

WALTER MERIVALE, third son of the late Very Reverend Charles Merivale, D.D., Dean of Ely, was born on the 22nd of December, 1855. He was educated at Haileybury College, and thence passed into the works of Messrs. Black, Hawthorn and Co., Locomotive Engineers, of Gateshead-on-Tyne. During his apprenticeship he served six months with the Société John Cockerill, of Seraing, Belgium, and afterwards became a pupil of the late Mr. Alfred R. C. Harrison, on the North Eastern Railway. On the completion of his training in 1881, Mr. Merivale was employed by the West of India Portuguese Railway Company as Executive Engineer on the construction of the line, from the harbour of Mormugão to the Western Ghâts, which connects the ancient Portuguese possession of Goa with the Southern Mahratta system of railways in British India.¹ He was first engaged on the erection of machinery at the harbour, but was soon sent up country and employed on survey in the Sonauli Valley, a difficult and unhealthy district, possessing a native name equivalent to "The Valley of the Shadow of Death." With characteristic ardour he set himself at once to conquer all difficulties, and spared himself so little in the attempt that his strength gave way, and he soon fell a victim to the fever of the country, and must certainly have died but for the kindly care of the contractor and his wife, who brought him to their bungalow and nursed him back to life. A sea voyage to Australia completed the cure.

On his return Mr. Merivale was married in Bombay to Emma Magdalene, daughter of Mr. John Pittman, of the Civil Service, and, accompanied by his young wife, again took charge of the Sonauli, where his work had been thoroughly successful. A severe epidemic of cholera broke out in the following year among the natives, and he strained every nerve to help them through it, carrying brandy and chlorodyne to the sick, and burying the dead, often with his own hands digging their graves when their own people fled in fear. But a return of fever soon compelled his removal to the more healthy station of Karapani, where he remained till the conclusion of his engagement with the West of India Portuguese Railway in 1885. After a short holiday in England he returned to India on the staff of the Indian Midland Railway, first as an Assistant, and afterwards as a District Engineer, during which time he had charge of the Saugor Division.

In 1889 Mr. Merivale quitted India and undertook the survey

¹ For description of the line, *vide* Minutes of Proceedings Inst. C.E., vol. xcvii. p. 302.

of a projected line of railway in Costa Rica. His next move was to Barbados, where he held an appointment for five years as Manager of the Barbados Railway. There he threw all his energy and resourcefulness into the task of reviving the fortunes of the line, which had sunk very low by the depression of the sugar trade in the West Indies and the consequent failure of traffic. Mr. Merivale saw another possible source of profit in the *Manjak*, a species of asphaltum or glance pitch with which the island abounds, and obtained mining rights over a considerable area, which he worked with some success as long as he remained there. But on the expiration of his term of engagement the railway was taken over by another company, and Mr. Merivale left Barbados and went to Venezuela, where he undertook the management of the South-Western of Venezuela (Barquismeto) Railway. During his stay in that country he was attacked by a severe illness, the fruits of twenty years' hard work in tropical climates, and in the summer of 1901 he returned to England, hoping that a few months' rest at home would restore him to health and activity. He could not endure to be idle, and employed this time of enforced leisure in learning Dutch with a view to possible openings in South Africa. He had been also from time to time a contributor to the *Spectator* and other journals, and almost his last piece of work was to write a paper on Rack Railways and Steep Gradients for this Institution.¹ As the winter advanced his health failed more and more; and a chill caught early in February brought on another attack of illness from which he had not strength to rally. He died on the 14th February, 1902, aged 46.

Mr. Merivale was elected an Associate Member of the Institution on the 1st May, 1888, and was transferred to the class of Members on the 10th January, 1893. He was also a Member of the North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers.

HENRY SADLEIR RIDINGS, born at Cork in 1839, obtained his preliminary engineering training at the Queen's University in Ireland, now the Royal University, where he obtained the diploma in Civil Engineering and the degree of M.A., with a gold medal for mathematics. After serving a pupilage with the late Mr. Joseph Fogerty, who was then Resident Engineer for Sir John Fowler, Past-President, on railway works in Shropshire,

¹ Minutes of Proceedings Inst. C.E., vol. cxlvii. p. 230.