

and the many other errors and fallacies in the paper (we can furnish a long list, if desired), it can only be assumed that before undertaking publication the Council of the Geological Society failed to submit the manuscript to any capable palæontologist familiar with the zones in question.

In the course of the paper we are mentioned by name more than forty times, not always without derogatory implication in the context. It is most unusual to find the *Quarterly Journal* utilized as the medium of publication for a paper of this character, in which the collective effect of the repeated personal references and the misrepresentations is sometimes that of a not well-veiled *argumentum ad hominem*. We have always understood that one of the chief functions of the Publication Committee of the Geological Society is to prevent the publication of matter which may give just cause of offence, and to provide some guarantee to the Fellows that the substance of communications issued by the Society shall be sound in essentials. Apart from any personal considerations, we, as Fellows, regret that the Council has created so questionable a precedent by the publication of Mr. Lamplugh's elaborate and costly paper in the form in which it has appeared.

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J. PRINGLE.

THE AGE OF THE SHENLEY LIMESTONE.

SIR,—In February of last year I published a short report on the Echinoids of the now notorious Shenley Limestone lenticles; and in the following month Mr. Lamplugh asked that "judgment in respect of [my] deductions" should be suspended. His "judgment" has now been pronounced and published (*Q.J.G.S.*, lxxviii, pp. 76-7), and I beg leave to exercise the prerogative of comment before sentence is passed.

I wish to say at the outset that I have neither desire nor intention to be drawn into a controversy on matters beyond my own observation—the stratigraphical relations of the Shenley limestone are none of my business—and that I am concerned solely with the facies presented by the Echinoid fauna. It is true that most of the specimens are too poorly preserved for rigorous determination; but it is equally true that a few of them are as satisfactory as could be desired. Is it a coincidence that every one of such specimens indicates an horizon at or above the top of the "Upper Greensand"?

Cidaris boverbanki was recognized on three (probably six) radioles, and Mr. Lamplugh suggests that "the determination can hardly be reckoned conclusive". With all deference I would submit that in this case the radioles are vastly more distinctive than the test. At least, they belong to a *Tylocidaris* (type *C. clavigera*), and that genus is not known before the Cenomanian. Arguments based on its generic range (after the style adopted by Mr. Lamplugh in his criticism) would make it reasonable to assume that the Shenley

Limestone is of Upper Senonian age ! Again, *Nucleolites lacunosus* (an equally confident identification) is airily disposed of with the remark that the *genus* has "many representatives in the Lower Cretaceous". *Nucleolites* (in the sense understood by both of us in this case) ranges from the Bajocian upwards, and I fail to see why the Corallian age of the Shenley Limestone should be disputed if such an argument is to hold ! I assume that here, as elsewhere, my critic intends to suggest that I have made a mistake in identification. I should have little cause for complaint if he had stated that opinion outright ; but hints and insinuations are unpleasant. Anyhow, the specimens exist, and the truth is in them.

But it is useless to haggle over names—especially when their application by our forefathers is regarded as evidence in modern palæontological stratigraphy. It is difficult to express in antiquated terms the views of palæontologists of to-day ; and still more difficult to convince those who consider that a "new genus and species has no present value for correlation" that they are mistaken. Palæontologists will understand me when I say that the whole facies of the Echinoid fauna under discussion suggests a "Warminster Top-Beds" horizon ; and that failure to attach a single specific name throughout the list would in no way have detracted from my confidence.

I should like to close on a less controversial note. As a professed palæontologist, I am deeply grateful to Mr. Lamplugh for an innovation in his paper. The idea of printing "field-determinations" of fossils in roman type, reserving italics for those based on special study, seems extremely well-inspired. If generally adopted, the practice will halve the difficulties of those who try to trace ranges as recorded in literature ; had it been carried out since 1875, Mr. Lamplugh's criticisms of my list might have been less voluminous and more convincing.

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12th May, 1922.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INQUIRIES.

Professor H. L. Hawkins, Geological Department, University College, Reading, would be very grateful to any collectors or curators of local museums who have specimens of *Pygaster* from authentic British localities if they would communicate with him. He is preparing a monograph for the Palæontographical Society, and desires to make it as complete as possible. At the present time he is particularly anxious to see *Pygasters* from the lower Oolites of the Midlands and North of England. While fully prepared to accept specimens as gifts or in exchange, he undertakes to cherish and return all specimens lent on other terms. All such help will be duly acknowledged in the monograph.