

he resided with his sister at Chipping Sodbury in Gloucestershire, where he died from exhaustion—produced by loss of vital energy and inefficiency of the digestive organs—on the 31st of May, 1894. He was elected a Member on the 14th of January, 1868.

ROBERT PIERCY was born near Trefeglwys, Montgomeryshire, on the 25th of January, 1825. He was the eldest son of Mr. Robert Piercy, who was well known in North Wales as a commissioner, valuer and surveyor in connection with the enclosure of commons and waste lands, and was also extensively engaged in the construction of public roads and other works. The subject of this notice was educated at the Grammar School at Chirk, near Ruabon, and at the age of sixteen entered his father's office, where he remained for about five years.

Mr. Piercy was then from 1847 to 1855 engineer to the New British Iron Company, which possessed extensive coal mines and ironworks at Acrefair, near Ruabon. During that time he constructed several lines from the various collieries to the Great Western Railway at Ruabon. In 1855 he joined his brother, the late Mr. Benjamin Piercy,¹ with whom he was associated for some years in the construction of railways in Wales. Among the lines on which they acted jointly as engineers may be mentioned the Bishop's Castle; the Wrexham, Mold and Connah's Quay; the Hoylake; the Hereford, Hay and Brecon; the Mid Wales; and the various lines now constituting the Cambrian system.

Between 1870 and 1880 Mr. Piercy assisted his brother in the construction of a network of railways in the island of Sardinia. On the practical completion of that system he proceeded to Assam to take charge of the laying out of the lines and collieries now worked by the Assam Railways and Trading Company. He discovered and laid bare enormous areas of coal, which is now conveyed in barges and steamers down the Brahmaputra River to Calcutta. The quantity shipped increases largely every year, the supply being practically inexhaustible. The seam at present being worked is about 40 feet in thickness, and there are other seams of even greater thickness and of excellent quality well adapted for

¹ Minutes of Proceedings Inst. C.E., vol. xevi. p. 333.

both household and furnace purposes. Mr. Piercy also discovered petroleum springs on the Company's property, and plant is now being erected, from his plans, for pumping and purifying the crude oil, some of the wells yielding considerable quantities which will no doubt become a valuable item of profit.

After a residence of about five years in Assam, Mr. Piercy returned to England in 1887, and resided principally in London, occasionally visiting Switzerland. During the last two or three years of his life he was engaged on the Wrexham railways, in which his brother held a large share. He died at The Celyn, Cærgwrle, near Wrexham—the residence of Mr. William Davies—on the 29th of January, 1894, from pneumonia complicated by heart disease.

Mr. Piercy was extremely popular and was much esteemed, his name and that of his brother being household words throughout North Wales, which they, as engineers and promoters, almost covered with railways from Carnarvon in the north to the coal-fields in the south. He was elected a Member on the 2nd of May, 1871.

THOMAS MANSON RYMER-JONES, the eldest son of the late Thomas Rymer-Jones, F.R.S., the eminent naturalist, was born in London on the 9th of December, 1839. After being educated at King's College, London, he was articled in 1858 to Mr. James Abernethy, under whom he was engaged two years later on the Falmouth Harbour and Dock works. There he obtained a practical knowledge of masonry which proved extremely useful in after life. In 1862 he took charge of similar work at Devonport for Mr. Jackson, and towards the end of the following year he was appointed, at the instance of the late Sir John Hawkshaw,¹ an Assistant Engineer on the staff of the Madras Railway Company. After some preliminary work, in order that he might gain experience of the natives, he was specially charged by the late Mr. W. G. Smart,² then Chief Engineer, with the erection of considerable iron-girder bridges, a work necessitating much exposure to the sun and requiring extreme care. Having carried these out with rapidity and to the satisfaction

¹ Minutes of Proceedings Inst. C.E., vol. cvi. p. 321.

² *Ibid.*, vol. lxxvi. p. 369.