

the Council were enabled to adapt the apartments to their new purposes. At this time the Library contained rather more than 1,000 volumes, exclusive of pamphlets.

In February of that year the number of the Society was stated to be as follows:—

Fellows having compounded	44
„ contributing	150
„ non-resident	211
Honorary members	55
Foreign members	47
	<hr/>
	507

The first meeting of the Society at Somerset House was that of November 7, 1828.¹

Old Somerset House had been erected by the Duke of Somerset (Lord Protector) about the year 1550. The present buildings, known as Somerset House, were erected from designs by Sir William Chambers, surveyor-general. Commenced in 1776, the Strand front was completed in 1779, but at the time of the architect's death in 1796 the main work was not entirely finished. Indeed, 'as late as 1819 decorative work was still being done upon the internal north façade.' King's College was not built until 1830. It has been remarked that Somerset House 'has remained the chief exemplar in England of the classic style applied to secular needs.'²

The buildings were constructed for the purpose of establishing public offices at Somerset House, and for the accommodation of the Royal Academy and Royal Society. The Royal Society was followed by the Society of Antiquaries, the former holding its first meeting in the new rooms on November 30, 1780, the latter on January 11, 1781. Government officials entered into occupation from 1785.

In 1828, when the Geological Society was provided with apartments in Somerset House, adequate space was afforded for the arrangement of the collection, particulars of which were given in the Report of the Council for

¹ *Proc. Geol. Soc.* i. pp. 86, 111.

² 'Somerset House, Past and Present,' by Raymond Needham and Alexander Webster, 1905, pp. 197, 201, 213, 214.