

horizons, have been deferred for a second volume, and we can only hope that though, greatly to the regret of his colleagues at the Museum, Dr. Gregory has taken himself to fresh fields, the work he has so ably begun may yet be carried to a successful end.

The Bryozoa are notoriously a difficult group, though they are a most fascinating study owing to the beauty of their forms, which must strike even the most casual observer on turning over the admirably executed plates which conclude the volume.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FORMATION OF MARITIME PEAT.

SIR,—It may interest some of the readers of this Magazine to learn that a remarkable illustration of the mode of formation of beds of maritime peat is at present to be seen on the shore in a small bay near the Bucket Rocks to the east of this town. During a heavy flood one day late in the past autumn great quantities of leaves were washed into the Tweed from the numerous woodlands, parks, and hedgerows adjoining its banks, and in course of time were drifted out to sea. A south-east wind prevailed at the time, and the flotilla of leaves, on reaching the quieter water of the sea off the river mouth, were gently wafted shorewards in the direction of the sheltered bay referred to. As they floated they were evidently first sorted out, in accordance with their buoyancy, and then were quietly deposited at the foot of the cliff as the tide fell. They form a sodden mass of leaves quite five feet in thickness at several places, which extends along the shore for several hundred yards.

An old resident, long acquainted with the coast there, tells me that the same thing happens almost every year; but that each year's deposit is generally washed seaward again, sooner or later, after it has been laid down.

As might be expected from the nature of the deposit, the constituents of which have been arranged solely with reference to their powers of flotation, it includes a small percentage of dried materials which the sea-water has floated from various parts of the shore. Bits of paper, straws, dried fronds of *Fucus vesiculosus* and *F. serratus*, coated with *Spirorbis*, and pieces of *Laminaria* encrusted with *Membranipora*, occur in small proportion, and there are a few fragments of corallines. *Talitrus locusta*, both dead and living, is rather common.

The mass is not divided by any beds of mud or sand. The general aspect of the deposit differs but little from that of such beds of maritime peat as occur, for example, at Elie in Fifeshire and at Maryport in West Cumberland, both of which are usually regarded as evidences of former changes of level of the land. Yet it must be obvious, from a consideration of the facts above noted, that similar deposits must frequently be laid down in the vicinity of large rivers, in quiet nooks both at the sea-level and beneath it, if the vegetable remains in the latter case have soaked long enough to become water-logged.

J. G. GOODCHILD.

BERWICK, July 4, 1900.