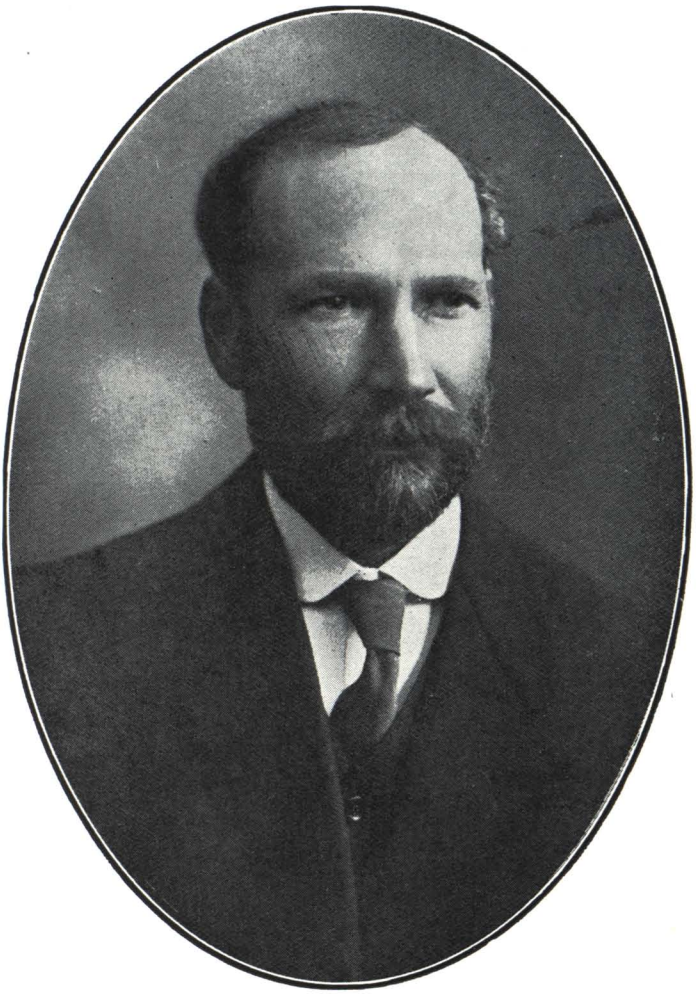
OBITUARY.

Frederick Chapman, Hon. F.R.S.N.Z.

F. Chapman, A.L.S., Hon. F.R.M.S., F.G.S., was born in 1864, and died in Melbourne on December 10, 1943, leaving his son, Brigadier W. D. Chapman, and a grandson, both of the A.I.F., carrying out in their several spheres their ideals of public service. He was the son of Robert Chapman, assistant to Professors Faraday and Tyndall, and at the age of 18 was appointed assistant to Professor J. W. Judd, at the Royal School of Mines. His life-long interest in micro-fossils was expressed by his first paper on the foraminifera and ostracods of the London Clays below Piccadilly, published in 1886, which was followed by a series of papers during the decade 1890–9 dealing with the foraminifera of the Lower Cretaceous (Gault) of Folkestone, which was practically the first comprehensive work to show the significance of these small organisms for stratigraphical zoning, a study which has since proved of immense importance, and now, carried on in countless laboratories throughout the world, guides the geological investigation of oilfields. His textbook on the foraminifera, the only work of its kind until 1928, appeared in 1902, in which year he was appointed palaeontologist to the National Museum, Melbourne. Here, as one of the very few Australian palaeontologists, he was called upon to study fossils of all kinds, his first task being to name and arrange the large and now well-displayed collections of Australian and foreign fossils in the National Museum. A quick succession of papers came from his pen, and at his death his bibliography included 500 titles, so that he and the late Robert Etheridge, jun., have the distinction of being the chief contributors to Australian palaeontology. Foraminifera form the subject of many of his papers, his opinion being sought in many countries outside Australia. Notable among his foraminiferal papers are those dealing with the collections of the Shackleton and Mawson Antarctic Expeditions, studies of South African material and of the foraminifera in the collections of the New Zealand Geological Survey, which he described in Palaeontological Bulletin No. 11 (1926) having completed earlier for the same Survey a Palaeontological Bulletin (No. 7, 1918) on the fossil fishes. His election to the Honorary Fellowship of the Royal Society of New Zealand, in 1932, was an appropriate acknowledgment of this and other contributions to New Zealand palaeontology. Similar comprehensive studies of fossil foraminifera from the Cainozoic formations of Australia have been of great service in the elucidation of its geological history. A long series of papers under the title of " New or Little Known Fossils in the National Museum " records many other and very varied features of past life in Australia.

