

The minds of most men stiffen with age, and after a certain period the faculty of reception in most disappears. It was evidently not so with Professor Kelland.

ALEXANDER JAMES ADIE, Esq. By David Stevenson,
M.I.C.E.

ALEXANDER JAMES ADIE, Civil Engineer, son of the late Alexander Adie, F.R.S.E., the eminent optician, was born in Edinburgh in 1808. A course of study at the High School, and afterwards at the University of Edinburgh, prepared him for entering on an apprenticeship under Mr James Jardine, Civil Engineer, with whom he was afterwards associated in carrying out various works.

In 1836 he became Resident Engineer of the Bolton, Chorley, and Preston Railway, and communicated some interesting papers to the Institution of Civil Engineers regarding that work, particularly one on Skew Bridges.

On leaving Lancashire he removed to Glasgow to take charge of some of the colliery railways there, and ultimately became engineer and manager of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway, which post he resigned about 1863.

Mr Adie made a series of important experiments on the expansion of stone by heat, which he communicated to the Society in his paper entitled "The Expansion of Different Kinds of Stone from an Increase of Temperature, with a Description of the Pyrometer used in making the Experiments," which is published in vol. xiii. of the Transactions.

Mr Adie was elected a Member of the Society in 1846. He latterly retired to reside at Rockville, near Linlithgow, where he had an opportunity of cultivating his taste for horticulture and the fine arts, and of receiving visits from many who esteemed his friendship, and valued his accomplishments.

JOHN BLACKWOOD, Esq. By Principal Sir Alex. Grant, Bart.

JOHN BLACKWOOD, who died on the 29th October last, was for a long period one of the most widely known and highly esteemed worthies of Scotland. As head of the last remaining of the great

Edinburgh publishing houses, he held an eminent and conspicuous position ; his name was known and honoured all over the world ; the circle of his acquaintance included almost all the most distinguished writers of the day, many of whom were his close and intimate friends ; and the chorus of regret uttered by the London newspapers on the occasion of his death showed how widely and how much he had been respected. His life was externally uneventful. He was born in 1818 ; was educated at the High School and University of Edinburgh ; travelled for three years under an accomplished classical tutor upon the Continent ; commenced learning the publishing business with Messrs Whitaker in London in 1839 ; took charge of a branch of Messrs Blackwood's in Pall Mall in 1840 ; returned to Edinburgh in 1845, and became editor of "Blackwood's Magazine ;" and in 1850 became head of the publishing firm in George Street. Happily married, and pursuing with conscientious diligence and great success the interesting duties of his position, keenly enjoying both work and relaxation, entering with equal zest into manly exercises and the intellectual pleasure of literary and witty conversation, to which he himself was no mean contributor, ever unselfish and taking an interest in others, diffusing much happiness among those who came within his range, he continued to exhibit till three years ago, when his health began to fail him, a career of high usefulness and a lot that was singularly blest. He continued in harness to the last, and within a few hours of his death was still reading the manuscripts of authors. He became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1857. He was never a contributor to the "Proceedings" of the Society. This, however, was only in accordance with the rule which he had laid down for himself, which was to abstain from authorship, in order to be able to estimate dispassionately and free from all feeling of rivalry the productions of others. Socrates used to say of himself that in matters of philosophy he performed the obstetric function for the youth of Athens, helping into existence such conceptions as were worthy to live and come before the world. The same sort of function John Blackwood performed for literature in this country. He was singularly fitted both by nature and education for the duties of his office. His knowledge of *belles lettres*, as well as of mankind, was extensive, and he had a remarkable sagacity in discerning

and foreseeing in the works of new writers, not only what was likely to be acceptable to the public, but what was essentially good in itself. During his thirty-four years of editorship and his twenty-nine years of publishing, he is said to have hardly ever made a mistake, while he frequently accepted works which had been rejected by other publishers, because he saw their merit, and the event proved him to have been right. In business transactions he was at once prudent and liberal, and always exhibited the qualities of a perfect gentleman. The result was a goodly and brilliant galaxy of great names in literature, who were his clients, and whose immortal works were first brought before the world under his auspices. • The Royal Society of Edinburgh, one of whose objects is the encouragement of literature, must ever honour one who has been so faithful and valuable a servant and minister of the muses. And this Society, together with Edinburgh and the country at large, must deplore the loss of John Blackwood, than whom few men could have been less well spared.

JAMES CLERK-MAXWELL. By Professor Tait.

[JAMES CLERK-MAXWELL, born in 1831, was the only son of John Clerk-Maxwell of Middlebie. His grandfather, Captain James Clerk, was a cadet of the old Scottish family of Clerk of Penicuik, being a younger brother of Sir John Clerk of Penicuik. Captain James Clerk had two sons and a daughter—the Right Hon. Sir George Clerk of Penicuik, Bart., the above John Clerk-Maxwell, and Isabella, who married James Wedderburn, Solicitor-General of Scotland. Sir George Clerk succeeded to the estate of Penicuik, and the younger brother, John, to the estate of Nether Corsock, part of the estate of Middlebie. This estate had come into the family through the marriage in a former generation of a cousin of the Penicuicks with a Miss Maxwell. Their daughter married Sir George Clerk (grandfather of the present baronet) and was Lady Clerk-Maxwell. John Clerk assumed the name of Maxwell on succeeding to the property, which by the entail of Penicuik could not be held by the owner of that estate. John Clerk-Maxwell was called to the Scottish bar, but seldom practised, and he was a well-known member of this Society. He lost his wife soon after his