

stock, being the remaining part of a subscription entered into some years previously to defray the expenses attending certain geological inquiries in Great Britain and Ireland.'

Wollaston (1766–1828), to quote the words of Dr. Fitton, was 'a Mineralogist of the first order,' and 'it would be difficult to name a man who so well combined the qualities of an English gentleman and a philosopher.' Moreover, 'his penetration and correct judgment upon subjects apparently the most remote from his own immediate pursuits made him during many of the latter years of his life the universal arbiter on questions of scientific difficulty.' His discoveries of Palladium and of Rhodium, together with his inventions of the Camera Lucida, and the Reflecting Goniometer, showed that his love of science was enriched 'by a constant wish and endeavour to be useful to mankind.'¹ It is said that the idea of the Camera Lucida suggested itself 'on his noticing certain phenomena occasioned by a crack in the glass before which he was shaving himself.'² He became interim president of the Royal Society in June 1820, on the death of Sir Joseph Banks.

The Council appropriated the first year's income of the Wollaston Fund to the acquisition of a die for a medal, with the impress of the head of the founder. This medal was to be of fine gold, not exceeding the value of ten guineas.

The following is the description of the medal :—

Obverse : Bust to left, 'WOLLASTON.'

Reverse : A space for the name of the recipient and the legend 'THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON,' enclosed within branches of laurel and palm, fastened with a ribbon.

For a number of years, from 1846 to 1860, the Wollaston Medal was made of Palladium that had been obtained from Brazilian gold by the eminent assayer and metallurgist, Percival Norton Johnson, F.R.S. (of Hatton Garden). He was a Fellow of the Society, and generously presented the metal used for the medals. He died in 1866, aged 73.

¹ *Proc. Geol. Soc.* vol. i. pp. 110, 115, 175.

² J. A. Paris, 'Life of Sir H. Davy,' i. 1831, p. 148.