

Indian Museum.

ANNUAL REPORT,

AND

LISTS OF ACCESSIONS.

April 1882 to March 1883.



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REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

For the year 1882-83.

IN my report for last year, I recorded my return to duty, on the 13th of April, from my Expedition to the Mergui Archipelago.

The sorting out and distribution into groups of the collections formed on that Expedition occupied my attention for some time after my return, and as the Trustees sanctioned that the various groups should, as far as possible, be worked up by specialists in Europe, the superintendence of the arrangement and packing of the specimens for this purpose devolved upon me personally.

By the 8th of May, I finally completed the first part of the Catalogue of Mammalia, and submitted a published copy to the Trustees on that date.

After these two labours had been overtaken, the greater part of my time, throughout the remainder of the year, was occupied with the Descriptive Catalogue of the Archæological objects in the Museum, the first part of which was published on the 28th of March, and laid before the Trustees.

A portion of my time was also taken up in superintending the re-naming and numbering of the bird collection now in course of being cleaned and remounted.

I also examined and checked a large number of small antiquities and coins received from the Archæological Survey of India, and incorporated them in the collections of the Museum.

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I also selected a considerable series of Reptiles and Batrachia for exchange with Dr. J. H. Garnier of Ontario.

At the request of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, I gave my advice and assistance in procuring specimens of boats, nets, &c., for the International Fisheries Exhibition, London, and prepared a catalogue of the exhibits, and the Museum has been benefited somewhat by this, as I have been permitted to retain certain duplicate specimens for the Trustees.

DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT.

Mr. J. Wood-Mason named and registered all the unnamed *Hesperidæ*, and made some microscopic preparations of a few of the species to ascertain their affinities.

He also registered various invertebrate specimens as they were received, and commenced the exhibition of the Lepidoptera in the new cases. Unfortunately, this work was interrupted by Mr. Wood-Mason's health giving way and necessitating his departure for Europe on the 9th of September last.

FIRST ASSISTANT.

Mr. Geoffrey Nevill returned from furlough on the 16th of November, and at once commenced to lay out the shells of the Mollusca for exhibition in the new cases provided for them. He determined a large collection of shells brought back by himself from Australia and other places, and he effected many important exchanges in his department.

Mr. Nevill's visit to Australia was not productive of that improvement in his health which, it was hoped, would result from it, and his health again broke down seriously in January,—so much so, that his work in the Museum practically ended about that time, and on medical advice he resolved to

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resign his appointment and proceed to the south of Europe, which he did, leaving Calcutta on the 12th of March.

I desire to record the very high estimate I have formed of the character and extent of the scientific work performed by Mr. Nevill, under great physical debility, while he was an officer of the Trustees. He brought his department of the Museum *en rapport* with all the leading conchological authorities in the world, and by means of exchanges with them he formed for the Trustees a collection of shells, more especially of the Eastern hemisphere, which will compare favourably with the majority of collections to be found in the more important Museums.

During his tenure of office, he commenced the publication of a detailed Descriptive Catalogue of the Mollusca in the Museum, but unfortunately his health did not permit him to bring out more than one Fasciculus. He, however, was able to make more progress with the lighter work of a Hand-list, of which one volume has already been published; and I have undertaken, in his absence, to see a second part through the press, and of this a considerable portion is already printed, and I hope soon to be able to issue the work.

EXTRA ASSISTANT.

Mr. de Nicéville was principally engaged with the Diurnal Lepidoptera, and after Mr. Wood-Mason's departure I requested him to proceed with the arrangement of the Lepidoptera in the cases in the public gallery, and to this work he has steadily given his attention. He has besides named and arranged a considerable number of Sphingidæ, and named, registered, arranged, and mounted many collections of Lepidoptera from Java, Sikkim, Mergui, Cachar and Orissa, and effected some important exchanges by which the

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Museum became possessed of a valuable series of European and Australian Lepidoptera.

SECOND ASSISTANT.

Mr. Fraser returned from furlough on the 16th October, and since then has been engaged, at Kyd Street, mounting skeletons of birds, and in stuffing and making casts of fish. He has also commenced the stuffing of a gaur—*Bos gaurus*.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANT.

Mr. Cockburn left the temporary service of the Museum on Mr. Fraser's return from furlough. During the time he was employed in the Museum he roughly identified and also registered the birds and fish collected in the Mergui Expedition, ticketed some of the birds given to Taxidermists to be cleaned, prepared a set of names for bird labels, and mounted some bird skeletons.

MR. DREYER.

After the departure of Mr. Wood-Mason, I recommended to the Trustees, on the 21st of November, that Mr. Dreyer should act as a Temporary Assistant in the Museum, and he has done so since Mr. Wood-Mason's departure. He has been chiefly engaged in going over the alcoholic collection of Reptiles, re-arranging it and putting on new labels. This he has done in addition to his work as Registrar and Librarian, and Mr. Dreyer has given me complete satisfaction in the way he has performed these duties.

MR. FLEMING.

The business of my office has been energetically carried on by Mr. Fleming.

ACCESSIONS.

Thirteen thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine specimens were acquired by the Trustees during the year, and the

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The cabinets for the Ethnological Gallery, and for the South-East Gallery, first floor, which I reported last year as having been in the course of construction for seven months, are not yet completed: it has therefore been impossible as yet to arrange the specimens in them.

The dried and alcoholic specimens have been frequently inspected during the year, and I am glad to be able to report that all the collections are in a satisfactory condition, so far as their conservation is concerned. A great deal, however, yet remains to be done before some sections of them are made available for the instruction of the public.

J. ANDERSON,

Superintendent, Indian Museum.