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REMARKS OF ROBERT E. C. STEARNS

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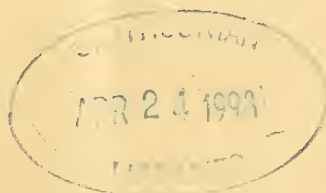
DEATH OF COLONEL EZEKIEL JEWETT,

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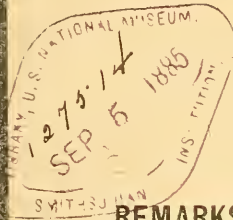
California Academy of Sciences,

June 18th, 1877.

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## REMARKS OF ROBERT E. C. STEARNS

ON THE

# DEATH OF COLONEL EZEKIEL JEWETT,

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MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMY: The duty has fallen on me to formally announce to the Academy the death of two of its corresponding members, well-known and highly esteemed in scientific circles—Colonel Ezekiel Jewett and Dr. Philip P. Carpenter. This evening I will read the following brief biographical sketch of the first—reserving a notice of the latter for another occasion.

Colonel Ezekiel Jewett, Ph. D., who was elected a corresponding member of the Academy, April 6th, 1868, was born in the town of Rindge, New Hampshire, October 16th, 1791. His educational opportunities were such as the common schools of the neighborhood afforded at the time. His father, who was a doctor of medicine, would have educated the son for the same profession, but the diverse tastes and restless temperament of the latter, required a broader and more active field of exertion than that of a country physician.

When, in 1812, accumulated grievances culminated in a declaration of war by the United States with Great Britain,

Jewett, then in the vigor of youth, enlisted in the army, and continued in active service until peace was proclaimed. During this military service he was under General Scott, being in the brigade of that celebrated soldier, and received promotion for his gallantry as exhibited on various occasions. He was in the battles of Lundy's Lane, Chippewa and Fort Erie, and at the latter his courage was notably conspicuous. He served his country with distinguished fidelity and bravery, and the commendation of his commanding general was bestowed upon him.

The war with Great Britain being over, and about this time the South American republic of Chili, then a province of Spain, having revolted against the Spanish rule, Jewett, and a few others of his companions-in-arms chivalrously espoused the cause of the Chilians, and pledged their services to the Chilean leader, General Carrera, in behalf of Chilean independence. Crossing the South American continent from Buenos Ayres to Chili, the passage of the Andes was made in a most inclement season and at great peril. When near the crest of the cordillera a fearful snow storm of four days' duration was encountered, in which they nearly perished; and at the summit, thirteen thousand feet above the sea, the cold was so intense that it was with great difficulty he saved himself from freezing. Arriving in Chili, he took command of the cavalry, and served with distinction until the successful close of the war, when he sailed for Rio Janeiro, and returned to his native village in 1818.

Soon after he married a woman of superior culture and character, Elizabeth Arnold, of Westmoreland, New Hampshire, who proved not only a devoted and affectionate wife, but a sympathetic companion and an appreciative associate in his scientific labors, for whom he ever manifested a most tender regard. In 1826 he removed to Fort Niagara, where he remained in charge seventeen years, his leisure hours occupied with the study of the natural sciences; he also improved the advantages which the locality furnished by making a collection of ethnological material pertaining to the American aborigines. In 1843 he removed to Lockport, New York, and his entire time was now given to the study of geology. In this connection he travelled extensively throughout the United States, including several journeys to the Lake Superior country in the years, 1844, 5, 6, where he was engaged in the



exploration of the mineral region, since so famous for its production of copper and iron; and also added largely to his ethnological collection, which he subsequently gave to the Smithsonian Institution. The vicinity of Lockport, at the time referred to, was equal to any, if not the best single point in the world for the student of palæontology. The heavy cutting, through the Niagara limestone, for the locks of the Erie Canal, then in process of enlargement, revealed many wonderful palæontological secrets. It was while Jewett was reaping in this interesting field that he was visited by Agassiz and Ed. de Verneuil, of France, and the acquaintance formed at that time with these eminent men ripened into a friendship which was terminated only by death. At the suggestion of Agassiz, he organized a summer school in geology, which was continued four years, and received the patronage of many now eminent in scientific pursuits. Though Colonel Jewett was especially interested in geology and palæontology, and of material related to the latter had made a large and valuable collection, he was also an eager student in conchology, as will be seen by the following from the report of the British Association for 1863, written by Dr. Philip Carpenter :

“Colonel Jewett went to Panama . . . . in January, 1849, spending ten weeks in that region, including Taboga. This was two years before Professor Adams’ explorations. Thence he sailed to San Francisco, where he spent four months in exploring the shore for about fifty miles from the head of [entrance to] the bay. After laboring for a week at Monterey, he spent ten weeks at Santa Barbara and the neighborhood, thoroughly exploring the coast for fifteen miles, as far as San Buenaventura. . . . . Before his return to the East, he also collected at Mazatlan . . . . and Acapulco.”

