## OBITUARY.

### WILLIAM REED, M.R.C.S. (ENGL.), F.G.S., Etc.

Born 1810. Died 1892.

By the death of Mr. William Reed, of Blake Street, York, the Yorkshire Philosophical Society has lost one of its oldest members, and certainly—as regards its Museum—one of its most liberal benefactors.

Mr. Reed commenced life as pupil of Mr. Ness, surgeon, Helmsley, and it was probably during his residence in that district that he acquired that strong affection for the study of geology which characterized his later years, and gave him a place amongst the first geologists of the past half century. Upon leaving Helmsley he entered St. George's Hospital, London, and subsequently continued his studies at Paris. In the year 1837 he qualified as licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries, and the following year he took his degree as member of the Royal College of Surgeons (Engl.). He was afterwards appointed resident medical officer of the York County Hospital, and surgeon of the York Eye Institution, founded by Mr. Henry Russell. After occupying these positions for some years, to the great benefit of the patients under his care, he removed from York to Foston, and there carried on a private practice with marked success for several years. Afterwards he again took up his residence in York, and remained there during the rest of his life. In York he entered into partnership with Mr. Benjamin Dodsworth, who at that time enjoyed a very extensive practice, and the partnership continued several years. After leaving his partner Mr. Reed carried on practice for some years alone. This practice, owing to his great diligence and professional skill, became very extensive, so much so, indeed, that he found it necessary to take a partner, and he was joined by Mr. Rose, with whom he worked until nine or ten years ago, when Mr. Reed retired from the profession. Since that time he has devoted his leisure to the study of geology, to which a great portion of his earlier leisure time had also been given. Many years ago he became connected with the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, and it is to him more than to any other person that the Museum at York owes its present high standing. His whole soul was devoted to the science of geology, and the excellent collections of specimens now to be seen in the Museum will cause his name to be handed down to many future generations, and will testify to his great liberality. For many years he has continually been adding geological specimens to the Museum, but his liberality is most apparent in the two collections of specimens which he presented, which have raised the Museum to the first position in the country. The first of these collections was presented in 1878. It contained about 100,000 geological specimens collected by Mr. Reed himself. The following is an extract from the Yorkshire Philosophical Society's annual report:—"In the Geological Department, the Council have formally to announce the presentation

to the Society of the valuable geological collection of their respected Vice-President, William Reed, Esq., F.G.S. The collection presented by Mr. Reed has been formed at a great cost over a period of many years, and has been well known to geologists as one of the most valuable private collections in the United Kingdom. The Council congratulate the Society on its possession, as tending to raise the Museum to the first rank among similar scientific Institutions in this country."

The collection presented by Mr. Reed consists of:—1. A complete set of shells of the land, freshwater, and marine mollusca of Great Britain, comprising several forms first ascertained to be still living members of the British Fauna during the dredging expedition of the "Lightning" and "Porcupine." 2. An extensive collection of mammalian remains from English Post-Tertiary deposits, remarkable among which, for their fine state of preservation, are the teeth and bones of Rhinoceros, Horse, Hippopotamus, Urus, Megaceros, Elephant, Bear, Lion, Hyæna, Beaver, etc. 3. A large series of shells of the same period, from fluviatile and marine deposits, in various parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland. 4. A magnificent collection of fossils from the Norwich and Coralline Crags. The suite of vertebrate remains, especially, is of great value. This is probably the finest private collection of Crag fossils in England, and it is doubtful whether it can be equalled in any of our great public museums. 5. A fine series of plant remains from the beds of Bovey Tracey, Mull, and Antrim. A collection of Miocene shells from the neighbourhood of Bordeaux and Cannes. 6. A large collection of Eocene fossils in a beautiful state of preservation, in which the several subdivisions of the deposits of that period in England are fully represented. 7. An extensive assemblage of fossils from the Chalk, Greensand, Gault, Neocomian, and Wealden. 8. A very large and valuable series of Jurassic fossils. 9. A series of British Palæozoic fossils, especially rich in Carboniferous limestone fossils from the neighbourhood of Settle (upwards of 200 species). A most important feature from a scientific point of view in Mr. Reed's collection is the great care which has been taken to indicate, by labels, the exact locality from which the several specimens have been obtained, so that thorough reliance may be placed on them.

In December, 1880, Mr. Reed made a second presentation to the Society. This consisted of a collection of specimens formed by the late Mr. Edward Wood, F.G.S., of Richmond, Yorkshire, and since known as the "Wood Collection." This, although by no means equal to the one previously presented, is yet a collection of great value to geologists, being particularly rich in Yorkshire fossils. Four great collections had up to that date been formed in Yorkshire during the last half century—namely, those of Mr. Bean and Mr. Leckenby, of Scarborough; Mr. Wood, of Richmond; and Mr. Reed, of York. Of these, a considerable portion of Mr. Bean's fossils were purchased by the Yorkshire Philosophical Society in 1860 for £200, and two of the other collections—Mr. Wood's and Mr. Reed's—have by the public-spiritedness and liberality of the last-named gentlemen

found their place in York Museum. The Leckenby collection is now in the Cambridge Museum. Mr. Edward Wood had his home among the hills of North-west Yorkshire, and from the Mountain Limestone and contiguous strata of that district he formed the collection which, added to that formerly presented to the Museum by Mr. Reed, raised that Museum to a high position among the geological museums of this country. The Society is greatly indebted to Mr. W. Reed for his presentation of these valuable collections, and also for the able service which for two years he rendered as honorary curator in the arrangement of the collections.

