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I. Biographical Notice of the late Dr Gilbert M'Nab of Jamaica

Professor Balfour

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undistinguishable; but I have not seen the cone of *P. M'Intoshiana*.

Mr Black, an English engineer who had occasion, in the performance of works entrusted to him in California, to make use of various of the country woods, informs my brother, that *P. Murrayana* is the best wood in the country for railway sleepers, sluice-heads, and purposes where a hard and durable wood is required; but being of a small growth, and more knotty than some of the others, is not so good for planks, and what is technically known by the term lumber. He also mentions as a peculiarity in it, that the rings are more concentrated at the outside than at the heart, which he says is just the reverse of the others,—only of some of them however,—for we shall find that this is also the case with *Wellingtonia gigantea*. He suggests that it may indicate a rapid growth when young, and slow afterwards, owing, perhaps, to the scantiness of the soil in the rocky regions where it grows.

9th February 1860.—Professor BALFOUR, V.P., in the Chair.

The following gentlemen were elected

Resident Fellows.

Mr WILLIAM GORRIE, Bangholm.

Mr P. S. ROBERTSON, Nurseryman, Trinity.

Associate.

Mr WILLIAM RAMSAY M'NAB, Botanic Garden.

The following donations were presented to the Library:—

Transactions of the Tyneside Naturalists' Field Club, Vol. IV., Part II.—From the Club.

Transactions of the Royal Scottish Society of Arts, Vol. V., Part III.—From the Society.

The Flora of Weston-super-Mare, and Flora Bristoliensis.—From Mr C. B. Dunn.

Report on the plants collected during Mr Babbage's expedition into the North Western interior of South Australia in 1858, by Dr F. Mueller, Victoria.—From the Author.

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The following donations were noticed as having been presented to the Museum at the Botanic Garden:—

From Mrs Haynes, Exeter—Specimen of the Fruit of *Ochroma Lagopus*.

Captain Archer—Fruit of Sandbox tree, ornamented gourd, and a large species of *Polyporus*, from Canada.

Mr Andrew Murray—Specimen of *Scirpus lacustris*, from California, 15 feet long.

Professor Balfour announced the following donations to the University Herbarium:—

From Colonel M'Cléverty—A Collection of Ferns from the ranges of hills round Wellington, in the Northern Island of New Zealand, including *Cyathea dealbata*, *C. medullaris*, *C. Cunninghami*, *C. Smithii*, *C. squarrosa*, *C. antarctica* or *pilosa*, and *C. lanata*, *Todea pellucida*, and various species of *Hymenophyllum*, &c.

Captain William Allan—About seventy species of Ferns, collected in the higher parts of Jamaica.

M. Planchon, Professor of Materia Medica, Montpellier—A specimen of *Clypeola gracilis*, Planch.

The following communications were read:—

I. *Biographical Notice of the late Dr Gilbert M'Nab of Jamaica.*
By Professor BALFOUR.

It is our melancholy duty this evening to record the death of Dr Gilbert M'Nab, one of the Fellows of this Society. The sad event took place at St Ann's in the island of Jamaica on the 21st January last. Dr M'Nab was a son of the late and brother of the present superintendent of our Botanic Garden. He was born in the parish of St Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, on the 26th November 1815. After prosecuting his elementary studies, he became a student in the University of Edinburgh, and devoted his attention to medicine. He graduated here in 1836 along with 122 other medical students, and he wrote a thesis "on the Botany of the Coast of Forfarshire." After his graduation he became an assistant in Dr Christison's laboratory. Here he acquitted himself to the entire satisfaction of the Professor; and he became a favourite with all his companions. He was fond of botany, and he prosecuted the science with great zeal and success. He was one of the 21 (of whom 12 remain) who met on the 8th February 1836 to institute the Botanical Society; and on the 27th March of that year he was enrolled as one of the original members. He rendered important services to the Society; and I find that on 13th April 1837 the thanks of the Society were given to him for valuable services and unwearied exertions in conducting the distribution of the specimens of 1836-37. Dr M'Nab made many excursions in Scotland, and communicated the results of his observations as well as specimens to the Society. An account of his botanical tour in Forfarshire was given in his Thesis. He visited also the county of Galloway and the Orkney and Shet-

land Islands. Among some of the rare plants collected by him and presented to the Society, I may mention the following:—*Arenaria norvegica*, from Serpentine Hill, Unst, Shetland; *Cerastium latifolium*, var., from Shetland; *Ajuga pyramidalis*, Orkney; *Allium oleraceum*, near Montrose; *Asplenium germanicum*, Dunkeld; *Calamagrostis Epigejos*, Braemar; *Hieracium umbellatum*, Clova; *Rhinanthus major*, Sands of Barry.

An opportunity for engaging in practice having opened at St Ann's, Jamaica, he left Edinburgh on 9th January 1838. Before his departure the members of the Society testified their regard for him by inviting him to a supper in Barry's Hotel, on 27th December 1837—Professor Graham occupying the chair, and Professor Christison acting as croupier. Every one felt regret at the loss of his valuable assistance in conducting the affairs of the Society.

After being at St Ann's for some time he was called to Kingston to act as assistant to Dr M'Fadyen, an eminent medical practitioner as well as a good botanist. Dr M'Nab aided Dr M'Fadyen both in his practice and in drawing up his Flora of Jamaica, of which unfortunately only one volume has appeared. Amidst the arduous duties of practice in the warm climate of Jamaica, Dr M'Nab did not neglect the pursuit of botany, and he contributed largely to the Society's Herbarium. The plants which he transmitted are incorporated with the University collection, and many of them have been transmitted to Dr Grisebach, who is now engaged in a work on the West Indian flora. Dr M'Nab also contributed largely to the museum at the Botanic Garden. Some of the specimens he has sent are very valuable and instructive. The difficulty of transmission prevented him from forwarding many large specimens of palm stems, &c., which he had secured for the museum with much trouble and expense.

In January last, he was attacked with inflammation of the kidney, accompanied with a cervical abscess, which appears to have burst internally, and caused sudden suffocation. His remains were interred in the church of Ochro Rois, St Ann's.

A writer in a local paper, in recording his death, says:—"There are few men in Jamaica whose demise will cause more sincere or more general regret than that of Dr M'Nab, who united to eminent skill as a surgeon and general practitioner one of the kindest and most amiable of dispositions. He practised for many years in Kingston—first, in partnership with the late Dr M'Fadyen, whose botanical tastes found a large sympathy in the cultivated acquaintance with that charming science which Dr M'Nab had acquired from his earliest associations—and subsequently on his own account, in the course of which he made numerous friends, all of whom will deplore his early death."

Dr M'Nab communicated a paper on the *Nelumbium luteum*, and he was the first to introduce the *Victoria regia* into Jamaica.

II. On the Phytotype or Archetype of the Flowering Division of the Vegetable Kingdom. By J. BIRKBECK NEVINS, M.D. (Lond.), Fel. Bot. Soc. Ed. Communicated by DYCE DUCKWORTH, Esq.

The author commenced by describing the theory of Morphology as announced by Goethe, and mentioning the principal facts upon which it is based. He spoke of the advance in botanical knowledge which had resulted from the discovery of the law of Morphology, and the obligation under which botanists lay to the illustrious poet. He then alluded to the objections naturally felt to the theory in the form in which Goethe pro-