

## DEATH OF MR. JOHN CRAWFURD,

A CANDIDATE FOR PRESTON, IN 1837.

This distinguished Oriental scholar and ethnologist died on Monday night at his residence, in Elvaston-place, South Kensington. He was born on the 13th of August, 1783, in the island of Islay. His father, Mr. Samuel Crawford, a man of sense and prudence, was of an Ayrshire family. He had been brought up to the medical profession, and visiting Islay, married Margaret Campbell, daughter of James Campbell, of Ballinaley, the proprietor of a small estate which had been for several generations in the family. Their son John was educated in the village school of Bowmore, and to the instruction derived from the master, Daniel Taylor, Mr. Crawford used to say he was chiefly indebted for his advancement in life. In 1799, the profession of medicine, for which he never had much taste, having been chosen for him, Mr. Crawford repaired for his studies to Edinburgh, where he remained three years. In 1803 he obtained a medical appointment in the Indian Service, embarked for India in April, and landed in Calcutta in September of the same year. For the first five years of his residence in India he was employed in his professional duties with the army, chiefly in the North-West provinces, in the neighbourhood of Delhi and Agra. In 1808 the same duties took him to Penang in the Straits of Malacca, where he began to devote himself to that study of the language and manners of the Malay race which was destined to make him widely known. In 1811, having been brought under the notice of Lord Minto, then Governor-General of India, Mr. Crawford was invited to accompany him on the expedition which effected the conquest of Java. After that event, in consequence of his acquaintance with the Malay languages, he was appointed to represent the British Government at the Court of one of the native Princes, and for nearly six years he filled some of the principal diplomatic offices of the island. It was then that he collected the materials for the work which he afterwards published, entitled *The History of the Indian Archipelago*. Java and their other Indian possessions having been restored to the Dutch, Mr. Crawford returned to England in 1817, and in 1820 published the work just mentioned. In 1821 he went back to India, and shortly after his return was appointed by the first Marquis of Hastings, at that time Governor-General, to the Diplomatic Mission to Siam and Cochin China. In 1823 Mr. John Adam, *ad interim* Governor-General, appointed him to administer the new settlement of Singapore, on the resignation of its founder, Sir Stamford Baffles. In that position he remained three years, and concluded with the native chiefs to whom the settlement belonged, the convention by which we hold its sovereignty. In 1826 he returned to Bengal, and was forthwith appointed by the Governor-General, Lord Amherst, Commissioner in Pegu, and eventually, on the conclusion of peace, Envoy to the Burmese Court. In 1827 Mr. Crawford finally returned to England, and in the following year published an account of his mission to Siam and Cochin China, and in 1829 another of his mission to Burmah. After this period, long leisure, good health, and an inclination to study and capacity for work, enabled him to keep up and perfect his stores of Indian and Eastern information. He was an indefatigable contributor to the Press on matters relating to the East, and indeed on many other subjects. In 1852 he published a grammar and dictionary of the Malay languages, and in 1856 a descriptive dictionary of Malay and the languages of the Philippine Archipelago, works which secured for their author the respect of the philological world.

But this barren list of his services and publications gives but a faint conception of the varied acquirements and genial character of the man whose loss is now deplored by a wide circle of friends. All members of the Geographical and Ethnological Societies will miss the tall form of the ever-green veteran who scarcely ever failed to take part in their discussions, and who, while stoutly maintaining his own views, showed a forbearance and courtesy in listening to others which might well be imitated by all members of learned societies. Of singularly simple and unostentatious bearing, few were more able, and certainly none more ready, to impart sound information, to those who sought his advice and assistance. A self-made man, he showed none of that jealousy which sometimes makes self-made men believe that kind of creation ended when they were made. In society, ever hale and hearty in body, ever fresh and vigorous in mind, he seemed to be of no age in particular, but in some sort to belong to all, and thus men of a younger generation both loved and respected him; for they felt that near him, they would find warm shelter, not cold shade, that any merit they might have would be fully appreciated, and that they would receive from the mellow octogenarian a sympathy and consideration for all shades and phases of opinion and thought, too often wanting in circles where men of science seem to meet rather as antagonists pitted against each other in an arena than as fellow-soldiers bound to combat ignorance and error to the death. Mr. Crawford leaves a son and two daughters to lament his loss.

