

MR. JAMES SMITH OKELL, a native of Manchester, received his professional education under the firm of Messrs. Sharp, Stewart and Co. After the expiration of his apprenticeship, he obtained employment with Messrs. Robert Gilroy, and Messrs. De Bergue and Co., and subsequently at Sir Joseph Whitworth's works, under Mr. William Hulse, M. Inst. C.E. In 1856 he entered the service of Messrs. C. D. Young and Co., and was occupied in connection with the building for the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition. This engagement terminated in 1859, when he proceeded to Brazil to erect five large-span road bridges for Messrs. W. Dredge and E. T. Bellhouse. He returned to England in 1861, and in the following year again went to Brazil, this time for Messrs. Robert Sharpe and Sons, to erect the winding-engines on the inclined planes of the São Paulo railway. In 1866, he entered the service of Messrs. Waring Brothers, and for four years was engaged by them as an assistant in the construction of the Metropolitan District railway, and afterwards in a responsible situation in Messrs. Waring's office, which he abandoned in 1872 in order to go to Iquique for Messrs. Montero Brothers. The inefficient management of the Iquique railway, and the numerous severe accidents upon the line resulting from it, had, shortly after Mr. Okell's arrival in Iquique, excited much popular indignation; and it was determined that an example should be made of some one or other of the responsible officials, if another accident occurred. Unfortunately for Mr. Okell, a catastrophe, attended with more fatal results than usual, took place early in 1873, and he—although in no way connected with the accident—was selected as the victim to receive the consequence of the popular feeling. He was imprisoned for several weeks, until, by the strong action taken by the British Consul at Lima, supplemented by the appearance of a man-of-war in Iquique harbour, Mr. Okell was set free and placed on parole on the ship. Ultimately—it having been proved that there was no foundation for the charge brought against him—he was liberated, and shortly afterwards he quitted the country, not before, however, he had laid the foundation for the malady which ended in his death. Returning slowly to England by way of Brazil, and stopping *en route* at Rio Janeiro for some months, upon professional business, he arrived home in the spring of 1875. His health gradually failing, he resolved to go to New Zealand in the hope of improvement; but softening of the brain, which originated in Peru, increased rapidly on the voyage, and on landing in New Zealand he was unable to accept the appointment which had been offered him. He lived about twelve months after his arrival, and died at Wellington on

the 23rd of February, 1877, at the age of forty-three. Mr. Okell was elected an Associate of the Institution on the 7th of May, 1872.

SIR MATTHEW DIGBY WYATT,¹ youngest son of the late Mr. Matthew Wyatt, Metropolitan Police Magistrate, was born near Devizes, on the 20th of July, 1820. His choice of a profession was probably, in the first instance, determined by the fact that his elder brother, Mr. T. H. Wyatt, Assoc. Inst. C.E., was an architect; and in 1836, at the age of sixteen, he entered his brother's office as a pupil.

In a spirit in every way honourable to him, the elder Wyatt determined to see that the young candidate for the profession should receive the most thorough education which he could bestow; and probably few people have entered on the profession more fully trained and instructed in the subjects of study which belong to it than Digby Wyatt. This fraternal care, however, must have been well seconded from the first by the natural ability of the pupil, since it is on record that in the same year in which he was articled he gained the Architectural Society's prize for an essay. After going through his course of office study, he travelled for two years on the Continent, examining the principal buildings in France, Italy, and Germany, and brought home, among a large number of drawings, sufficient studies of the Mediæval mosaic work of Italy and Sicily to form the subject of a large volume illustrative of "The Geometrical Mosaics of the Middle Ages," which was his first publication of importance. His power of expression, both in writing and speaking, in regard to art-subjects, became developed at an early period of his life, and was no doubt one of the gifts to which he owed his ultimate success, of which at this time he was by no means sanguine. In 1849 he was commissioned by the Council of the Society of Arts to report on the French "Exhibition of the Products of Industry," which was then held in Paris. His report comprised not merely a description of the building in the Carré de Marigny, but a history of past exhibitions, and an investigation of the administrative arrangements. His observations on the last point are especially interesting, as they must have had no small influence upon the organisation of subsequent exhibitions. When the scheme of the Exhibition of 1851 was matured, Mr. Wyatt was

¹ This memoir is chiefly compiled from notices in the "Architect" of May 26 and the "Builder" of June 2, 1877.