Boston Society of Natural History has awarded the Walker Grand Honorary Prize of 500 dollars to Prof. William Berryman Scott, of Princeton, New Jersey, for "his half century of conspicuous effort to advance the science of vertebrate paleontology in North America". Prof. Scott is professor emeritus at Princeton University, where he held the Blair professorship of geology and palæontology from 1884 until 1930. He was born in Cincinnati, 1858, received his bachelor's degree from Princeton, Ph.D. from Heidelberg, LL.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, and honorary doctorates of science from Harvard and Oxford. He is a past president of the Geological Society of America and the Paleontological Society of America, his specialty having been vertebrate palæontology. He is the author of a well-known geological textbook, also of the "History of Land Mammals in the Western Hemisphere", and of the "Theory of Evolution", and has written some fifty monographs on geological and palæontological subjects. The Walker Grand Prize is awarded by the Society from the trust fund given by Dr. William J. Walker in 1864 not oftener than once in five years, for such scientific investigation or discovery in natural history as the Society may think deserving thereof, providing such investigation or discovery shall first have been made known and published in the United States. The award is made solely for merit.

Henry Francis Blandford, F.R.S. (1834–93)

HENRY FRANCIS BLANDFORD, the distinguished meteorologist and geologist, brother of William Thomas Blandford (1832–1905) president of the Geological Society, was born in Bouverie Street, Whitefriars, London, on June 3, 1834. Like his brother, he was trained at the Royal School of Mines under De la Beche, Smyth and Percy, and at the Mining Academy of Freiburg, and in 1855, with his brother, joined the Geological Survey of India. After serving for seven years, ill-health compelled him to resign from the Survey and he became a professor at Presidency College, Calcutta, a post he held from 1862 until 1874. From 1867 he was also meteorological reporter to the Government of Bengal, making a close study of cyclones, and in 1874 was appointed chief of the Meteorological Department of India. Retiring in 1888, he took up his residence at Folkestone. He died on January 23, 1893, at the comparatively early age of fifty-eight years. Elected F.G.S. in 1862, and F.R.S. in 1880, in 1884 he was elected president of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. He wrote some fifty papers on meteorology and geology, and his work as a meteorologist caused him to be elected an honorary member of various foreign meteorological societies.

Francesco Denza, 1834–94

ON June 7 the centenary occurs of the birth at Naples of Father Francesco Denza, the eminent Italian astronomer and meteorologist. At the age of sixteen years, he joined the order of Barnabites and studied at Rome, where he came under the influence of Secchi, the astronomer. From 1856 until 1890 he was attached to the Barnabite College at Moncalieri, where in 1859 he established an observatory. Keenly interested in meteorology, he did much to further its study in Italy, founding the *Bolletino mensile de Meteorologia*, and in 1881 was chosen to be the first president of the Italian Meteorological Society. He was also well-known for his observations on meteors and his researches in terrestrial magnetism. He represented the Pope at