

OBITUARY.

ROBERT ETHERIDGE, JUNIOR.

Palæontologist, 1887-1895 ; Curator, 1895-1917 ; Director and Curator, 1917-1920.

Robert Etheridge, Junior, was born in 1847. He was the only son of Robert Etheridge, Palæontologist to the Geological Survey of Great Britain, and, later, Assistant Keeper of the Geological Department of the British Museum, which no doubt explains why the study of fossils and Museum administration became his life work. The bibliography attached to this short notice is sufficient testimony, if any be necessary, to Etheridge's mental energy extending over fifty years of official life.

His scientific career commenced when he became a student of the Royal School of Mines, London, where, though he did not take his Associateship, he attended lectures by Tyndall, Huxley, Ramsay, and R. Etheridge, Senior.

While a student, he was a constant companion of his father, by whom he was initiated into the knowledge of the various modes of preservation of fossils, the treatment of the matrix, and the development of concealed structures. His Saturday afternoons were conscribed to assist his father, the washing, sorting, and labelling of the gatherings of the field staff being his share. All this gave him, at the most receptive time, the sense of touch and proportion, almost an instinct, which will reconstruct a shell from a fragment, and tell the horizon not only from the index fossil, but from the containing rock.

His training and application gained him his first official appointment as Assistant Geologist of the newly created Geological Survey of Victoria, regarded then as "one of the most complete Geological Surveys ever organized, except, perhaps, that of the United States Territories under Dr. F. V. Hayden." A. R. C. Selwyn was Director. The Survey was terminated in 1869, the officers being disbanded. Selwyn was appointed Director of the Geological and Natural History Survey of Canada in succession to Sir W. E. Logan. Etheridge, with his colleague Reginald A. F. Murray, afterwards Government Geologist of Victoria, spent some time in gold mining, returning to England in 1871. This was Etheridge's introduction to Australian geology, and led to his association with C. S. Wilkinson, who in 1874 became Geological Surveyor in New South Wales, and later induced him to come back to Australia. After his return to England, he was for some time engaged in coal mining in South Wales as underground manager in one of Crawshaw's Mines.

In 1873, he was appointed Palæontologist to the Geological Survey of Scotland. Then began the second stage of his scientific life. Entering into this position with little more than a student's knowledge of palæontology and stratigraphy, his indomitable energy brought him to the forefront of the younger school of English palæontologists. During this period he contributed to the Geological Magazine, the Geological