

December 14, just a month before the eclipse. They thus had sufficient, but not too much, time to get their instruments erected and adjusted. They were joined later by Dr. Aston and Col. J. Waley Cohen, who combined a view of the eclipse with service to the party in the manipulation of their half-dozen instruments during the four minutes of totality.

After the eclipse the plates must be developed, brought home and measured before the value of the results of half a year's work can be assessed. The observation of eclipses is expensive in time and money. The return on the outlay has been hitherto highly satisfactory, and we may expect that equal success will attend the latest expedition. F. W. D.

### Obituary.

MR. ALFRED BELL.

MR. ALFRED BELL, who died at Ipswich on December 7, 1925, was born in the parish of St. Marylebone on June 28, 1835. During his long life of more than ninety years, he had been brought into contact with a long succession of geologists, and he was personally known to Murchison, Sedgwick, Lyell, Owen and many others. His interest in science was awakened in early years by reading illustrated popular literature, and he became a collector, with his brother Robert, a year or two older than himself, at the age of about eleven years. Robert, who also specialised in conchology, was a well-known authority on this subject. Alfred, whose interests were at first more general, obtained specimens in any way he could, partly from sailors returning from abroad, and among his personal efforts may be mentioned the collection of fossils he made from the cuttings of the Great Northern Railway, then in process of construction out of London.

Largely a self-taught geologist, Alfred Bell's education in the science began with a course of lectures he attended at a Working Men's Institute. By 1868 he had made sufficient progress to publish, in conjunction with his brother Robert, an account of the Mollusca of the Red Crag; and, somewhat later, another paper which resulted in making the acquaintance of Searles V. Wood, who was then making preparations for a supplement to his "Crag Mollusca." Robert died in 1888, and Alfred continued the work begun by his brother, with Prof. Kendall, on the newly discovered Pliocene beds of St. Erth, Cornwall. To the end of his life he worked specially at the East Anglian Crag, of which he had a remarkable knowledge. He visited all the important Pliocene deposits of Great Britain, Ireland and the Isle of Man, and he had some personal knowledge of those of Holland, Belgium and the Rhine Valley. His judgment on the specific differences of molluscan shells was regarded as particularly good, and a long list of papers on this group stands to his credit.

Alfred Bell was not one of the favourites of fortune, and he was obliged to make his living in commercial life, partly in the employment of others, but for a time as a professional collector and dealer. In the later years of his life he became the friend of Mr. F. W. Harmer, to whom he made prolonged visits, taking the greatest interest in Harmer's monograph on Pliocene Mollusca, the preparation of which was facilitated by the opportunities given by the visits for discussion and criticism. After Harmer's death, in April 1923, Bell retired to Ipswich, where he worked indefatigably until a few days before his death. His last paper, referring to the shells of the Isle of Man, was in the press when he died.

Without any special educational advantages, Bell

acquired a wide knowledge, not only of his own subject, but also of others, such as archaeology and history. He was of a genial temperament, possessing a considerable fund of quiet humour, and his characteristic optimism did not desert him even in his closing years, when the disabilities of old age fell heavily on him. His friends speak of him with affectionate regard.

G. MAYNARD.

REV. GEORGE HENSLOW.

THE Rev. Prof. George Henslow passed away at Bournemouth on December 30 last, in his ninety-first year. He was the younger son of Rev. John Stevens Henslow, professor of botany in the University of Cambridge, and afterwards Rector of Hitcham, in Suffolk; his mother was Harriet, a sister of the Rev. Leonard Jenyns, better known as Blomefield, a west country naturalist.

George Henslow was born at Cambridge on March 23, 1835, received his education at Sawston Parsonage, six miles to the south of Cambridge, then at the Grammar School of Bury St. Edmunds, and in 1854 became a scholar of Christ's College, Cambridge. He gained a first class in the Natural Science Tripos, and second class in divinity and mathematics. After graduating in 1858, he was ordained, and became curate of Steyning, Sussex, in 1861 receiving the appointment of headmaster of Hampton Lucy Grammar School, and four years later a similar post in London. In 1886 he became lecturer on botany to St. Bartholomew's Hospital Medical School until 1890, lecturing at other institutions also. He was a popular lecturer at the Royal Horticultural Society for many years; he had a good resonant voice, his method was attractive, his delivery clear and plain, and in the days before lantern-slides were common, at the right moment he would display a specimen or a drawing to his audience.

Henslow's pen was busy upon botanical subjects, largely in a popular sense, on evolution, the fertilisation of plants, Bible plants, the origin of flowers, and the like. Some years before his death, he gave to the Linnean Society eleven volumes of reprinted papers and three volumes on Darwinian subjects. He was elected a fellow of this Society on March 17, 1864, and at the time of his death was the senior fellow but two. He was twice married, his second wife surviving, but left no family.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Mr. R. A. F. Murray, a pioneer of the Geological Survey of Australia and Government Geologist from 1881 until 1897, aged seventy-nine years.

Prof. W. H. Warren, Challis professor of engineering and president of the Professorial Board in the University of Sydney, and twice president of the Royal Society of New South Wales, aged seventy-three years.