the work here noticed seems to be of a rather finicking character, with a great amount of unnecessary nomenclature, and the need for some comprehensive generalization in this branch of geology is clearly apparent. This publication will, however, be of considerable value to workers in this subject, taken in conjunction with Professor Boswell's recent bibliography: the two together must cover pretty well the whole field.

OBITUARY.

Dr. R. S. Woodward.

BORN 21ST JULY, 1849. DIED 29TH JUNE, 1924.

Robert Simpson Woodward was connected as astronomer and geographer with the U.S. Geological Survey from 1884 to 1890. It was during this period that he worked at problems of terrestrial physics from a mathematical point of view. In 1887 he wrote two memoirs on the cooling of a homogeneous sphere, ending with an application to the contraction of the earth. In the following year an important Survey Bulletin (No. 48) contained his investigations on the form and position of the sea-level, in which he estimated the variations of sea-level due to the presence of continental masses and ice-sheets. This work is entirely mathematical, but in 1889 he gave a less technical address on the mathematical theories of the earth, before Section A of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. After 1890, as professor of mechanics and mathematical physics in the University of Columbia (1893–1905) and President of the Carnegie Institution of Washington (1905–1920), his attention was diverted from geophysical problems.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE NOMENCLATURE OF ROCKS.

SIR,—Mr. Wells, in his criticism of modern nomenclature, is decidedly destructive, whereas the present need is for a constructive scheme which would be applicable to the major rock bodies, and also to the smaller differentiates. When variation is minute in detail in a small rock body the difficulties of nomenclature are still greater. Hence the use, in my Newton Abbot paper, of a rock name, in inverted commas, to indicate that the variation appears to follow such a type. Such a procedure is somewhat different from definitely naming the rocks as mugearite, etc.

If Mr. Wells can indicate some formula for constant application to such cases, he would do a real service to petrology.

W. G. SHANNON.

6th August, 1924.