Mr. W. Keeping, M.A., a former keeper of the Museum, read a paper at the monthly meeting of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society held in January, 1881, upon the "Wood Collection." In it he says: —The collection of fossils formed by the late Mr. Edward Wood, F.G.S., of Richmond, Yorkshire, is the result of the constant attention and labour of more than 30 years of his lifetime. Living in a district rich in some of the most beautiful and attractive of fossil organic remains, and impelled by a strong natural love for palæontology, Mr. Wood became an ardent collector of all specimens of geological interest, and such was his success that he ultimately became distinguished as the possessor of one of the finest private geological collections in Britain. Naturally this collection is particularly rich in objects from the Yorkshire dales, especially his own dale, Swaledale: but it also includes collections from many other British localities which were obtained by the help of his many scientific friends and acquaintances, in his own travels, or by his own purchases. Thus the collection came to spread over a wide area both in space and time, forming a fair representation of the whole of the geological periods, but specially rich and valuable in certain formations. To the York Museum this collection is particularly valuable, for it is precisely where we were poor that we here find the greatest riches. It was in the Permian, Coal-measures, the Carboniferous Limestone, and the Old Red Sandstone that our collection, including Mr. Reed's original museum, was weakest; while in the Edward Wood collection these groups are most perfectly represented. Mr. W. Reed, F.G.S., our honorary Curator of geology, was already acquainted with Mr. Wood's collection, and knew how important an addition it would be to the Society's Museum, and he therefore, as soon as the way to its acquisition was open to him, at once decided to purchase the collection and present it to the Society. As a private collection of Carboniferous Limestone fossils Mr. Wood's museum has never been equalled in England, and the other groups of the Upper Palæozoic rocks are also particularly fine. It is without doubt in the Carboniferous Echinoderms, especially the Crinoids, that the collection is most remarkable, and it is best known to geologists as containing a magnificent series of those Crinoids or "Sea Lilies" named in honour of their discoverer, *Woodocrinus*. Some hundreds of specimens of this beautiful fossil were obtained by Mr. Wood, the duplicates being liberally distributed throughout the various Museums of Europe, while some 80 slabs, including all the

more choice examples, remain in the collection. Many of the slabs include several heads, some of them exhibiting as many as nine distinct individuals, so that we have altogether a perfect forest of these beautiful sea lilies. The spot where these were found is in a quarry at Lymmas House, Holgate, near Marske, a place in Swaledale, some 13 miles from Richmond, and rather difficult of access. They have not to my knowledge been found in any other locality. Altogether the collection numbers over 10,000 specimens; there being, according to a catalogue made by Dr. Henry Woodward, 9365 selected specimens in the cabinets.

Mr. Reed was of a retiring disposition, and took little interest in public affairs. He was, however, of a genial disposition, and in private life was a pleasant companion.

He never married and lived an extremely abstemious life, performing many acts of private charity and benevolence which the world saw not. He suffered a long time from bronchitis, and about ten days before his death he received a chill which brought on his old complaint, to which he succumbed on Monday the 9th of May at the advanced age of eighty-two years.

Mr. Reed's death will be sincerely mourned by many friends, his loss to the city of York will be great, but to the Yorkshire Philosophical Society still greater.—*Yorkshire Herald,* May 10, 1892.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

### Major John Plant, F.G.S.

The fact that Major Plant is about to sever his long connexion of forty-two years with the Peel Park Museum, Salford, affords us a welcome opportunity of giving a brief sketch of the life and work of one to whom naturalists and the general public of Salford owe so much, and whose long services the Museum Committee recently recognized by a gratifying tribute.

Major Plant is the son of the late Mr. Robert Fisher Plant, a stationer of Leicester, in which town he was born in October, 1819. At an early age he entered the National School of his native town, and there acquired the rudiments of a sound education, side by side with the Right Hon. A. J. Mundella. On leaving that school, he continued his studies at the Mechanics' Institution, displaying considerable taste for drawing and Natural Science. It was intended that he should adopt the medical profession, and with that view he was articled to a surgeon of Leicester, Mr. T. Paget, but it was afterwards found necessary for him to abandon this pursuit, to assist in his father's growing business. In 1844, he was elected Honorary Secretary of the Leicester Naturalists' Club, and shortly afterwards was appointed Curator of a small museum which had been founded in the town through the instrumentality of the Literary and Philosophical Society. By this time Mr. Plant had obtained that keen predilection for geology which has characterized him all his life; and it was also in 1844 that he read before the British Association,