

11th December, 1894.—Sir Raymond West, K.C.I.E., in the Chair.

It was announced that—

Mr. C. A. Fox,

Mr. E. D. H. Fraser,

had been elected members of the Society.

Dr. Th. Bloch read a paper on "An Unpublished Valabhi Copper-plate Grant," followed by a few remarks by Professor Bendall and Sir Raymond West. The paper will appear in the April number.

## II. OBITUARY NOTICES.

*Dr. Terrien de Lacouperie.*—We deeply regret to announce the death of Dr. Terrien de Lacouperie, which occurred at his residence, 136, Bishop's Road, Fulham, on October 11th, of typhoid fever. Dr. de Lacouperie was born in Normandy, and was educated with the view of his entering into commercial life. For some years he was associated with the house of business with which his father and brothers were connected, but his real interests were centred in linguistic studies. To these he devoted every moment of the spare time at his disposal, and in 1867 he published a work on the subject entitled "Du Langage," which, at the time, attracted considerable attention. As he advanced in his studies his desire grew to get as far back as possible in the history of languages, and he began with an investigation into the most archaic forms of the Chinese characters. About this time George Smith, following in the footsteps of Sir Henry Rawlinson, and assisted by the discovery of the library at Nineveh, was throwing open wide the doors of Babylonian learning. It had already been conjectured by several writers that there might be some connection between the civilization of China and Babylonia, but no substantial evidence had been adduced in support of the theory. This conjecture may have suggested to Dr. de Lacouperie the advisability of making a scientific investi-

gation into the subject. But however that may be, he took up the comparative study of the languages and civilization of China and Babylonia, with learned zeal. For years he pursued the subject, neglecting everything else, and at length was able to establish identities sufficiently numerous and striking to convince any but the most sceptical of the very close relationship, both as regards their civilization and written characters, which existed between the peoples of the two areas in ancient times. In 1879 he settled in London, and in the following year published a pamphlet entitled "The Early History of the Chinese Civilization," in which he gathered up the proofs which he accumulated in support of his theory.

While prosecuting these researches he was attracted to the oldest book of the Chinese, "The Book of Changes." This work had been a hopeless puzzle to all those—natives as well as foreigners—who had attempted to explain it. Guided by a scholarly instinct Dr. de Lacouperie perceived that the basis of that work consisted of fragmentary notes of an early age, mostly of a lexical character; that the original meaning to be placed upon them had been lost; and that they bore a close resemblance to the so-called syllabaries of Chaldea. Following up these clues he gained so clear an insight into it that he might almost have said with Merlin:—

"O ay! it is but twenty pages long,  
 But every page having an ample marge,  
 . . . . .  
 And every square of text an awful charm,  
 Writ in a language that has long gone by,  
 So long, that mountains have arisen since  
 With cities on their flanks;  
 And every margin scribbled, crost, and cramm'd  
 With comment, densest condensation, hard  
 To mind and eye; but the long sleepless nights  
 Of my long life have made it easy to me."

On this subject he contributed several papers to the pages

of this *Journal*, in which he gave translations of some of the chapters of this difficult book; and if his life had been prolonged he would no doubt have completed the translation of the entire work. With the same erudition and literary insight he made a comparative study of the languages of earlier Asia generally, and twice was presented by the "Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres" with the Prix Julien for the best works of the year on China.

In 1884 Dr. de Lacouperie was appointed Professor of Comparative Philology applied to the languages of South-eastern Asia, at University College.

Among his best known works were the following:—

"Catalogue of Chinese Coins in the British Museum." Vol. I. 1892.

"Les Langues de la Chine avant les Chinois." 1888.

"The Oldest Book of the Chinese, the Ykking, and its Authors." 1892.

"The Western Origin of the Early Chinese Civilization." 1894.

He was also Editor of the *Babylonian and Oriental Record*.

