

of naturalists. He was chosen president in 1853, when only thirty-eight years of age ; but died in the following year (see p. 178).

Lonsdale had named and described many of the corals that were deposited in the Museum in illustration of papers ; and subsequently when Forbes became curator the Museum Committee recommended ' That all the new species [in the British collection] be described and named by Mr. Forbes, and the account published in the Society's *Proceedings*.' Needless to say, this task was not completed, although a commencement was made.¹ After the retirement both of Forbes and the sub-curator, S. P. Woodward, in 1845, but little continuous systematic work was given to the Museum, although an officer was now and again appointed to discharge the duties of curator.

The Dudley and Midland Geological Society was instituted on January 17, 1842, when Murchison delivered the inaugural address. Among the active local workers were Henry Beckett, S. H. Blackwell, William Mathews, and James Yates. The Society was not long in existence ; but it was re-established in 1862 as the Dudley and Midland Geological and Scientific Society and Field Club.

During the years 1843-45 some controversy arose on the unsettled limits of the Cambrian and Silurian systems. Murchison had noted that the Bala Limestone, placed by Sedgwick in the Upper Cambrian group, contained several species of fossils that occurred, some of them very abundantly, in his Lower Silurian rocks ;² and this fact was admitted by Sedgwick,³ and later on confirmed by Daniel Sharpe, whose work bears evidence of great care and accuracy.

In 1843 Murchison, in his presidential address, alluded to this subject, and to Sedgwick's recent researches in the field, the results of which would have been communicated

¹ *Proc. Geol. Soc.* iv. pp. 324, 530 ; *Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc.* i. pp. 237, 345.

² 'Silurian System,' 1839, pp. 256, 308.

³ *Proc. Geol. Soc.* iii. 1842, p. 548.