

OBITUARY.

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As we go to press we learn with great regret that Dr. H. J. Johnston-Lavis has been killed in a motor accident at Bourges (Department of Cher), France. He appears to have been on his way from Paris taking his invalid wife to their daughter at Biarritz. Madame Lavis escaped. We hope to give an obituary notice in a later number of the Magazine.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE TYPE OF PLIOLOPHUS VULPICEPS, OWEN.—In 1858 Richard Owen described the head and other portions of a skeleton of a small mammal from the London Clay of Harwich under the name of *Pliolophus vulpiceps*. He had made a section through the lower jaw, and that section was, so far as we knew, the only fragment of the original skull which survived. It is in the British Museum. The specimen belonged to the Rev. R. Bull, vicar of Harwich, and was supposed to have perished. Such was a tradition with the late Mr. William Davies, and Woodward and Sherborn failed to trace it when writing their *British Fossil Mammalia*. But only two weeks ago a message was received from the widow of Mr. Bull saying that the specimen was not only preserved but that she wished to deposit it in the British Museum in accordance with her late husband's desire. The little skull and limb bones are as perfect as when Owen left them, and still bear his labels. The section of the jaw now in the Museum fits on exactly to the cut in the skull.

The recovery of this long-lost type is of extraordinary interest, for it is the earliest known horse, and its proper position is ascertained from work done since its time in America and elsewhere. It is greatly to be hoped that the specimen may be redescribed in the light of modern knowledge, and the thanks of all palæontologists are due to Mrs. Bull, who has so carefully preserved the specimens and handed them over to the British Museum, where they will be available to students from all countries. The modern name of the animal is *Hyracotherium leporinum*, Owen, for *Pliolophus vulpiceps* proves to be identical with a species founded in 1841.

THE FOSSIL TRACK OF A DYING LOBSTER.—Dr. J. Walther has remarked that very few of the Crustaceans preserved in the Kimmeridgian Plattenkalk at Solnhofen exhibit traces of a death-struggle or of any movement, and he infers that these and other forms of life were dead before their remains were swept into the basin where the Plattenkalk was accumulated. In *Knowledge* for September Dr. F. A. Bather describes and figures a specimen of *Mecochirus longimanus*, one of the Glyphæidæ, accompanied by tracks indicating the movements that took place during the last few minutes of its life. From the nature and the distinctness of the markings it is inferred that the animal had been thrown on to a mud-flat exposed for a time to the direct rays of the sun. The specimen is numbered I 16137 in the Geological Department of the British Museum.