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In Memoriam: Matthew B. Slater, F.L.S.

Matthew B. Slater F.L.S.



A still further gap in the ranks of prominent Yorkshire naturalists occurred on the eve of our going to press, in the death of Matthew B. Slater, of Malton at the age of 88. Mr. Slater was one of the original members of the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union, and in the old days was a familiar figure at the Union's meetings and excursions, as well as at the annual conferences of the British Association, where, together with our ex-president, Mr. W. N. Cheesman, and the late William West, the present writer had many pleasant meetings.

Mr. Slater has occupied various positions in the Botanical section of the Union, and some years ago was offered the Presidency, which he declined on the ground of advancing years. He was particularly interested in mosses and hepatics, of which he made an extensive collection, and he contributed notes thereon to *The Naturalist* as long ago as 1880.

For the second edition of Baker's 'North Yorkshire.' Mr. Slater undertook the preparation of the section devoted to mosses and hepatics, in connection with which I paid many pleasant visits to his home at Newbiggin, Malton. That work was issued in 1906 and occupied the whole of part 33 - nearly 300 pages - of the Union's Transactions. It not only contained particulars of the distribution of 418 mosses (over a hundred more than were given in the first edition of 1863), but a list of over 120 hepatics - almost entirely new. Mr. Slater also recorded many new localities, and considerably added to the value of his work by preparing an extensive account of the literature of the subject.

Mr. Slater took a prominent part in the founding of the Malton Naturalists' Society in 1880, and ever since has taken much interest in the society's work, has held various offices in connection with it, given lectures, and materially assisted in the formation and arrangement of its museum. In recent years his health has prevented him from carrying out his work. His death is a serious loss to Yorkshire science, and the naturalists at Malton will have difficulty in finding any one to take his place. -T.S.

[Tom Sheppard]