

proportionate value of facts. His habit was to jot down in the form of memorandums his reasonings concerning any important matter, and hand the papers to some one in whom he placed confidence for perusal and remark.

In 1880 Mr. Purdon gave up professional work. A singular but great change came over his character, no doubt the result of over-anxiety respecting the health of his only daughter. The mind which had been so powerful and energetic suddenly appeared to be over-fatigued; and while capable of enjoying society, travelling, and his ordinary home occupations as heretofore, he refused all mental exertion, referring the simplest questions requiring thought to his sons or to other people. Fortunately, his surroundings were very happy, and he spent the remainder of his life in much comfort until he passed away after a brief illness on the 14th of February, 1889.

ROBERT PAULSON SPICE¹ was born in Norwich on the 1st of January, 1814, and was educated in that city. His father, having a large family, was unable to afford him the engineering training he desired, and young Spice was apprenticed to an ironmonger at Fakenham, in Norfolk, to whose business he eventually succeeded. During the period between his marriage in 1837 and the year 1848, he worked hard to fit himself for the profession of a gas engineer, and it is surmised that he acted in that capacity on occasions while still nominally an ironmonger, as it is known that he commenced designing and erecting gas-works in 1845-6, and there is an inscription in existence, taken from the old Hoddesdon Gas-works, bearing the words, R. P. Spice, Engineer, 1847. He probably merged his Fakenham business into that of a contractor for supplying gas-works requisites; at any rate, in 1848 he relinquished his trade as an ironmonger, and thenceforward entirely devoted himself to the gas interest. After erecting works for lighting Fakenham, he settled at Richmond, Surrey, where he established himself in the management of gas-works under leases, according to a very general practice of the time. He opened offices in Cornhill in 1860, about which date, and for several years following, he was lessee of the gas-works at Wandsworth, Hampton Court, Richmond, and Watford. He also built gas-works at Great

¹ The substance of this notice is from the *Journal of Gas Lighting*, May 14, 1889.

Yarmouth, Boston (Lincolnshire), Tunbridge Wells, Tattershall, Abingdon, Hartley-Wintney, Hoddesdon, and other places. Thus, like most other gas engineers of his epoch, he grew into his place by experience, and held it by a native aptitude for the business of his choice. He was largely consulted by gas companies and local authorities for arbitration, rating-appeals, &c.; and he had an extensive Parliamentary practice. He possessed the gifts necessary for an expert—ready wit, keen appreciation of the bearings of a situation, and facility of expression. Unfortunately for himself, as well as for others, Mr. Spice was prone to adopt with excessive warmth projects in which he was professionally engaged, whether they turned out well or ill. He was at one time identified with a water-gas scheme, which he described before the British Association of Gas Managers in 1876, and worked experimentally at Wormwood Scrubs. This scheme was taken up by the New Gas Company, under whom it was tried on a working scale, and failed, at the works of the Crystal Palace District Gas Company. Some years later Mr. Spice became a partizan of the St. John and Rockwell condensing and carburetting apparatus, which he brought under the notice of the Gas Institute in 1881; and later on he supported the Cooper coal-liming process. Mr. Spice was elected a Member of the Institution on the 4th of May, 1875. He was a regular supporter of the British Association of Gas Managers, now the Gas Institute, often speaking at the meetings, and was President for 1876-7, from which period dates the Benevolent Fund in connection with that society, whereof he was one of the first supporters, and moved the resolution upon which the fund was established. Mr. Spice was also a Member of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, and a very distinguished Freemason. His engineering work covered a period of half a century; and that he retained his activity to the end is shown by the fact that his last new gas-works, at Riddings, were only just completed, and awaited his final certificate. He was sitting in an arbitration case on the Wednesday preceding his death, showing no signs of failing health. Next day, however, he caught a chill, and was attacked by bronchitis, which confined him to his bed, and on the 11th of May, 1889, he succumbed to sudden failure of the heart's action. He was buried at Brompton Cemetery after a funeral service at St. Margaret's, Westminster, at which about two hundred of the representatives of the gas interest were in attendance.

Mr. Spice became known to a wider circle than his personal friends and acquaintances through the simple chatty little books

in which he was accustomed to write the records of his journeyings as the "Hermit of Westminster," and which reveal his kindly nature.

WALTER HALSTED CORTIS STANFORD was born at Worthing in the year 1840, and was educated by Dr. J. M. Pearce, Crawford College, Maidenhead. In the year 1859 he was articled to Mr. (now Sir Robert) Rawlinson, and very soon became proficient in neat and accurate draughtsmanship, giving promise of the skill in designing which he so highly developed in later years. On completing his apprenticeship, Mr. Stanford spent some time on the contractors' staff of the Mid-Wales and Conway and Llanrwst Railway, and, in 1863, was engaged on the Geneva tramways and on surveys for tramways in other continental cities. From 1863 to 1866 he was employed, first as Assistant to Mr. Hugh U. McKie, and then as Engineer to the Concessionaire (the late Mr. Edmund Sharpe) of the Perpignan and Prades Railway, and during that time made the surveys for several branch mineral lines. While in the Pyrennean district, Mr. Stanford endeared himself greatly to a large number of young Frenchmen and became very proficient in their language. Unfortunately, he there had his first attack of rheumatic fever, no doubt initiating the heart weakness which ultimately caused his death.

In 1867 and the two following years Mr. Stanford acted as one of the Belgian Public Works Company's Engineers on the *Assainissement de la Senne* works in Brussels, having charge of the outfall sewer and all other works outside the city. As usual he made many friends, among others the eminent Belgian artists, Dillen and Schœnflère, the latter of whom painted an admirable portrait of him. Mr. Stanford was in Brussels during the year 1866, when the English Volunteers paid so successful a visit to that city, and when his cousin, Captain Alfred Cortis, one of the most noted English riflemen, won the King's prize. On that occasion he was most useful as interpreter, and in many other ways, to the large contingent of volunteer officers who were in the Belgian capital. Although he was too much engrossed with his professional work to give any time to practice, Mr. Stanford won the first prize at Aachen in the following year against all comers, volunteers included.

In 1870, Mr. Stanford returned to London and joined the firm of Lawson and Mansergh, of Westminster. After Mr. Lawson's death in 1873, he acted as chief assistant in that office, and in that