the top. At the bottom of the surface soil, exactly where the head of the man in the white straw hat comes in fig. 1 of the report above referred to, the workmen came upon the bones of a child about twelve years of age. There was nothing, as far as I could ascertain or see, in the appearance of the overlying soil to suggest an interment until the bones were reached. There was, however, a small irregular depression excavated in the top of the underlying chalky loam, and in this the body lay as if it had been buried in a contracted position. The bones were crushed and disturbed by the settling down of the overlying earth during the decay of the soft parts, and were much decomposed, but there was nothing obviously abnormal in them. In such cases we have to remember that the surface soil is always on the move, and that all traces of a grave or other pit quickly disappear in a homogeneous superficial deposit. It is only where there are stratified beds of sand or gravel and the continuity of the layers is interrupted that the infilled grave or pit can be clearly seen in section.

I once saw a remarkable case of the obliteration of the signs of interment at Faversham in North Kent. Here an interesting cemetery of Roman and Saxon age was entirely carried away in the course of digging for brickearth. In the face of earth seen in section at the time I refer to, the bones in the Saxon graves were exposed at a depth of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 feet, and some 4 feet lower the Roman skeletons were seen.

In ordinary dry states of the weather the earth above the skeletons showed no sign of having been moved, and there was nothing obvious in its condition to indicate in either the one case or the other that there had been any interment. The graves had been dug in homogeneous yellowish-brown brickearth, and there were no lines of stratification or stony beds cut across to betray the disturbance. But the loosening of the earth had permitted a more free percolation of surface-water in the graves, and had in this way produced a small change in the texture of the loam, which was indicated in damp weather by a slightly darker colour in the moved soil.

In view of these facts I attach no importance to the absence of any signs of disturbance in the soil above the skeleton at Barrington. I believe that the Ipswich skeleton occurred under exactly similar conditions. It showed, as I was informed, no signs of disturbance in the earth above the bones, which were in a small irregular depression in the underlying sand. This sand is that called by Searles Wood 'Middle Glacial'. The earth above the skeleton was simply 'soil', 'head', 'run of the hill', or 'trail', but there was, I feel sure from what I saw, no Boulder-clay overlying the skeleton.

T. McKenny Hughes.

February 28, 1912.

STRATIGRAPHICAL NAMES.

Sir,—I think Dr. Bather has done well to call attention to the growing necessity for some official control over geological nomenclature. The introduction of a new name for any stratigraphical unit ought to be regarded as a serious matter, which cannot receive too much

consideration, and it should certainly have the sanction of a responsible committee. This is desirable not only to prevent the duplication of names and the proposal of unnecessary names, but also on behalf of a good and necessary name, which would thus stand a better chance of being generally adopted.

Being myself responsible for the proposal of several stratigraphical names I can fully understand both the positive and negative advantages of submitting them to a committee, and one practice which such a committee could practically prevent, by refusing to sanction it, is that of giving formal geographical names to divisions which have no greater importance than zones.

Moreover, there are cases where the same stage is known by different names in different countries, and if such tribunals existed in two or more European countries they might combine to decide which of the two names should be adopted.

I think the committee might be appointed by the Council of the Geological Society and its members hold office for a term of years, and that it might consist of seven members, with the proviso that one was always chosen from the staff of the Geological Survey.

A. J. Jukes-Browne.

Torquay.
March 9.

OBITUARY.

R. B. BROCKBANK.

Born 1824. Died January 31, 1912.

The late Richard Bowman Brockbank, who died at The Nook, Crosby, near Maryport, Cumberland, on January 31, in his 88th year, was a much-esteemed member of the Society of Friends, and was well known in the district around Carlisle as an able farmer and breeder of excellent horses and cattle. To the geologist he is notable as the discoverer of the fact that the shales and limestone bands around Great Orton and Aikton, west of Carlisle, are of Liassic and not (as then supposed) of Carboniferous age. He called the attention of E. W. Binney to the subject, and Binney has described what he saw of the Lias of Cumberland in Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc., vol. xv, p. 549. More detailed observation, on the part of the present writer, has added but one section to those shown to Binney (see Geol. Survey Mem., *Geology around Carlisle*). For the ground is persistently drift-covered, and any sections in the underlying rocks are very few and small.

In addition to being shown the positions of sections in the Lias, I have to thank Mr. R. B. Brockbank for much information kindly obtained for me with regard to old borings and observations that would otherwise have remained unnoticed, and which have a special value in a district of this kind.

T. V. Holmes.