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PROF. EDUARD SUESS, FOR.MEM.R.S.

BY the death of Eduard Suess on April 26, Austria loses her most eminent man of science, and the world one of its greatest naturalists. The son of a German merchant, domiciled in this country, Suess was born in London on August 20, 1831. The family removed, while he was still young, first to Prague and then to Vienna—but to the end of his life Suess retained his affection for what he used to call his "native land," and maintained the most cordial relations with his numerous English friends. His university career was commenced at Prague, but completed in Vienna, and at the age of twenty-one he became an assistant in the geological department of the famous Natural History Museum of the latter city. Here he worked for five years on the collections, and, as the result of his studies, published a number of important papers on graptolites, brachiopods, and other fossil forms.

It was in 1857, however, that Suess entered upon what was his life's great work—that of a teacher. After serving ten years as an extraordinary professor in the University of Vienna, he was in 1867 appointed to the full professorship of geology, a post which he held for thirty-four years, retiring as emeritus professor in 1901. Of his success as a teacher it is needless to speak, for he numbered among his pupils Neumayr, Mojsisovics, Fuchs, Waagen, Penck, and other distinguished geologists, many of whom caught from their master that grasp of detail, combined with powers of generalisation, that so eminently distinguished him. The writer of this

notice recalls with pleasure the happy time he spent with Suess forty years ago, when he had the opportunity of witnessing the delightful relations that existed between the professor and his students. Not only during geological excursions in the neighbourhood of Vienna was the charm of Suess's society felt, but in the Wurstel-Prater, where we joined the young fellows during hours of relaxation—in the beer-gardens, and even on the "merry-go-rounds." Yet, amid all the fun and frolic, the signs of affectionate respect and devotion to the great teacher were never for a moment wanting.

It was at this time that Suess's daughter became engaged to his most distinguished pupil, the young Bavarian, Melchior Neumayr. After working for a time on the Geological Survey of Austria, Neumayr had established a great reputation as a palæontologist, and at the age of twenty-eight became a colleague of Suess, as professor of palæontology in the Vienna University. Greatly impressed by reading the "Origin of Species," he entered into correspondence with Darwin, by whom his work was held in high estimation, and in the end he came to be regarded as the stoutest champion of evolution on the geological side.

Suess's own researches ranged over every branch of geological science, as may be seen from the titles of sixty memoirs and books published by him prior to 1875. But in this year there appeared his remarkable work, "Die Entstehung der Alpen," to be followed five years later by the first part of the still more famous "Antlitz der Erde." In this great work, which engaged his labours during twenty-five years, Suess aimed at no less a task than taking a comprehensive survey of all that has been accomplished in elucidating the geological structure of every part of the globe, and drawing general conclusions from that survey. How admirably this herculean undertaking was performed is told—with an estimate of the great merits, the small defects, and the enormous influence exerted by this monumental work—by Sir Archibald Geikie in a contribution to the series of "Scientific Worthies" (see NATURE, vol. lxxii., May 4, 1905). It will suffice here to say that the book will undoubtedly take its place as a scientific classic, side by side with Hutton's "Theory of the Earth" and Lyell's "Principles of Geology."

In 1890 there came a sad interruption to Suess's scientific labours. His distinguished son-in-law and colleague, Neumayr, died at the early age of forty-four, when only the first volume of the great work on which he was engaged, "Die Stämme des Thierreichs," had been published. It is very touching, even at this date, to read the letters in which Suess wrote of his great sorrow to his friends; but fortunately these same letters contained the expression of a new hope, founded on the fact that his own son had just taken his doctor's degree in geology. Happily, Suess lived to see his son become an extraordinary professor in the University, to find him the author of valuable geological papers, and, shortly before

he passed away, to witness the son installed in the chair vacated by himself only a few years previously.

The great task of his life completed in 1910, Suess's closing years have been happy and restful, for only quite recently came the bronchial affection which terminated his life in his eighty-fourth year.

Suess held much the same position among German-speaking peoples as did Huxley among English and Americans. They both held that, in addition to their scientific labours, however exacting these might be, something in the way of service was due to the cities in which they lived and the states to which they belonged. In 1862 Suess had directed attention to the unsatisfactory condition of the water-supply of Vienna, and, from 1863 to 1873, he was called upon to serve as a member of the Municipal Council of Vienna; it was due to his initiative in this capacity that an aqueduct, 110 kilometres long, was built to bring water from the Alps to the city, and that other great improvements in the sanitary conditions of Vienna were undertaken. For more than thirty years he was a member of the Lower House of the Reichsrath, and proved himself a doughty champion against the defenders of political privileges and of clericalism. Like Huxley, he declined many offers of honours and titles from the State, but was amply compensated by the marks of esteem from his fellow-workers in science. He was president of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, a member of the French Institute, Foreign Member of the Royal Society since 1894, and member of scientific societies in every part of the world. He received the Wollaston medal of the Geological Society in 1896, and the Copley medal of the Royal Society in 1903.

JOHN W. JUDD.