

of experimental chemistry which determines the nature of soils by an analysis of their several contents.

The British Mineralogical Society, having of late increased the number of their members, find themselves enabled to extend the plan of their institution, from the analysis of minerals, in the usual sense of the term, to that of the various soils which are made the base of agricultural operations.

They, therefore, give this public notice that they will examine, free of expense, all specimens of earths or soils, with a view of determining the nature and proportion of their different contents, with as much accuracy as shall seem requisite.<sup>1</sup>

During 1803 the attendance at this society began to be irregular. In January 1804 it was 'Resolved: That the future meetings of the society be held by summons from the secretary, with the concurrence of the president, when business may require the attendance of the members.' On December 18, 1806, it was 'Resolved that the society be incorporated with the Askesian Society.'

The Askesian Society, with the British Mineralogical Society, thus furnished a nucleus of men interested in special studies connected with Geology. They had assembled together mainly for the purpose of mutual improvement in Mineralogy, but 'soon transferred their attention to the more comprehensive master-science of Geology.'<sup>2</sup> They recognised that the science required distinctive treatment, and a selected number agreed together to form an independent society.

Here it may be mentioned that the institution founded by Count Rumford and others in 1799, and chartered in the following year as the 'Royal Institution,' had formed by the year 1804 a museum of more than 3,000 mineral specimens and fossils, including a special collection of minerals presented by Humphry Davy. Connected with that institution were the Hon. C. F. Greville, Sir J. St. Aubyn, and Sir A. Hume, all of whom subsequently

<sup>1</sup> *Phil. Mag.* ix. 1801, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> *Proc. Geol. Soc.* iii. p. 525.