

The dominant impression of "palaeoecology" which the book leaves on the reader is not one of a unified palaeontological discipline, but of a bundle of inconclusive methods, applied with all too little awareness of the ecology of living organisms. It is clear that palaeoecology will have to become far more self-critical, and far more rigorous in its methods and reasoning, before it will deserve to take its place as a genuine extension of ecology. Dr. Ager gives us a valuable summary of its present state; it is much to be hoped that his book will spur palaeontologists towards creating a science that will indeed "study these fossils as once-living things, and not simply as dry lumps of stone in a museum".

The book is attractively printed, with many line drawings and a few half-tone photographs. The more diagrammatic figures are admirable; some of the drawings of fossils, on the other hand, are very crude, and will do nothing to foster that respect for morphology which should surely lie at the root of palaeoecology, as of any other branch of palaeontology.

M. J. S. R.

STRUCTURAL GEOLOGY OF NORTH AMERICA. By A. J. Eardley. Second edition, pp. xvii + 743, with numerous figs. and 15 coloured plates (maps). Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc., 1963. Price £8 2s.

The first edition of this book, published in 1951, was the first full-scale study of the geological structure of the continent of North America, arranged in chapters each dealing with a natural structural province. For such a vast work by one man, it was inevitable that only a few leading papers in each case could be abstracted for the information to be compiled in convenient form. Accepting this limitation the advantage of having so much material brought together with uniform treatment was very great. Thus, cross-sections, stratigraphical tables and charts were redrawn, and the material was summarized generally in the text. Special features of the book were its unusually elongated format (24 × 16 cm. type area) allowing considerable flexibility of layout with a page width suitable for cross-sections and correlation tables, which otherwise permitted two normal columns of type. Additional features were a coloured palaeogeological (tectonic) map for each geological period, a combined bibliography and an index.

All these advantages have been retained in the new edition. In the eleven intervening years much revision has been achieved, and further material incorporated especially as additional chapters on Pre-Cambrian Tectonic Provinces (4) and the igneous and tectonic provinces of the Western Cordillera (33): South America (34), Mexico (35), western United States (36), western Canada (37), and the origin of magmas (38). The chapter *Arctica* was wisely renamed so as to limit its intention to the Canadian Arctic for which so much material is now available, although a further somewhat superficial attempt at an Arctic synthesis is included. Finally there is a new chapter on South Mexico and Central America (43). The new chapter numbers are given above and the net addition is 119 pages to make a total of 743 pages, but the price has been nearly doubled. Again in so ambitious a project it would be too much to expect all to have been critically digested. The author modestly addresses it mainly to the advanced undergraduate. Naturally some theoretical interpretation has been attempted, but the reviewer feels its main use is as a preliminary source book, and as such it is quite invaluable for all students of North America who need a geological introduction to some part of it.

W. B. H.

Erratum

Vol. 101, page 61, line 5, for 'a typical' read 'atypical'.