

CORRESPONDENCE.

GEOLOGY OF KAVIRONDO.

SIR,—Speaking for my colleagues and myself, we are well content to leave geologists who know the Kavirondo goldfield and its history to decide for themselves whether the implications contained in Dr. Pulfrey's letter (*GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE*, February, 1937) are deserved or not; but it may be pointed out that the term "Kakamega area" as understood in Kenya now is a subdivision of convenience; it had no existence when Combe was working in Kavirondo and has no geological meaning to-day. Dr. Pulfrey's statement that "Mr. Combe's reports deal with an area south-west of the Yala" is inadequate; the area was south, west, north, and round to the east of the Yala thus including some of the "Kakamega area" as at present defined, to which Dr. Pulfrey seems to consider it has no reference, despite the fact that the *raison d'être* of its investigation was to open the path for the search for gold.

Admittedly the discovery that heralded the opening up of the Kakamega goldfield was made by non-officials, as I have more than once stressed in print¹; and it is not a "controvertible point" that Combe's report led the pioneers to make that discovery. They had nothing to gain by proffering that information except the ordinary satisfaction of stating the full truth, which they hastened to do, gratefully, it seems, in the Press. That announcement was the first news we had of the discovery of gold in Kakamega.

It frequently happens in a new goldfield that quite a number of people find they knew the gold was there "all along". Perhaps this is true of Kavirondo? But it seems significant that the late Professor J. W. Gregory, who was our most up-to-date authority when Combe investigated and reported on the area in question, could write of the Kakamega area in his *Rift Valleys and Geology of East Africa* without mentioning gold, in spite of the fact that he had an important chapter on Mineral Resources, in which all he had to tell of the occurrences of the precious metal in the Colony was that: "Gold is said to occur in the Lol Daika hills and has been recorded from Jombo" (p. 255), and "the information available does not encourage much hope that the country will be found rich in the more valuable and high-priced minerals" (p. 250).

Dr. Pulfrey states that it was the rise of the price of gold that first turned people's thoughts to the winning of it in Kenya. That is not so. It was the slump in other commodities that brought distress to the Kenya farmers, who were glad enough to turn their hands to anything likely to bring grist to the mill, and the discovery in Kavirondo naturally attracted them. At that time the price of gold was 84s. 9d.—84s. 11d. It began its spectacular rise after the discovery, but had it been only half the figure mentioned the farmer would still have sought it.

¹ "Beginnings of Kakamega," *East Africa*, 30th May, 1935, pp. 827-8.

Nor is Dr. Pulfrey in happier case when he refers to the "private report". So little private indeed was that document that it was especially written for publication, together with a map. But when all was ready we learnt that Sir Albert Kitson was coming out to Kenya, and as we did not wish to appear to rush in under the nose of the consultant, the report was withheld from the printer but its contents were made available to those interested. Actually, the main facts of that report had already appeared in the Annual Reports of this office previously referred to (*GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE*, July, 1936, p. 331). To my certain knowledge the so-called private report was made use of by Sir Albert Kitson, and several other geologists.¹ It was in no way confidential.

E. J. WAYLAND.

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OFFICE,
ENTEBBE, UGANDA.

THE BALLARD DOWN FAULT.

SIR,—May I appeal to Mr. Brydone to give me the credit for a genuine desire to discover the truth, and not to "score off" him, to "blunt his points", or to strike an "attitude"? If I have poached on his preserves in Dorset it was done in innocent unawareness that he was working on tectonics.

I cannot leave his first paragraph uncorrected. I "asserted" nothing new in 1936, with regard to the relative ages of the chalk above and below the Ballard Down Fault that had not already been asserted by Strahan in 1898, and I modified Strahan's assertion by calling attention to the subsequent work of Rowe. After sifting Strahan's statements, and still clearly referring to them, my words were: "The actual observations or facts that we are justified in setting down . . . appear to me to be limited to the following" (*GEOL. MAG.*, 1936, 59). It seems that this could hardly be called an assertion (still less a new one) by anyone who did not desire to misrepresent my views. Those views, for what they are worth, are stated in *GEOL. MAG.*, 1937, 86.

W. J. ARKELL.

DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY,
UNIVERSITY MUSEUM,
OXFORD.

STRENGTH OF THE EARTH'S CRUST.

SIR,—A paper recently read before the Geological Society of London dealt with marine platforms which occur in Cornwall, Wales, and Scotland at heights above present sea-level up to 1,000 feet; and in the discussion the question of the whole country rising as a unit was mentioned. Even if it is eventually established

¹ Murray-Hughes, R., "Notes on the Geological Succession, Tectonics and Economic Geology of the Western Half of Kenya Colony," *Report No. 3. Mining and Geological Dept., Kenya Colony*, 1933.