

of policy, in the immediate future at least, continue to use the Ludlovian-Downtonian boundary as the Siluro-Devonian boundary.

The contents of this letter have been discussed and agreed by the Director and all interested colleagues in the Institute of Geological Sciences.

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CYCLOTRON, A NEW NAME FOR POLYPHYMA GROOM

SIR,—It was noticed by Neave in his *Nomenclator Zoologicus* that the generic name *Polyphyma*, proposed by Groom (1902) for a Cambrian ostracod, is preoccupied by *Polyphyma* Jakovlev, 1877 [Insecta], and *Polyphyma* Hamm, 1881 [Bryozoa]. A new generic name *Cyclotron* (neuter gender) is proposed for Groom's genus, with the type-species *Polyphyma lapworthi* Groom because this is the type-species of *Polyphyma* Groom by original designation. The new name refers to the two D-shaped valves of the carapace.

Cyclotron lapworthi is one of the horny bivalved crustaceans commonly referred to as the 'Conchostraca' but which Sylvester-Bradley (1961, p. Q100) regards as ostracods; Öpik (1967, p. 393) concurs and places them in the Order Bradoriida Raymond.

The type-material of *C. lapworthi* is from the lowest White-Leaved-Oak Shales of the Malvern Hills, beds of late Middle or Early Upper Cambrian age. In the Nuneaton District, work by the Institute of Geological Sciences shows that species of *Cyclotron* occur throughout the Upper Cambrian (excluding the Tremadoc) but *C. lapworthi* is found only in the *Olenus* Zone. *Cyclotron angelini* (Barrande) is a subzonal index for the topmost subzone of the *Olenus* Zone in Sweden (Westergaard 1947, p. 18). Two other species listed by Ulrich & Bassler (1931, p. 66–67) may be referred to the genus: *C. armatum* (Groenwall) from the Middle Cambrian of Denmark and *C. marginatum* (Ulrich & Bassler) from the Upper Cambrian of Newfoundland. Sylvester-Bradley was evidently mistaken in recording a Lower Cambrian age for this genus.

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ESSAY REVIEW

THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

by J. A. STEERS

MAXWELL, W. G. H. 1968. *Atlas of the Great Barrier Reef*. 258 p., 166 figs. Elsevier Publishing Co., Amsterdam, London, New York. Price £10 15s.

The appearance of a new volume on the Great Barrier Reefs—the Admiralty use of the plural, reefs, is, I think, far more appropriate—deserves a welcome. There have been many papers, mainly biological but a few physiographical and geological, issued since the major expedition to the area in 1928, but no comprehensive account has been attempted since Saville Kent's in 1893, and the more popular book by (Sir) Maurice Yonge, who led the 1928 expedition, and whose important scientific work on the reefs was published in the reports of the expedition. The Great Barrier Reef Committee in Australia has issued some reports since that time, and Heron Island has become the site of a marine biological station. Bores have also been put down there and on Michaelmas Cay. Nevertheless, the reefs have become increasingly popular to tourists, and the reefs and mainland beaches are also being exploited for their economic possibilities. In recent years a starfish, *Acanthaster planci*, has in places done great damage to the reefs because it feeds on coral polyps. A conservation policy has, therefore, become imperative for the whole Queensland coastal region, and unless genuine attention is paid at high level to this matter, irreparable damage will be done to the reefs which form not only the greatest area of coral growth in the world, but also a fine Australian resort.

The present book should be studied against this background. This is not to say that the book should be concerned primarily or even generally with conservation and exploitation of the reefs. But it is proper to regard a book of this nature as a source of scientific information of the coral area. At the same time it is essential to remember that the reefs extend for about 1,200 miles along the coast of Queensland, from Torres Strait to Lady Elliott Island and that the distance between the *outer* edge of the reefs and the mainland varies from 80 to 100 miles in the far north, to perhaps 12 to 20 miles near Cape Melville, and that south of Cairns the distance gradually increases to 150 or more miles near Mackay. In the southern part the reefs are more scattered; it is only north of Trinity Opening, near Cairns, that the term 'barrier' can reasonably be applied. Even if we take such very rough figures as these, it is evident that the region discussed in this volume covers considerably more than 150,000 square miles—at least half as much again as the area of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and not much less than that of France.

Professor Maxwell's book is called an atlas, and perhaps that word describes it fairly well; but it is far more than a collection of maps. It certainly contains a large number of maps, some folding, and also a collection of excellent photographs. There is also a text divided into eight chapters and a conclusion.