R. K. D.

*James Darmesteter*.—It is hardly six months since the Council—one of the Honorary Members of the Society, Dr. A. Sprenger, of Heidelberg, being dead—recommended "that the vacancy thus occasioned should be filled up by the election of Mons. James Darmesteter, the distinguished Professor of Persian at the Collège de France, and Secretary of the Société Asiatique. As the members of the Society will be aware, Mons. Darmesteter is the greatest living authority on Zoroastrian literature, and is distinguished not only for his wide philological knowledge in that and other fields, but also for his thorough grasp of historical criticism, and for his mastery of style and power of exposition. It will also be a peculiar pleasure to this Society to be able to confer an honour upon a scholar who adds to his other attainments a very deep and sympathetic acquaintance with English literature."

Darmesteter is no more: a short illness at Maisons-Lafitte has broken, on the 29th of November, 1894, the thin thread which united this vast intellect to his weak frame.

James Darmesteter was the son of a bookbinder of Château-Salins, where he was born the 28th March, 1849. His elder brother was the well-known philologist, Arsène Darmesteter, who died on the 16th November, 1888. Who could then predict the brilliant scientific career of the poor Jewish artisan's sons? Though for both, life was cut short in the forties—that is, at the height of mental activity—their failing health could hardly have permitted us to hope that, brief though it was, their earthly career should have run so long. In fact, Darmesteter's life was a long struggle of mind against matter, of brain against body, of high intellectual attainment against physical deformity. He went through the regular course of studies in Paris; a student at the Lycée Condorcet, where he carried off, in 1866, the *prix d'honneur de rhétorique* at the *Concours général*; he graduated in letters and in sciences as a bachelor, then as a licentiate in letters (1868) and at law (1870); he took the degree of Doctor in Letters in 1877, with a thesis on the Iranian dualism of Ormazd and Ahriman.<sup>1</sup> Michel Bréal and the much-regretted Abel Bergaigne were his first masters, and the former has paid a most graceful tribute to his memory in *Le Temps* of 2nd November, 1894. His first essays were devoted to the language and literature of ancient Persia.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Ormazd et Ahriman, leurs origines et leur histoire," par J. Darmesteter. 8vo. Paris, 1877.—In the *Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études*. Sciences philologiques et historiques, fasc. xxix.

"De verbo latino dare."

<sup>2</sup> "Hauwatât et Ameretât, essai sur la mythologie de l'Avesta." 8vo. Paris, 1875.—In the *Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études*. Sciences philologiques et historiques, fasc. xxiii.

"Notes sur quelques expressions zendes." 8vo. pp. 17.—Extrait des *Mémoires de la Société de Linguistique*, tome ii. fascicule 4.

"Études iraniennes," par James Darmesteter. Tome premier: *Études sur la grammaire historique de la langue persane*. 8vo. Paris, F. Vieweg, 1883.—Tome second, première partie: *Mélanges iraniens*. *Ibid.* 8vo. 1883.—Seconde partie: *Traductions indigènes du Khorda Avesta*. *Ibid.* 8vo. 1883.—Dedicated to Adolphe Régnier. Contains the grammar from the time of the Achemenides to our days; it is a revised edition of a paper which obtained,

Appointed in 1877 a teacher of Zend at the *École des Hautes Études*, Darmesteter obtained at last, on the 23rd January, 1885, a situation where his talent could find a suitable field of action by his nomination to the chair of Persian Language and Literature at the *Collège de France*. A sudden death had carried away and cut off, in the prime of life, the young and already celebrated Arabic Professor, Stanislas Guyard; the Persian Professor Barbier de Meynard, Hon. Member R.A.S., being transferred to the vacant chair, Darmesteter took his place. Darmesteter delivered his opening lecture on the 16th April, 1885: it is a general survey of the history of Persia, which embraces history, religion, literature.<sup>1</sup> A few weeks before, on the 28th February, 1885, he gave at the Sorbonne, before the Scientific Association of France, a paper on the "Mahdi, from the beginning of Islam to our day."<sup>2</sup>

In order to complete his researches he visited India, where he resided from February, 1886, to February, 1887—about eleven months—of which he spent three at Bombay, seven at Pesháwar and Hazára, the few remaining weeks being spent travelling from Bombay to the Punjab, from the Punjab

in 1881, the Volney Prize at the *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*. The other papers were first published in the *Revue Critique*, and in the *Mémoires de la Société de Linguistique*.

