

development are happily still alive. Now a historical retrospect of the work of living people is a delicate task, requiring a very nice sense of proportion and abundant tact, for obvious reasons. Even men of science are but human and it is impossible that some at any rate will not think that their work has been passed over somewhat lightly, while that of others has perhaps been unduly appreciated. Consequently, we feel that Professor Boswell would have been better advised if he had confined himself to the publication of his admirable bibliography, without entering upon the thorny path of the appraisal of contemporary work, even in the subject in which he is so competent an authority. And here another and rather sordid consideration enters: if a book is half the size it can be published at something like half the price, and under present conditions many people hesitate to pay a guinea for a book, whereas ten shillings is by no means an alarming figure. Frankly, these "essays" make extraordinarily dull reading, and are a distinct handicap on the sales of an otherwise very useful book. The publishers would be well advised to cut them all out and issue the bibliography alone at a reasonable price.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BEACHES IN GOWER.

SIR,—I regret I misunderstood Mr. Baden-Powell's remark concerning the "ecological assemblage" of the Patella Beach of Gower. Not being qualified to express an opinion on the climatic range of lamellibranchs, I defer to his statement that *Ostrea edulis* and *Chlamys varia* are not likely to have lived near the snouts of valley glaciers. Nevertheless, as I pointed out in my letter to the June number of this Magazine, I was concerned to demonstrate that the Patella Beach is pre-glacial only in the sense that it is older than the neighbouring Glacial Drift, which it stratigraphically underlies. There is no information available as to its maximum possible antiquity, but it is at least not younger than the Neritoides Beach.

Mr. Baden-Powell's remarks concerning beach heights are astonishing. In the GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE for 1927 and 1928, and in his letter to the May number of this year, he repeatedly refers to beaches in terms of their heights. On the other hand, to avoid the obvious confusion consequent upon such a practice, I endowed the Gower beaches with special names; and in my letter of June I merely quoted him or adopted his terminology when discussing beaches in the manner now condemned by him.

I am sorry Mr. Baden-Powell objects to my calling his post-Glacial beaches of Scotland and elsewhere Neolithic. So far as

I understand the writings of Dr. Wright and others, however, the beach in Scotland, although perhaps not everywhere of the same age, is certainly Neolithic (*sensu lato*). In any case, post-Glacial is very different from Mousterian, and the Patella Beach in Gower antedates even the latter period.

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THE LATER STAGES OF THE CYCLE OF EROSION.

SIR,—MR. C. H. Crickmay's paper on "The Later Stages of the Cycle of Erosion" (GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE, July, 1933), mentions the scarcity of peneplains in progress of formation.

In Northern Rhodesia, which is essentially a plateau of about 4,000 feet altitude composed of Cambrian (?) sediments intruded by granite, peneplanation is still in progress, rainwash being the agent. Rhodesia is noted for its "dambo" topography; the dambos being treeless swampy stretches, sometimes quite narrow but usually wide near the stream sources. True dambos are seldom seen on main streams but exist on most tributaries and laterite often outcrops on their somewhat rectangular margins. Dambos appear often to follow structural lines and either enter the major streams at right angles or continue straight across them.

The larger streams usually follow the strike and joint systems of the rocks and represent the new system of erosion but dambos on the tributaries are mainly areas of deposition. Slopes are low, and in the rainy season silt is carried to the edge of the dambo, where it is caught by vegetation, the material passing through the bottle-necked outlets being mainly discoloured water.

Slight earthquake shocks are recorded and the plateau uplift is probably still in progress, the strain being taken up on the old fracture lines so often indicated by the dambos. As mountain building ceased in Lower Palaeozoic times and deposits of post-Mesozoic age are not extensive round South Africa, it may be assumed that peneplanation has been in progress in Rhodesia since the Karroo, with only a small proportion of the products of denudation reaching the ocean. The Rhodesian data indicate that peneplanation, contemporaneous with rejuvenation, can take place at moderate altitudes and that rainwash is a simpler explanation than river or marine erosion.

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