Retiring from the service of the National Museum in 1927, he continued till 1936 working in his old laboratory as Commonwealth Palaeontologist, guiding by his studies the search for oil in Western



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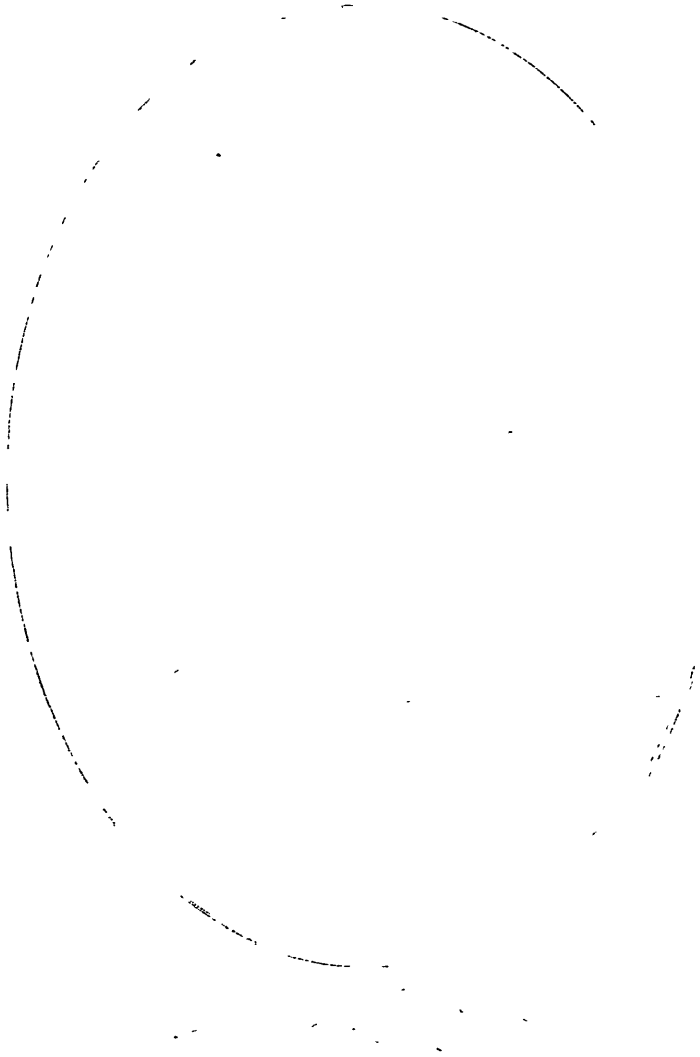

Australia, New Guinea and Victoria, and teaching in Melbourne University, to which he had been appointed as part-time lecturer on Palaeontology in 1920.

Though quiet and unassuming, he took an active part in the scientific life of Melbourne, was President of the Royal Society of Victoria, the Microscopical Society and the Field Naturalists' Club, and contributed by several semi-popular books, many newspaper articles and broadcast talks to the furtherance of public interest in natural science. His enthusiasm for the cultivation of native plants was shown both by his own garden and by the Maranoa Native Plant Garden, of which he was Honorary Curator.

It is impossible for one man to be a complete expert on fossils of all types and ages, and naturally some of his conclusions have since been modified by specialists in one or other of the many groups of organisms which he studied. But as an Australian-trained geologist, the writer desires to pay tribute to the immense value of Chapman's promptly completed work to the steady advance of geology in all parts of the Commonwealth, notably his study of the Silurian and especially Cainozoic fossils, appropriately recognised by the award to him of the Lyell Medal of the Geological Society of London, in 1930.

A last personal association with Mr. Chapman was at a laboratory party in the National Museum in honour of his seventieth birthday, during which it was revealed, though not by the guest, that his form of celebration had been by making a gift to enable the young folk in a children's home to share his enjoyment and interest in the many aspects of life to be seen on the hills and beaches near Melbourne—very characteristic of a most kindly and lovable naturalist.

W. N. B.