"L'apocalypse persane de Daniel," par James Darmesteter. (*Mélanges Rénier*. Pp. 405-420. Paris, 1886.)

"Les Origines de la Poésie persane," par M. J. Darmesteter. 12mo. pp. 89. Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1887.—Vol. liii. of the *Bibliothèque orientale elzévirienne*.

"The Origin of Persian Poetry," translated from the French of Professor J. Darmesteter by Masarivánji Framji Tamboli.—8vo. pp. 40. Bombay: printed at the *Voice of India* Printing-Press, 1888.

Preface: "The following pages, the original French of which appeared in the evening issues of the *Journal des Débats* of the 20th, 21st, and 24th April, 1886, were published in parts in the *India Spectator*, some time back."

"La flèche de Nemrod en Perse et en Chine," par M. J. Darmesteter. (*Journ. Asiat.* 8<sup>e</sup> sér. v. Févr., Mars, Avril, 1885, pp. 220-228.)

"Points de contact entre le Mâhâbharata et le Shâh-Nameh." (*Ibid.* x. p. 6.)

"Prophètes d'Israël." 8vo. Paris, Lévy, 1892.

<sup>1</sup> "Coup d'œil sur l'histoire de la Perse," par James Darmesteter, Professeur au Collège de France. 12mo. pp. 67. Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1885.—Vol. xlv. of the *Bibliothèque orientale elzévirienne*.

<sup>2</sup> "Le Mahdi, depuis les origines de l'Islam jusqu'à nos jours," par James Darmesteter, Professeur au Collège de France. 12mo. pp. 120. Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1885.—Vol. xliii. of the *Bibliothèque orientale elzévirienne*.

to Calcutta, and thence to Bombay. In the latter place he was warmly received by the Parsi community, which, indeed, is never backward in welcoming distinguished foreigners. At a meeting in the Bai Bhikaiji Shapurji Bengali Parsi Girls' School, Fort, presided over by Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, Bart., C.S.I., Darmesteter delivered a lecture on the place of Parsi-ism in History.<sup>1</sup> His experiences of India have been embodied in a volume,<sup>2</sup> dedicated to Lord Reay, Governor of Bombay, and to Lady Reay. He brought back with him fresh materials for his great translation of the Avesta, a capital work on the popular literature of the Afghans,<sup>3</sup> and sundry Notes which appeared at intervals, chiefly in the *Journal Asiatique*.<sup>4</sup>

When Adolphe Régnier died (20th Oct. 1884), Ernest Renan succeeded him as president of the Société Asiatique; the secretaryship left vacant by the illustrious author of the "Life of Jesus," fell into the good hands of Darmesteter. As such he had to write the yearly reports of the progress of Oriental studies, which had done so much for the fame of Jules Mohl and Ernest Renan. It is not saying a little that he showed himself worthy of his predecessors, and that the notice he read on the life and labours of Ernest Renan at the Société Asiatique, on the 22nd of June, 1893, is second to none of the best pages of the great philosopher.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Parsi-ism: its Place in History." A lecture delivered at Bombay by Professor James Darmesteter. 8vo. pp. 32. Bombay: Printed at the *Voice of India* Printing-Press, 1887.

<sup>2</sup> "Lettres sur l'Inde. A la frontière afghane," par James Darmesteter. 12mo. pp. xxix. and 355. Paris, A. Lemerre, 1888.

