

'Elementary Introduction to the Knowledge of Mineralogy, published in 1816, reached a third edition in 1823; a fourth edition, augmented by Robert Allan, appeared in 1837; and the book was deemed worthy of a further edition, by H. J. Brooke and W. H. Miller, in 1852.¹

It will be noted that the founders were men of culture and wide sympathies, although not all of them were geologists in the strict sense.

In the preface to the first volume of the Society's *Transactions* (dated 1811), the following statements were printed:—

'The few individuals who were founders of the Society met, in consequence of a desire of communicating to each other the result of their observations, and of examining how far the opinions maintained by the writers on geology were in conformity with the facts presented by nature.'

They recognised 'the advantages which may be derived from individuals acting in combination for the advancement of particular departments of science,' and 'that there is no object of research in which this co-operation is more necessary than in geology. In this science less, perhaps, has been done, and more that is important remains to be ascertained by future inquirers than in any other branch of natural knowledge; while the variety of attainments, and the degree of leisure requisite for the prosecution of it, can seldom fall to the share of one individual.' They 'felt satisfied that there was a peculiar propriety in making the metropolis of the empire the centre of such an institution, on account of the many mineralogical cabinets that it contains, as well as of the superior opportunities for mutual intercourse.' Attention was also called to the fact that 'a considerable collection has already been formed, which comprises not only many of the mineral productions of the British islands, but likewise several series of foreign rocks.' While thus laying stress on the mineralogical side of the science—no mention being made of the life-history of the

¹ 'A Short Memoir of William Phillips,' by his widow, Christiana Phillips, was published in 1891. For a copy of this we are indebted to their granddaughter, Mrs. George Horton, through the kind influence of a great-nephew, Professor Silvanus Phillips Thompson, F.R.S.