A SIGNPOST MEMORIAL TO WILLIAM SMITH

SIR,—A " scientific shrine " of the greatest interest to geologists is Rugbourne Farm, High Littleton, Somerset, where William Smith lodged from 1792–5 when surveying the local coal mines, for it was here that the fundamental principles of stratigraphy first became evident to him (cf. Cox and others, 1941, *Proc. Geol. Assoc.*, **52**, p. 21, pl. 2*a*). Visitors to High Littleton have had difficulty in locating this farm, and have found local residents woefully ignorant of the work of William Smith and of his connection with their village. It is, therefore, pleasing to record that, thanks to the initiative and persistence of Mr. J. B. Jones, of Swindon, and the action of the Clutton Rural District Council, a memorial signpost described by Mr. Jones as a substantial erection which does the local Council credit, has now been placed at the beginning of the bridle-path leading to Rugbourne. It reads : " To Rugbourne Farm/where William Smith, ' Father of/English Geology ' lodged, 1792–1795."

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16th October, 1951.

SILICATE ANALYSIS

SIR,—I much appreciate the thoroughness of the kindly review of the 2nd Edition of my " Silicate Analysis " in your September–October number, but in the concluding paragraph attention is drawn to a supposed error in the result of the silica determination in Appendix B, an error which is said also to have appeared in the 1st Edition. As, however, the reviewer himself has erred in this instance, a few words of explanation seem desirable.

The ignited residue remaining after the expulsion of silica by means of hydrofluoric acid consists of any R_2O_3 oxides contaminating the silica, plus the non-volatile residue invariably left by the hydrofluoric acid and which in the case of the ordinary " redistilled " grade is often considerable. The blank for the HF is accordingly *added* to the SiO_2 figure and *deducted* from that of the R_2O_3 (the R_2O_3 being subsequently ignited and weighed on top of the residue in the same crucible). The correct figure for SiO_2 therefore is 51·44 as given in Appendix B in both editions. In Appendix C, where the final results of the analysis are tabulated, a misprint causes the silica to appear as 51·47 and this may have contributed to the reviewer's misapprehension.

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(I stated in my review that the value for SiO_2 given as 51·44 per cent presumably included the blank for HF. I still regard it as an error to place this value opposite a determination which gives 51·14 per cent. The final value for SiO_2 should appear lower on the page, *after* the value of the blank for HF has been given, and not before.—S. R. N.)

OLD RED SANDSTONE OF PORTSALON

SIR,—Mr. Bishopp's note on p. 371 of the current volume suggests a Torridonian age for the red sandstone with conglomerates south of Portsalon.

The sandstones of this outcrop are tilted to the north in a " faulted " attitude, but it is believed that the fault is either completely older than the deposit or that only a slight amount of movement has followed the deposition of the red sandstones. If the northern edge of the outcrop of the Knockalla quartzites is examined carefully it can be seen, on many small, steeply inclined