of this last survivor of Tertiary times, but the hand of Man the destroyer. The wide distribution of numerous species of *Sirenia* in Tertiary times over Europe and America is, however, a powerful argument in favour of the former higher temperature of our Northern hemisphere.

HENRY WOODWARD.

THE CARBON-CRUST ON FOSSIL PLANTS.

SIR,—It is well known that Fossil plants when found in sandstone are generally entirely covered with a thin layer of nearly pure carbon; in the case of Calamites, etc., in the Coal-measure sandstones the layer is often not more than about $\frac{1}{20}$ of an inch in thickness. It very readily falls away, and it is only in rare cases that it adheres to the sandstone cast. I should like to propose some questions concerning this carbonaceous covering to your readers. (1) Why is the whole of the carbonaceous residue in well-preserved fossils confined to the outside of the cast? (2) Does the carbonaceous layer represent the whole of the carbon of the tissue of the plant? (3) Why, in comparatively soft and little altered freestones, should the carbonaceous layer exhibit such a baked or charred appearance?

A. WILMORE.

WESLEYAN SCHOOLS, TRAWTEN, COLNE, LANCASHIRE,
November 8th, 1893.

OBITUARY.

JOHN HOOKE TAUNTON, M.INST.C.E., F.G.S.

EARLY in the present year[1] we lost by death Mr. John Hooke Taunton, M.Inst.C.E., F.G.S., of Stroud. Mr. Taunton had an intimate acquaintance with the water-bearing strata of the Cotteswold Hills, and furnished some valuable information to the Report of the Commissioners on Water Supply (1869). He was for many years local engineer to the Thames and Severn Canal Company, and also consulting engineer to the Stroud Local Board of Health. He contributed several papers to the Proceedings of the Cotteswold Naturalists' Club, of which he was an active member: among these were papers on the Hydrology of the Cotteswolds, on the Geology of the Sapperton Tunnel, on the Malmesbury Waterworks, and on the Dynamic Geology of Palestine.

THE REV. H. W. CROSSKEY, LL.D., F.G.S.

BORN 1826. DIED OCTOBER 1ST, 1893.

IN Dr. H. W. Crosskey we have to record the loss of one who was a most ardent student of Glacial Geology and the author of a valuable series of Reports on the Erratic blocks of this country, communicated during the past 20 years to the British Association. He paid much attention to the post-Tertiary deposits of the Clyde Valley, and was associated with David Robertson and Dr. G. S. Brady in describing the post-Tertiary Entomostraca in the Palæontographical Society's Volume for 1874. Whilst resident in Glasgow he contributed many papers to the Geological Society of Glasgow. He died at his residence, Edgbaston, Birmingham, Oct. 1st, 1893.

[1] January 31st, 1893.