“There can be no doubt of the accuracy of the Colonel’s observations at the time they were made. Unsurpassed in America as a field palæontologist, possessed of accurate discrimination, abundant carefulness, and unwearied diligence and patience, no one was better fitted to collect materials for a scientific survey of the coast.”

At Santa Barbara he also made a collection of pliocene fossils, which are referred to in the report from which I have quoted. In 1856 he was appointed Curator of the State Museum of New York, at Albany, his incumbency continuing for several years, “a position which he filled,” says a writer, “with great credit to himself and incalculable benefit to science.”

The voyage from Panama to San Francisco was made on the old whaleship Niantic, as I have learned from a fellow-passenger, a well known citizen of San Francisco. Among the nearly three hundred emigrants, adventurers and pioneers on that now historic vessel—including men of all grades of character and culture, exhibiting every mood and tense of humanity—“Colonel Jewett was a general favorite with them all.” . . . “He was a gentleman everywhere and at all times.”

In 1859 Numismatics attracted his attention, and with characteristic zeal he pursued the study, and got together in five years one of the largest and most valuable collections of coins and medals in the country.

Early in the beginning of the great civil war, though seventy years of age, he wrote to his old commander, who was then at the head of the army, expressing his readiness to enter the service again, in defence of the Union. The reply of his venerable chief was to the effect, that the magnitude and probable duration of the struggle, required that its burdens and management should devolve upon younger men. During the frequently changing aspect of that prolonged and terrible conflict, those who knew him can tell you how he chafed under this enforced inaction.

#### PERSONAL REMINISCENCES.

In 1866 he visited California again. It was in the month of June of that year when I met him for the first time and with a few members of the Academy, made up a small party for a short excursion to Bolinas Bay. There are others here to-night who must remember with pleasure the climbing of Tamalpais, the descent to the Bay, and the “walks and talks” with him on that occasion. He was with us but a few months, but sufficiently long to endear himself to all. After returning East, he made several journeys to Florida, during succeeding winters, collecting everything of interest to himself or which might be of service to others. While visiting the East in 1868-70 I again had the pleasure of his companionship on one of these Florida excursions, and with the lamented Stimpson, our little party of three spent the months of January, February and March in the delightful winter climate of that country, collecting along the eastern shore and among the keys on the Gulf side of the peninsula. In November 1869, in company with

his friends, Dr. and Mrs. Newcomb, he made a second visit to Panama ; but the climate affected him so severely that he was obliged to return, after a brief stay of only five weeks. He again visited Florida in the winter of 1872, being the fourth time, for the purpose of collecting as before, and was as usual, successful. As may be supposed a man so incessantly active and untiring as Colonel Jewett, was widely known and appreciated in scientific circles, and possessed the friendship and esteem of very many of the most distinguished men of the day.

In 1860 Hamilton College, New York, honored him with the degree of Doctor of Philosophy; and his services to science were further recognized by many learned societies at home and abroad, of which he was an honorary member.

#### THE CLOSE OF A USEFUL LIFE.

In 1862 he met with the severest affliction in the death of his wife ; after this sad event he made his home with his daughter, Mrs. A. A. Boyce, and upon the removal of herself and family to California, about two years ago, accompanied them to Santa Barbara, where, on the 18th of last May, after a brief illness, he closed his eyes forever, at the ripe age of eighty-six years.

Imperfect as is this rapid sketch, it is sufficient to give you some idea of the career of this remarkable man, of his wonderfully active and prolonged life, which exhibited, nearly to its last moments, indomitable energy and perseverance Intellectually of quick perceptions, eager in the pursuit of knowledge, and enthusiastic in his love for and appreciation of nature ; actuated by a high sense of honor, and of the most rigid integrity ; he was also a man of generous sympathies and impulses. Of exceeding modesty, flattery was distasteful to him, and he was sensitive to the publication of anything in his praise. While courteous to all, he was critical in the selection of his friends, with whom he was exceedingly companionable, and by whom he was greatly beloved.

And here, imperfect as it is, let us close this poor rehearsal of a life well rounded in its fullness of useful service, and of honorable years. Of those refined and delicate qualities which though unseen by the outer world attract kindred spirits and draw them together, I will not speak. Friendship will seek its consolation in precious memories too tender to be told.









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