

editors of the *Annals of Natural History*, and a letter dated 14 November [1852] from P. J. Martin of Pulborough to Mr Pritchard about Mantell's death. None of these items are reproduced.

Reginald's own account of the dispersal of the estate is particularly interesting, and his journal sheds light on some of the family difficulties. Miss Foster of Clapham is revealed as an intimate member of the family circle, and Reginald records after his first visit to her on his return that 'Poor Miss Foster was quite overcome and feels more than all the sad bereavement and through her tears told me more than I had yet heard of the last days and hours of his life'.⁶ Later, after a tirade from his brother-in-law against Miss Foster and indirectly his father, he 'wrote a note to Ellen about what Mr P had said about Papa and Miss Foster . . . to ask her to hint to Mr P the unnecessary of reverting to past times'.⁷ He also makes a significant comment on the family temperament when, in March 1853, he writes in despair, 'I am so harassed and worried . . . that I am very low spirited and my natural irritability increased to such an extent that I am not fit for anyone to live with me for any length of time . . . This adds to my distress till I sometimes think I shall go mad. I fear I have my poor Father's unhappy temperament without his sufferings as an excuse for it or his talents to hide it and feel that I would rather not live than live such an unhappy life as that would lead me'.⁸

As a final comment, a quote from the obituary which appeared in the *Illustrated London News* is a refreshingly human note among the glowing catalogues of Gideon Mantell's very real achievements: 'Dr Mantell took great delight in imparting to others a knowledge of his favourite science: he was fluent and eloquent in speech, full of poetry, and extremely agreeable in manner to all who manifested an admiration of his genius'.⁹

REFERENCES

- 1 *Illustrated London News*, 4 December 1852, 501.
- 2 Sidney Spokes, *Gideon Algernon Mantell, Surgeon and Geologist* (London, 1927).
- 3 op.cit.
- 4 E. Cecil Curwen, *The Journal of Gideon Mantell Surgeon and Geologist covering the years 1818-1852* (London, 1940).
- 5 T. G. Vallance, *Gideon Mantell (1790-1852); a Focus for the Study of the History of Geology at the Turnbull Library*. Paper delivered at the History of Science in New Zealand Conference, Wellington, 1983.
- 6 Reginald Mantell, *Journal*, 6 January 1853 (MS, ATL).
- 7 *Ibid*, 1 February 1853.
- 8 *Ibid*, 18 March 1853.
- 9 *Illustrated London News*, 4 December 1852, 501.