

Towards the end of the year 1860 Mr. Spiller definitively left Cardiff, and, after five years' residence at Bridgewater, the last seven years of his life were spent in peaceful enjoyment at a retired country home, Salcombe Lodge, in the beautiful vale of Sidmouth, in his native county of Devonshire. When he had long passed the allotted span of human existence, so unbroken was his health, both of mind and body, that not only could he enjoy a walk to the top of one of the steep Devonshire hills, and work for hours together at the bench, but he wrote several able letters for publication, and still acted as a Consulting Engineer. He said he felt as capable of continuous thought as ever, and that he could scarcely believe so many years had passed over him. Mr. Spiller was an earnestly religious man, and the manuscripts he leaves bear testimony how far above the fleeting concerns of time he esteemed all that relates to God and eternity. His death, which took place on the 29th of May, 1873, from the breaking of a blood-vessel, was for him but the natural ending of a blameless, well-spent life. He lies buried in the little churchyard at Salcombe Regis.

Mr. Spiller's skill and ingenuity as an engineer were very great; but he was wanting in commercial capacity, nor had he the desire for riches, and hence he did not acquire a large fortune, which otherwise he might have done. He was one of those modest, unpretentious men whose existence tends to strengthen the national life and to command general respect.

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Mr. FREDERICK AYRTON, the eldest son of Mr. Frederick Ayrton, a solicitor of Gray's Inn, was born in London on the 20th of March, 1812. After being educated at Ealing school, he was entered at Addiscombe in 1826 as a cadet for the East India Company's army. He passed that seminary for the Artillery, and in June 1828 was appointed a 2nd Lieutenant of the Bombay Artillery.

He returned to England in 1832, in consequence of ill health, when he seized the opportunity of studying, under the late Mr. Brunton, civil engineering. The late Mr. Robert Stephenson, having become acquainted with him, wished him to retire from the army, and become an Assistant Engineer on the London and Birmingham railway, then in course of construction, but he preferred the army.

On returning to India, at the end of 1835, he was employed in superintending experiments for boring for water in the island of Colaba, which however did not prove successful. He was next engaged on survey duties in the Deccan. He was promoted to the

rank of Lieutenant in 1837, and after acting for a short time as Quartermaster of the 1st Battalion of Artillery, he proceeded, in July 1839, to Aden, to conduct the duties of Adjutant to the European and native details of artillery there stationed.

In consequence of the views expressed by him respecting the fortifications of Aden, he was, in June 1840, appointed to act as Executive Engineer; there, whilst in command of the troops stationed at the wall which protects the British territory against incursions from the Arabs, he repulsed the last attack made by them in force to drive the British out of Aden. In 1841 he was again compelled to return to Europe from ill health. He became a Captain in June, 1843, but finding that his imperfect eyesight, which had been injured, disabled him from discharging the active duties of his military career, he was permitted to retire from the service on a pension in 1843.

He then entered himself at the Middle Temple, and in 1846 was called to the Bar; but, having taken to the study of Arabic whilst at Aden, he devoted himself to that and other literary pursuits until 1851, when Abbas Pasha, the Viceroy of Egypt, hearing of his qualifications for the office of Secretary to the Viceroy, offered him that appointment. On his arrival in Egypt, towards the end of 1851, he entered upon the duties of his office. He was much esteemed and respected by the Viceroy, who eventually, amongst other duties, confided to him the superintendence of the education of his only son, Ilhami Pasha.

He was also intrusted with the legal defence of the interests of the Egyptian Government in regard to claims brought against it by Europeans of high standing in the country, and his upright conduct in these important matters gave much satisfaction to the Viceroy, who openly expressed his sentiments regarding him. The Viceroy likewise took advantage of Mr. Ayrton's knowledge of artillery affairs to consult him frequently about a new organisation of this arm of the Egyptian army. At the death of Abbas Pasha, in 1854, Mr. Ayrton continued to assist the young Prince, his scholar, with his advice, which was much needed, and faithfully remained attached to the Prince's interests until his career prematurely ended by death at Constantinople in 1861.

From this time Mr. Ayrton's connection with the Egyptian Government ceased. He then occupied himself occasionally as a Consulting Barrister, in preparing cases for trial in the Consular Courts, but never pleaded in any of these courts. Much of his leisure was also taken up with researches into the history of

mediæval Egypt, and it is to be regretted that the results of his studies have not been given to the public. He took a great interest in the railway system of Egypt, which was commenced on his arrival in Egypt, and published a pamphlet in which he made known his views and opinions. These, however, were not properly appreciated by the Government.

The Suez Canal, during its construction, came in, as a matter of course, for a full share of his attention. He made himself perfect master of all details connected with its works, and repeatedly visited the whole undertaking from end to end.

When claims were brought against the Government of Turkey by British subjects and protégés, in consequence of the massacre of Christians at Jedda, in June, 1858, Mr. Ayrton was selected by the body of claimants to forward their views and advocate their interests. He proceeded in consequence to Jedda, to meet the English and French Commissioners (Messrs. Walne and Sabatier), who had been named by their respective Governments, in conjunction with a high Turkish functionary, to adjudicate upon the several claims preferred of indemnification for losses of property suffered during the period of outrage and massacre. Mr. Ayrton conducted his cases with much talent and perseverance, and it may be safely affirmed that the results obtained by him, in every instance, gave unbounded satisfaction to his employers, who recompensed him handsomely for his arduous exertions. But Mr. Ayrton did not remain satisfied with simply obtaining decisions from the Commissioners at Jedda. Armed with these, he proceeded to Constantinople, where he agitated in high quarters until he obtained from the Turkish Government payment of the last farthing to which his clients were entitled. To those acquainted with the dilatory mode of conducting financial matters in the East, the difficulties encountered by Mr. Ayrton, in this part of his duties, will be duly appreciated.

During the absence, on leave, of Her Majesty's representative from Cairo, Mr. Ayrton was twice intrusted with the management of all consular affairs, administrative and judicial—namely, from the 25th of April to the 9th of October, 1859, and from the 8th of June to the 17th of September, 1864.

He retired from Egypt in ill health, in 1872; but failing to obtain relief from the waters of Vichy and other places, he returned to England in 1873, and died on the 20th of June, a few days after his arrival.

Mr. Ayrton was elected an Associate of the Institution on the 9th of June, 1835.