

He seemed indeed ever to have the interests of the firm more at heart than if they had been his own. From early morning until late at night, with rare and brief holidays, and those taken only when illness rendered them absolutely necessary, he gave undivided attention to the large and varied works carried on in the establishment which he superintended. He may be said to have died in harness, for his labours were unremitting till, in the spring of 1863, he was struck with the illness from which he never recovered. He suffered, with fortitude, great pain and extreme debility, the result probably of exhaustion produced by a life of unceasing labour and anxiety; and, after lingering a few months, he expired on his own birthday, the 17th of August, 1863, having exactly completed his sixty-second year. It is sadly interesting to remark, that he died on the day on which his illustrious master, Mr. Joshua Field (Past President Inst. C.E.) was buried, having survived him only a week.

Mr. Sherriffs was elected an Associate of the Institution of Civil Engineers in the year 1851, and was very regular in his attendance at the meetings. The leading feature of his character was a modest diffidence, which throughout life held him back, while others, by no means superior in talents or acquirements, took high positions in the engineering world. He was eminently quiet and unpretending, and thus a due estimation of his capabilities was confined to those who knew him intimately. He was cautious, painstaking, and assiduous almost to a fault, but these were qualities which were of the greatest value to his employers, and which they highly appreciated. In disposition he was most kind and generous, and in manner he was courteous and refined. The men who worked under him never heard a rough word pass his lips, and yet they knew him to be strict and resolute, and they obeyed him not only without a grudge, but with reverence and love. Perhaps of all who lamented the death of James Sherriffs, none mourned more sincerely and with better reason than the foremen and workmen whose labours he had so long, so successfully, and so kindly directed.

MR. ALFRED THOMPSON was born at Queen's Row, Chelsea, in the year 1818, and received the greater part of his early education under Mr. Sheepshanks, at the St. Peter's Grammar School, Eaton Square, Pimlico. He was articled to his father, Mr. George Thompson, of the Eccleston Ironworks, Pimlico, and continued in his service until 1842, when he was admitted into the firm of G. Thompson and Sons; and from the year 1844 to the period of his decease, he was the managing partner, in addition to which duties, he practised as a Civil and Consulting

Engineer. He was extensively employed in designing and constructing sanitary apparatus, and made the name of his firm familiar in London to every trade connected with gas and water supply, sewage works, &c. His stove for cooking by ordinary coal-gas was the first successful apparatus of the kind, and it was largely used. In 1854 he was elected "Inspector of Furnaces" for the metropolis under "The Smoke Nuisance Act," and he continued to act in that capacity until 1858. In 1855 he drew up a Report on "Extension of the Smoke Nuisance Act," addressed to Sir Richard Mayne, in which he proved that smoke might be prevented in any kind of manufacture in London, and urged the authorities to advocate the extension of the Act to the large works adjacent to the City. Mr. Thompson's knowledge of chemistry and mechanics rendered him peculiarly fitted for the duties of Inspector under the Act, and he performed them fearlessly.

In 1861, when the spire of Chichester Cathedral fell, Mr. Thompson made a careful examination of the ruins, and after testing part of the material, he discovered that the limestone with which the spire had been built, had been laid constructively in its weakest position, and that it was a wonder how it existed so long under such conditions. The result of his testing and analysis was laid before a Meeting of "The Royal Institute of British Architects," and was published in the "Builder," August 13th, 1861.

In 1856 he was elected an Associate of the Archæological Society; and from the memoir of him, which is printed in the Obituary of the Proceedings of that Society, he appears to have been an intelligent and indefatigable member.

He joined the Institution of Civil Engineers, as an Associate, on the 29th February, 1838, and was a constant attendant at the Meetings, taking great interest in the proceedings. He was a good mechanic, and by reading and frequent attendance at the scientific Meetings of the metropolis, he acquired a considerable insight into the progressive improvements of the period. He was an amiable man, and his decease, on the 4th of January, 1864, in the forty-sixth year of his age, was severely felt by his family and friends.

* * The Memoirs of those deceased Members which have been omitted, in consequence of the difficulty of procuring information from their friends, will, it is hoped, appear in the next Volume.