<sup>3</sup> "Chants populaires des Afghans, recueillis," publiés et traduits par J. Darmesteter, précédés d'une introduction sur la langue, l'histoire, et la littérature des Afghans. 8vo. 1890.

<sup>4</sup> "Afghan Life in Afghan Songs." (Reprinted from the *Contemporary Review*, Oct. 1877.) Pamph. 8vo. pp. 24.—"Inscriptions de Caboul. Epitaphes de l'Empereur Bâber et d'autres princes mongols," par M. J. Darmesteter. (Extrait du *Journal Asiatique*.) Pamph. 8vo. pp. 15. Paris, Imp. nat. 1888: these inscriptions were given to Darmesteter in 1886 by Col. Pratt, who had them copied at Cabul in 1879.—"La grande inscription de Gandahâr," par M. James Darmesteter. (Extrait du *Journal Asiatique*.) 8vo. pp. 40. Paris, Imp. nat. 1890.—"Souvenirs bouddhistes sur l'Afghanistan." (*Jour. Asiat.* 8<sup>e</sup> sér. xv. p. 105.)

<sup>5</sup> "Notice sur la vie et l'œuvre de M. Renan," par M. James Darmesteter. Lue à la Séance annuelle de la Société asiatique le 22 juin, 1893. (Extrait du *Journal Asiatique*.) Pamph. 8vo. pp. 56. Paris, Imprimerie nationale, 1893.

The field of Oriental studies was hardly large enough for Darmesteter's activity.<sup>1</sup> If nature did not make an orator of him, certainly with his pen Darmesteter had much of the temper of a debater and of a polemist, and periodical literature could not fail to fascinate him somewhat. For several years he was one of the Editors of the *Revue Critique*, to which he gave a great many critical notices on works like Spiegel's "Iranian Antiquity," Delattre's "Peuple et empire des Mèdes jusqu'à le fin du règne de Cyaxare," Oppert's "Peuple et langue des Mèdes," Evers' "Avénement de la puissance perse sous Cyrus," Justi's "Histoire de la Perse ancienne," Nöldeke's "Histoire d'Ardeshir," Keiper's "Les Perses d'Eschyle," Gibb's "Gudrun, Beowulf, and Roland," Shairp's "Essays on Poetry," Elze's "Lord Byron," G. Herbert's "The Temple," etc. He made his *début* on the 16th August, 1882, in the *Journal des Débats*, to which he contributed, besides his Oriental essays, a number of articles on various subjects—"Criticism," "Ireland," "Formosa,"<sup>2</sup> "India," etc. His "Coup d'œil sur l'histoire du peuple juif," published in the *Nouvelle Revue*, created a stir by its warmth and its eloquence.<sup>3</sup> When last year Calmann Lévy offered him and Louis Ganderax the editorship of the *Revue de Paris*, I feel pretty sure that the great publisher's proposal gave satisfaction to a secret craving of my late friend. Nor did he fail to take to heart his new task, and to contribute himself to the new Review some of the best papers which have appeared in its pages.

But the great work of his life was the translation of the Avesta. When Prof. F. Max Müller undertook his collection of the "Sacred Books of the East," he entrusted

<sup>1</sup> He has contributed to *Capitales du Monde*, a handsome volume published by Hachette, in 1892; edited a new edition of "Macbeth," with a Commentary, etc.

<sup>2</sup> "Annales de Formose." Par James Darmesteter. (*Journal des Débats*, 1884, Oct. 10, 20, et 21.)

<sup>3</sup> Reprinted in: "Essais orientaux," par James Darmesteter, "L'Orientalisme en France." "Le Dieu suprême des Aryens," "Les Cosmogonies Aryennes," "Prolégomènes de l'histoire des religions," "Mélanges de mythologie et de linguistique," "La Légende d'Alexandre," "Coup d'œil sur l'histoire du peuple juif." 8vo. pp. 279. Paris, A. Lévy, 1883. (Dedicated to Ernest Renan.)

