

is the anus, which in 1883 and even later was thought to be the mouth by many American writers. The supposed jaws are presumably the anal pyramid, which Dr. Gregory suggests came to be part of the apical system, i.e. at the aboral pole.

The species, in short, though perhaps not referable to the Carboniferous genus, *Lepidodiscus*, do not depart from the plan of the Agelacrinidæ, and anyone who wishes to maintain them in a separate genus should be asked to show the differences between them and *Agelacrinus*, *Haplocystis*, and one or two other of their allies.

Dr. Gregory appears to accept Haeckel's view that the ambulacra of the Agelacrinidæ bore pinnules. This may have been the case with one or two of the genera placed by Haeckel in his Agelacystidæ; but it can scarcely have been the case with any of the genera mentioned by Dr. Gregory.

It seems as well to indicate these minor lapses, which none will regard as detracting from the interest or value of my friend's long-looked-for paper.

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OBITUARY.

THE REV. ROBERT HUNTER, M.A., LL.D., F.G.S.

BORN 1823.

DIED FEBRUARY 25, 1897.

ROBERT HUNTER was born at Newburgh in 1823, and was the son of Mr. John Mackenzie Hunter, a Scotsman from Portpatrick, in Wigtownshire, his mother being (*née* Agnes Strickland) an English-woman from Ulverston, in Lancashire. In 1826 his father, with his family, removed to Aberdeen. There Robert Hunter, after attending the leading academy, entered the Grammar School, then under the celebrated rector, Dr. Melvin. Here he took the first prize in the third, fourth, and fifth classes of the school, and afterwards, when still only fourteen, he came out at the head of seventy-nine competitors in the open examination for University bursaries. He thus obtained the first, and entered Marischal College in the University of Aberdeen. There, a few months later, he was first in Latin and first in Greek, and in the third year first also in Mathematics. Among secular studies, however, Natural Science had supreme attractions for him. This subject was conducted by Dr. John Shier, and in his second year Robert Hunter gained the first prize, the second being awarded to Hugh Mitchell, afterwards Minister of the Free Church, Ferryden, who proved in later years a most excellent geologist and palæontologist. [The Rev. Hugh Mitchell, M.A., LL.D., passed away on November 10, 1894, and his obituary, written by Dr. Robert Hunter, his friend and former classmate (now, alas! also lost to us) appeared in the *GEOL. MAG.* for 1894, p. 575.] Robert Hunter and Hugh Mitchell, with an ardent prophetic of future eminence, roamed the country for many miles around the granite city making Natural History collections. But, as the result of prosecuting researches in spite of wind and weather, Hunter was laid up for three months with a serious illness. The day of

competition for the Mathematical scholarship to be held for two years arrived, finding Hunter still confined to his bed. But the same indomitable pluck which carried him through numberless other severe trials in later life, stood him in good stead. He arose and entered the lists "pale and emaciated," but came out bracketed first with another student, with whom Hunter divided the spoil. At the end of the arts curriculum, these two young men were singled out to receive from the University the degree of Master of Arts "with honourable distinction." Hunter afterwards, in the Divinity Hall, obtained the Lord Rector's prize for Hebrew.

On quitting Aberdeen he went out as a tutor to the Bermudas, and determined to occupy his spare time in studying the Natural History of those islands. Having been introduced to Professor Owen by one of the Scotch Professors, he received particular directions for collecting corals, and preservative fluid in which to place the living coral-polypes for subsequent examination. In this task Hunter was most successful, bringing back, in 1845, excellently preserved examples of the "Brain-coral," *Meandrina cerebriformis*, with the animal, which Owen declared to be the finest specimens which (at that time) had reached this country. He was also placed in communication with Sir William Reid, the Governor of Bermuda, and through him was introduced to Sir William Hooker, of Kew, who evinced a warm interest in Hunter's botanical researches. At this time he might have readily obtained an engagement as a naturalist; but he was so strongly impressed by the conviction that his vocation was in the service of the Free Church of Scotland, that he once more resumed his theological studies.

Subsequently Mr. Hunter offered himself for the Foreign Mission Service, was accepted, licensed, and ordained, and in 1847 he was sent to be the colleague of the Rev. Stephen Hislop, at Nagpore (Nágpur), Central India. Hislop, like himself, was a born naturalist. For upwards of eight years Hislop and Hunter worked together in the heart of the old Mahratta kingdom, which was not then, as now, under British, but under native rule.

