part in the discussions, was always ready to afford information, or assistance, and at every annual meeting, the Council had the pleasing task of recording General Colby's unceasing attention and liberality, in procuring for and presenting to the Library, the Ordnance Maps, and many other valuable documents, as soon as they were published.

The scientific services of General Colby are given, in considerable detail, in the Annual Reports of the Royal and the Astronomical Societies for 1852, and in a Memoir, worthy of its object, by Lieutenant-Colonel Portlock, published in the Professional Papers of the Corps of Royal Engineers, Vol. III., New Series, 1853. His life was a course of scientific research, and his name will hereafter be inseparably connected with the history of the Ordnance Survey. His character was distinguished for genuine simplicity and honesty, and his frank, open-hearted manner, and genial hospitality, created for him a host of friends, who loved and admired him; and at his decease, which occurred at New Brighton, Cheshire, near Liverpool, on the 2nd of October 1852, in the sixty-ninth year of his age; it might be said of him, that few men were more sincerely regretted.

MR. JOHN GEORGE CHILDREN was born on the 18th of May 1777, at Ferox Hall, near Tonbridge, and received the early rudiments of his education at the grammar-school of that town, under the eyes of his father, a gentleman of considerable fortune and an active magistrate, whose life was devoted to the care of his only son. From thence he was removed to Eton, and in 1794, was entered a Fellow Commoner of Queen's College, Cambridge. He quitted the University in 1798, and went to Lisbon, where he stayed a few months, for change of scene, after a severe domestic affliction. In 1802, he sailed for North America, and, with his cousin, visited, not only the principal cities and towns in the United States, and in Canada, but penetrated far into the backwoods. His return to Europe was hastened by a violent attack of the lake fever; but on his arrival at home he entered the West Kent Militia, as one of its Captains; and served actively, until another severe fit of illness compelled him to resign his commission.

Henceforward his time and talents were directed to scientific

pursuits; Chemistry, Galvanism, and Mineralogy, chiefly occupying his attention, and amidst a circle of scientific men, composed of Davy, Hatchett, Wollaston, Leslie, and others, he soon occupied a distinguished position, granted to him for his knowledge and acquirements, and maintained by his uprightness, honesty of purpose, and amiability of character.

In 1807 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, and to it, he communicated the results of the experiments in his laboratory at Tonbridge, and accounts of the two large plate Galvanic Batteries constructed by him, the two latter papers being published in the Philosophical Transactions.[1]

He made a journey to Spain, chiefly for the purpose of examining the quicksilver mines of Almaden, of which, at that period, but little was known, and there he acquired knowledge and practical experience, which eventually became valuable to him, for when, in consequence of the failure of a bank, at Tonbridge, in which his father was a partner, the family estate was sacrificed, Mr. Children immediately devoted himself to the practical application of his scientific acquirements, and being, at the same time, appointed one of the Librarians at the British Museum, he became fairly launched in the scientific world.

A little before that period, he was engaged in the controversy respecting the safety lamp, espousing warmly the cause of his friend Davy; and the paper on that subject published in 1816 in the Philosophical Magazine,[2] conveys a fair impartial statement of the question at issue.

After the decease of his father, who appears to have enjoyed, in a very high degree, the esteem and respect of the gentry of Kent and of his fellow townsmen of Tonbridge, Mr. Children took up his residence at the British Museum, having been transferred from the department of Antiquities to that of Natural History. He was also elected in 1826, and again in 1830, one of the Secretaries of the Royal Society, and increased his already wide circle of friends, by the urbanity he displayed in exercising the functions of this, at times, troublesome post, well meriting the unanimous vote of thanks offered to him, and

[1] Vide Phil. Trans., 1809, p. 32; and 1815, p. 363.

[2] Vide Philosophical Magazine, 1816, vol. xlviii. p. 189.

the warm eulogium passed on him by the President, on his resignation of the Secretaryship in 1837.

By degrees he became a Fellow, or Member of most of the Literary and Scientific Societies of this country, and received the Honorary Membership of several Foreign Societies; he was also the first President of the Entomological Society, in the establishment of which, he had exerted himself very successfully.

He was looked up to with considerable respect, as a chemical authority, and his evidence in cases of litigation, was frequently sought. In the celebrated case of Severn, King and Co.,[1] when the Lord Chief Justice Dallas, in allusion to the evidence of the scientific witnesses, who had been drawn up in martial and hostile array against each other, said, whilst admitting their talents, he lamented the sad discrepancy of their opinions and contradictory evidence, on points that should not have admitted of a doubt, he acknowledged, that Mr. Children's clear and well-considered views did him great honour. At this period (1818 to 1824) his life was one of considerable activity; he was one of the early editors of the Zoological Journal;—frequently contributed papers to other scientific periodicals;—published translations of "Thénard's Essay on Chemical Analysis" in 1819, and of "Berzelius' Treatise on the use of the Blowpipe," in 1822; and bringing his chemical knowledge to bear on his previous observations in Spain, he discovered a system of separating the silver from the ore, without the use of quicksilver, for which he received a moderate sum from the Mining Companies in South America, who might have realized great benefit from the discovery, but that they preferred paying him not to promulgate the process.

Mr. Children resigned his situation at the British Museum in the year 1839, and henceforth lived, chiefly, at the residence of his daughter, at Halstead, in Kent;[2] still occasionally visiting

[1] Vide "Report of the Trial of the Action, brought by Messrs. Severn, King and Co., against the Imperial Insurance Company, &c., on the 11th to 13th April, 1820." 8vo. London, 1820.

[2] Since the decease of Mr. Children, a very interesting memoir from the pen of his daughter, Mrs. J. P. Atkins, has been privately printed, and circulated among a few of his friends; it contains the principal events of his life, and some unpublished poetry by his father and himself; the Author regrets not having had cognizance of the existence of the work until the present slight sketch was in type.

the Metropolis, and mingling with the friends and associates of former years, with the same interest and kindly feeling as when he was actively engaged in similar pursuits.

He devoted the last few years of his life, chiefly to the study of astronomy, into which he entered with all the energy of his nature, and in the contemplation of the wonders of those realms to which he calmly awaited his removal, he drew his last breath, on the 1st of January 1852, in his seventy-fifth year, without a struggle; his latter hours being, like the whole of his mortal career, gentle, and full of peace and love towards all around him.

He was elected an Honorary Member of this Institution in the year 1838, and was ever ready to lend his aid for its benefit, as he was a great advocate for the closest intimacy between scientific men of all classes, and he justly regarded the labours of the Civil Engineer as connected with the useful practical application of all scientific investigations.

MR. JOHN BARNES, who was born at Walker-Colliery, near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on the 12th of August 1798, descended from a family of mining engineers; the five previous generations having all been "coal viewers," of considerable eminence in the north. His father, Thomas Barnes, (who died in the year 1801) was a man of education and general acquirements, and in a voluminous correspondence with Smeaton, and subsequently with Boulton and Watt, relative to the erection and duty of steam-engines, for draining mines and raising coals, erected under his direction, from their plans, he exhibited proofs of superior information on the subject of steam and its application, and demonstrated great sagacity and intelligence.

With such a father, and under the care of a mother, who was well calculated to guide and instruct him, from his earliest days, John Barnes was imperceptibly induced to study, and the plates of Dr. Desagulier's Natural Philosophy, became his hornbook and primer. At a very early age he was committed to the care of the Rev. W. Rawes, M.A., in whose school, at Houghton-le-Spring, Durham, he received the rudiments of a superior classical and mathematical education; his