

THE LATE JOHN HARTNUP, F.R.A.S.—The melancholy news of the fatal accident to Mr. John Hartnup reached us just as the previous Number of the "Journal" was in the press. We were able, therefore, merely to announce the fact of his death, which took place on the morning of April 21.

We learn from the report of the inquest that Mr. Hartnup had gone up to the roof of the observatory, according to custom, for the purpose of examining the instruments, and was observed to fall over the low parapet to the ground, a distance of upwards of 30 feet. Death seems to have been instantaneous. It was stated at the inquest that he had lately been subject to fits of giddiness, but it is certain that the dangerously insufficient height of the parapet was a subject of comment to all who had occasion to visit the observatory.

Mr. Hartnup's family have been associated with Liverpool for nearly 50 years, his father having been appointed Director of the Liverpool Observatory in 1843. The observatory, originally situated in Prince's Dock, was afterwards removed to its present fine position on Bidston Hill. Mr. Hartnup was appointed assistant in 1862, when only about 20 years of age, and on the death of his father, in 1885, he succeeded him as Director. The services of both father and son to the port of Liverpool, and to navigation in general, are well known, and the almost public funeral he was accorded testified to the high regard in which he was held by his fellow townsmen.

Bidston, being a Nautical Observatory, special attention was given to meteorological observations and chronometer rating, and both departments were carried to a high degree of perfection. Much good astronomical work was, however, also done with the fine equatorial the observatory possesses.

Mr. Hartnup was a Member of the Royal Astronomical Society, the Meteorological Society, the British Astronomical Association, and the Liverpool Astronomical Society, of which, till last year, he was a vice-president. He was only 51 at the time of his death. That so promising a career should be thus prematurely terminated by an accident the possibility of which was obvious to everyone, and which might so easily have been prevented, must give rise to the greatest sorrow and regret.