

## OBITUARY.

NILS ADOLF ERIK NORDENSKIÖLD.

THE death of Professor Baron A. E. Nordenskiöld at Stockholm, on August 13, 1901, deprives our Society of a distinguished honorary member, elected in 1877 soon after its foundation. His nephew, Dr. Otto Nordenskiöld, writes: 'His death was absolutely sudden: the same day he was working in his laboratory, occupied with great plans in his mineralogical and chemical work.'

Nordenskiöld was born at Helsingfors on November 18, 1832, of a Swedish family possessed of scientific attainments. His father, Dr. Nils Gustaf Nordenskiöld, also well-known as a mineralogist, was director of the Department of Mines in Finland, and the son accompanied his father on many mineralogical excursions, including one to the Urals in 1853. In this way young Nordenskiöld became an enthusiastic student and collector of minerals. In 1849 he entered the University of Helsingfors, applying himself to science and spending his vacations in visiting the rich mineral localities of Finland. His first paper 'on the crystalline forms of graphite and chondrodite,' written in 1855, was a dissertation for the degree of licentiate; in the same year he published his book on the Minerals of Finland, a second edition of which appeared in 1863. Immediately after taking his degree he was appointed Curator of the Mathematico-Physical Faculty and to a post in the Mining Office, but was dismissed in the same year on account of a political speech distasteful to the Russian Government. This rendered it advisable for him to go abroad, and his time was spent working at mineral analysis in Rose's laboratory at Berlin. In 1857 he returned to Helsingfors to take his degree of master and doctor; at the graduation ceremony, which was attended by a deputation from the Swedish Universities, the young doctor again expressed his sympathies too plainly, and as a result was banished from the country.

He then settled in Sweden, and as a geologist accompanied the Swedish expedition to Spitzbergen in 1858. After his return he was appointed professor and director of the mineralogical collections of the State Museum at Stockholm in succession to Mosander. This appointment gave him opportunities for investigating the many rare minerals for which the Scandinavian peninsula is remarkable, and the results of

his work in this direction are recorded in a long list of mineralogical papers. Quite recently, in a paper read before the Geological Society of London, of which he was a Foreign Member, he has given an historical review of Scandinavian minerals containing rare elements. About half of the twenty-six minerals discovered and named by him have withstood the test of subsequent examination, and now rank as well-defined species, of which, among others, may be mentioned crookesite, thaumasite, kainosite, ganomalite, tapiolite, and hydrocerussite. The peculiar borate of calcium and tin, nordenskiöldine, bears his name.

It was, however, as an Arctic explorer that Nordenskiöld achieved fame. He several times visited Spitzbergen, where he made important geological collections. During one of his two expeditions to Greenland he discovered, and brought back in 1870, large masses of the now celebrated Ovik (Disko) iron, formerly thought to be meteoric, but now known to be of terrestrial origin; he further made important observations on the cosmic dust (cryoconite) which accumulates on the inland ice. During the memorable voyage of the *Vega* in 1878-1880 he accomplished the navigation of the North-East Passage, a feat many times before attempted, thus being the first to circumnavigate Europe and Asia. On his return he received many honours, including a Swedish baronetcy.

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## NOTES.

THE fine private collection of minerals and meteorites, comprising some 10,000 specimens, brought together during a period of thirty-five years by Mr. Clarence S. Bement, of Philadelphia, has recently been purchased by Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan and presented to the American Museum of Natural History at New York. Only shortly before Mr. Morgan had purchased for the same museum, of which he is a trustee, a large collection of precious stones and pearls which was on exhibition by Messrs. Tiffany and Co., of New York, at the Paris Exposition of 1900.

A Mineralogical Society (Wiener Mineralogische Gesellschaft) was founded at Vienna on March 27, 1901. Reports of the monthly meetings, excursions to mineral localities, and visits to museums, will be found in the 'Mineralogische und Petrographische Mittheilungen,' the periodical commenced in 1871 by Professor Tschermak, who is the first president of the new society.