

publicly that the pores have the position there assigned to them, and gives a properly enlarged drawing or photograph in support of his statement, scepticism will be more than justified.

F. A. BATHER.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

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THE SUBMERGED PLATFORM OF WESTERN EUROPE.

SIR.—The question of whether the border of this platform is an escarpment or not cannot be left where Professor Hull leaves it, for, as it stands, one of us must certainly have a false idea of the meaning and use of the word *escarpment*. I am consequently obliged to refer Professor Hull to textbooks for a definition, and it will probably suffice if I quote the Student's Manual of Geology, by Jukes & Geikie (3rd edition, p. 474): "An escarpment is a cliff or precipitous bank formed by the outcrop of a bed or series of beds of harder consistency than those on which they rest."

Professor Hull asserts that the question "is really one of form" or shape of the ground, and he implies that the submerged declivity is an escarpment because it "has a terraced upper surface, has a descent sometimes almost precipitous, and falls off in a slope, sometimes gentle, at its base into the abyssal plain." Then he proceeds to put geological structure aside, which is precisely what the definition of an escarpment forbids him to do. It is quite true that the height and length of a declivity are matters of degree, but if he cannot show that a given declivity is formed by the outcrop of one series of beds he has no right to call it an escarpment.

Professor Hull, however, has another argument: he says, "the question of the origin of the escarpment might have remained problematical," but for the existence of the river channels which cross the platform and open out through the "escarpment." He regards these channels as being "unquestionable proof of subaerial origin, both of themselves and of the physical features with which they are connected." This is a novel argument certainly, but how the existence of river-made valleys can possibly prove the declivity to have been made by subaerial agencies passes my comprehension.

Let us apply the argument to an existing terrestrial surface, and for choice let us take Portugal; then we have this syllogism:—The surface of Portugal is trenched by river-valleys which open through the cliffs that form the western border of the land; such valleys prove all the physical features with which they are connected to be of subaerial origin; therefore the sea-cliffs of Portugal are "escarpments" of subaerial origin!

No one wants to deny that the surface of the platform has once been a land-surface, but I do deny that its border can properly be called an *escarpment* or that there is any proof of its having been fashioned by subaerial agencies.

A. J. JUKES-BROWNE.

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ORTHITE.

SIR,—In the interesting and instructive paper on Scottish Rocks containing Orthite, communicated by Dr. Flett to the September number of the GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE, the author states that the