Darmesteter with Zoroastrian literature, and the result was a translation of the Vendidâd and the Sirôzahs, Yasts, and Nyâyis;<sup>1</sup> the Yaçna and the Gâthâs being left out. Urged in 1884 by Max Müller to complete his translation, Darmesteter, thinking himself unprepared for the task, declined the offer; but after his journey to India, urged by his wife, he resumed the work in 1888, and brought it last year to a successful end. This translation of the Zend-Avesta comprises three huge quarto volumes of the "Annales du Musée Guimet"<sup>2</sup>; it is Darmesteter's *magnum opus*, and this very year the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres awarded it the prize of twenty thousand francs.

I suppose that the biographer was thinking of this work when, writing about Darmesteter in the *Athenæum* (No. 3496, Oct. 27th, 1894), he said: "In him was realized the perfect ideal of scholarship, that happy blending of profound learning, daring originality, and transparent clearness of expression which, save for rare exceptions, France alone seems able to produce; and by his premature death science has suffered a loss which may well be called irreparable." This, his last great labour, seems to have exhausted his feeble constitution.

Darmesteter had married a graceful English lady, Miss Mary Robinson, well known for her poetical talent, and so far versed in French literature as to be able to give us a new book on the famous chronicler Froissart.<sup>3</sup> The last years of the life of Darmesteter passed away in the happiness

<sup>1</sup> "The Sacred Books of the East," edited by F. Max Müller. Vols. iv. and xxiii. "The Zend-Avesta." Part i. The Vendidâd; Part ii. The Sirôzahs, Yasts, and Nyâyis. Translated by James Darmesteter. Two vols. 8vo.

<sup>2</sup> "Annales du Musée Guimet"—"Le Zend-Avesta, traduction nouvelle avec commentaire historique et philologique," par James Darmesteter, Professeur au Collège de France. Three vols. 4to. Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1892-1893: I. La Liturgie (Yasna et Vispéred); II. La Loi (Vendidâd). L'Épopée (Yashts). Le Livre de prière (Khordâ Avesta). III. Origines de la littérature et de la religion zoroastriennes. Appendice à la traduction de l'Avesta (fragments des Nasks perdus et index).

<sup>3</sup> "Les grands écrivains français—Froissart," par Mary Darmesteter. 8vo. pp. 174. Paris, Hachette, 1894. Also "Marguerites du temps passé." 12mo. 1892.



of a cheerful home, and his death has left a bereaved and broken-hearted widow. Indeed, France has lost a profound scholar, with a touch of genius.

HENRI CORDIER.

*Paris, 27th November, 1894.*

### III. NOTICES OF BOOKS.

CHRESTOMATHIA BAIDAWIANA, THE COMMENTARY OF EL-BAIDĀWĪ ON SŪRA III. Translated and explained for the use of Students of Arabic by D. S. MARGOLIOUTH, M.A. Pp. xvi. and 216. London: Luzac & Co., 1894.

This book is as scholarly as it is useful. Al-Baidāwī's work, although not one of the easiest, is one of the most popular commentaries of the Qorān, and should be read by every student of Arabic. Of particular importance are the numerous grammatical annotations which give the beginner an insight into the method of the Arabic national grammarians, and which form an excellent preparatory study for the perusal of these works in the original. The rather concise scholia also form a good introduction, not only into the criticism of the Qorān, but in particular into the early history of Moslim dogmas and the development of the sects.

Prof. Margoliouth chose Sūra iii., which, although one of the longest, is not so tedious as Sūra ii., and is of great interest from theological, polemical, and historical points of view. A selection of smaller Sūras, representing the chief phases of the Qorān, would perhaps have been more commendable, but this unimportant circumstance in no way diminishes the value of the book. The translation also of the text of the Qorān is thoroughly original and clear. The introduction and the remarks in particular, which form one-third of the book, show how well Mr. Margoliouth has mastered the immense literatures of Moslim Tradition, Grammar, and Kalām.