Whilst earnest in the missionary cause, in their walks and mission tours their keen scientific proclivities impelled them to take note of the geology, the fossils and the minerals, of the country. Thus we find them sending home papers to be read at the Geological Society of London—"On the Geology of the Neighbourhood of Nágpur, Central India" (see Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc. 1854, x, pp. 470-473, and 1855, vol. xi, pp. 345-383, pl. x); "On the connection of the Umret Coal Beds with the Plant-beds of Nágpur, and of both with those of Burdwan" (op. cit. 1855, xi, pp. 555-561). After 1855, the geological work in India wholly devolved upon the Rev. S. Hislop, although sympathized in most warmly by the Rev. Dr. Hunter here at home. "Tertiary Deposits associated with Trap-Rock in the East Indies, and Fossil-shells from those deposits" (op. cit. 1860, xvi, pp. 154-182, and pls. v-x); "On the Age of the fossiliferous thin-bedded Sandstone and Coal of Nágpur" (op. cit. 1861, xvii, pp. 346-354); "Supplementary Note on the Plant-bearing Sandstone of Central India" (op. cit. 1862, xviii, p. 36);

“Fossil Teeth and Bones of Reptiles from Central India” (op. cit. 1864, xx, p. 117 and pp. 280–282).

The fossil plants collected by them from Nágpur were described by Sir Charles J. F. Bunbury, in the *Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc.* 1861, xvii, pp. 325–346, plates viii–xii. A Labyrinthodont reptile (named *Brachyops laticeps*) was described by Professor Owen from Nágpur (*Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc.* 1855, vol. xi, pp. 37–39, pl. ii; 1859, xv, p. 647; and 1861, xvii, p. 353). Professor T. Rupert Jones described the Fossil Cypridæ from Nágpur (*Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc.* 1860, vol. xvi, pp. 186, 187, 189, pl. x).

“Hislopite,” a new mineral, was designated after his friend by the Rev. Prof. Haughton (op. cit. 1860, vol. xvi, p. 160), and “Hunterite” by the same author, after Dr. Robert Hunter.

The effects of a tropical climate, however, began to tell upon Mr. Hunter’s constitution, and in 1855 his health completely broke down, and he was ordered to start at once for Europe. Thus the personal association of these two ardent Scottish geologists and naturalists in India terminated, but their warm friendship continued until severed by the sad death of the Rev. S. Hislop, by drowning, on September 4, 1863, about twenty miles from Nágpur, in attempting to cross a river in flood after dark, when only in his 46th year.

Dr. Hunter continued to carry on the work of the Free Church Missions, preaching on behalf of the cause for India at home. He suffered the loss of a brother, also engaged in the missionary cause, with his wife and child, who were killed during the Indian Mutiny.

Taking up literature, the Rev. R. Hunter wrote for the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, and brought out in 1863 his “History of India.” For two years he held the office of resident tutor in the Theological College of the Presbyterian Church in London, but resigned in 1866, in order to enjoy greater freedom in preaching and in the pursuit of his literary work. His contributions to the magazines were at one time most varied and prolific, but his “colossal work,” as Sir Richard Owen called it, was the bringing out for Cassell & Co. the “*Encyclopædic Dictionary*,” upon which he spent seventeen years of his life; the first seven years working entirely alone, but afterwards with assistance. This was followed by a manual of the Bible. He did splendid work with schools and a church at the Victoria Docks, the latter built for him by Mr. James Duncan. He was elected an F.G.S. in 1868, and the *Senatus of Aberdeen University*, in 1883, conferred upon him the degree of LL.D.

Those who (like the writer) had the good fortune to know the Rev. Dr. Hunter personally, must have been struck by his extreme modesty and simplicity of character, and his amiable and unselfish nature. Yet beneath this unassuming and retiring exterior there lay vast stores of learning which were at anyone’s command who might ask his help.

He has bequeathed by his will a sum to be devoted to the working out and publishing descriptions and figures of the fossil plant-remains collected by him, and by his friend the Rev. S. Hislop, in Nágpur, Central India.—(Partly from *The Presbyterian*, Sept. 15, 1893, and March 4, 1897.—H. W.)