

OBITUARY NOTICE.

CÉSAR FÉLIX ANCEY was elected a Corresponding Member of the Society in 1902. He was born at Marseilles on the 15th of November, 1860, and was educated at the College of the Jésuites d'Avignon, where he took degrees in literature, science, and law. Natural history, however, had the greatest attraction for him, and at first he devoted himself to entomology, especially to the study of Coleoptera, and at one time was occupied in the superintendence of the famous collection of MM. Oberthür of Rennes. However, he subsequently displayed a predilection for the study of conchology, which henceforth was maintained to the end of his life.

He left France in 1887 to occupy an official position in Algeria, where step by step he rose to the rank of 'administrateur titulaire.' He stayed a long time at Kabylie, until he became the oldest official in that district. He possessed a great capacity for work, was an excellent linguist, and always exhibited a very pleasant and affable manner to friends and acquaintances. The great desire of his life was to have made a scientific journey to the Cape Verd Islands or to South America. However, this hope was never to be realized. He died from fever on October 10th of last year in his 46th year.

M. Ancey's conchological writings commenced with the year 1881, and continued almost without interruption until the year of his death. Altogether he published about 750 pages, distributed among some 121 different papers. His longest memoirs treated upon the fauna of the Hawaiian Islands, altogether occupying 135 pages. M. Ancey was a member of the 'Nouvelle école' of French conchologists, and consequently many of his so-called species are merely regarded as slight varieties of long-established forms. An instance of this kind, familiar perhaps to some of the members of this Society, is worth recalling. In 1884 he wrote a paper entitled "Mollusques inédits du système européen," in which he described two forms of *Hyalinia* and eighteen so-called new species of *Helix*. One of the latter, *H. cantianiformis*, was from Folkestone! I think that British conchologists will not admit the possibility of the existence in Kent of a 'new species' of *Helix*, even as far back as the year 1884. I may mention that no figures accompanied M. Ancey's paper, and as far as I can ascertain most, if not all, of these eighteen forms are still known only by the author's Latin diagnoses. It is to be greatly regretted that the writings of M. Ancey are so inadequately illustrated; in fact, altogether only five plates and forty-one text-figures accompany his 750 pages. His descriptions in themselves are, however, very good, and many of his "Notes critiques" contain much useful information. M. Ancey contributed two papers to these "Proceedings," both treating upon the fauna of the Sandwich Islands, and doubtless had he lived others would have been offered for publication. Although we may disagree with M. Ancey in what constitutes a species, at the same time the utility and thoroughness of much of his work must be admitted.

E. A. S.



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