

schoolmaster and schoolmistress in the kingdom, and, we might add, every landed proprietor. The beautifully coloured Geological Map of Great Britain, at the commencement of the volume, is worth at least half the price of the work, which is only 7s. 6d. This edition may almost be regarded as a new work. D. M.

II.—PROCEEDINGS OF THE BRISTOL NATURALISTS' SOCIETY, vol. vi., 1871.

WE generally look to our local societies for observations on the Natural History of the neighbourhood which it is their special province to investigate—indeed most of them were formed for this purpose. Our Bristol friends last year, however, seem to have found nothing new to say about their own country, and so the only geological papers relate to distant parts,—the valley of the Thames in Berkshire, the shores of Waterford Haven, and the neighbourhood of Edinburgh. We think it is rather a mistake to publish such papers in the journal of a local society; we do not mean to discourage the bringing together of facts from other parts, but if the paper be a record of any new facts, it is apt to be lost sight of and is unknown to those who would perhaps be specially interested in it.—Fort-Major Austin read a paper on his discovery many years ago of Silurian fossils at Duncannon, Wexford, which were identified by Mr. Salter as belonging to the Llandeilo Flags.—Mr. E. W. Claypole read a paper on the development of the Carboniferous system in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh; and another on some Gravels in the Valley of the Thames near Wallingford, in Berkshire.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE DIVINING-ROD IN SOMERSETSHIRE.

SIR,—One would imagine that the Divining-rod or Dowsing fork had become a thing of the past—that in these “enlightened” days, no man could go about with a forked hazel-twigg pressed to his ribs, and believe it could indicate a coal-crop, a metalliferous deposit, or a water-supply. Yet there are some who still cling without question to the faith of their fathers, on the principle that as it was in the beginning it should be now, and so although I experienced a sensation of great surprise, and almost of incredulity, yet the fact appears that on the Mendip Hills the Divining-rod is still used. I was staying a few days ago at the little hamlet of Gurney Slade, near Oakhill, and went to look at a shaft that was being sunk for iron-ore, not far from the decayed George Inn. Several trial holes had been made—and some I was told by an intelligent miner had been made at the instigation of the Divining-rod! Although a little iron had been found, and some calamine too,—both of which would most probably be found anywhere in the Dolomitic Conglomerate of the Mendips,—yet the ores were very poor, and the works would no doubt soon be abandoned. I have heard that a few of the old Cornish miners still retain some belief in the efficacy of the Divining-rod, but I was not prepared to find it still being used as a guide to mining enterprise. H. B. WOODWARD.

SOMERTON, 12th October, 1872.