

### LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

*The Editors do not hold themselves responsible for opinions expressed by their correspondents. No notice is taken of anonymous communications.*

#### Vertical Section of a Coral Atoll

RECENTLY, Captain A. G. N. Wyatt, R.N., in one of H.M. ships, visited Fadiffolu Atoll in the Maldive Islands, and opportunity was taken to run a line of soundings across the atoll and to carry it on into deep water to a distance of some  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the rim.

An interesting feature of this work was the control. While in sight of the islets it was, of course, possible to fix the position of the soundings by cross bearings, but it is probably the first time that such a section has been controlled by taut-wire measurement over the rim of an atoll, so that it can be stated that the depths which were recorded continuously by echo

soundings show a completely accurate determination of the contour of the sea-bed from within the atoll, where depths of rather more than 20 fathoms were obtained, into deep water of more than 1,000 fathoms.

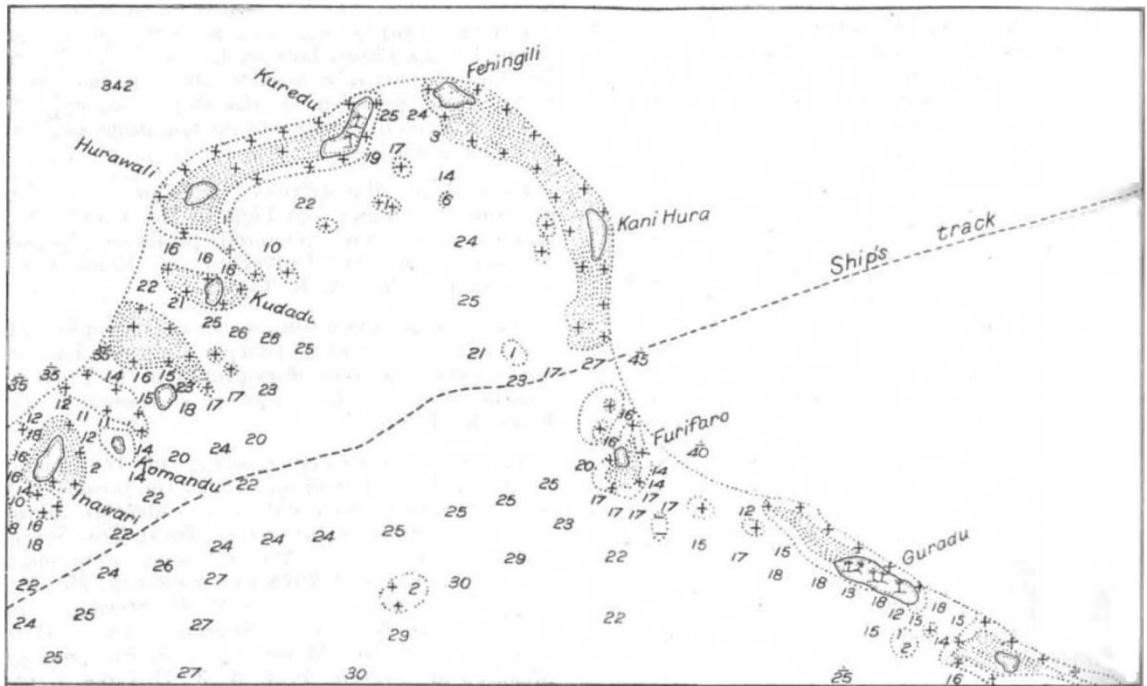
The accompanying sketch is from Admiralty Chart No. 3324, and the section below shows the form of the sea-bed.

Hydrographic Department,  
Admiralty, London, S.W.1.

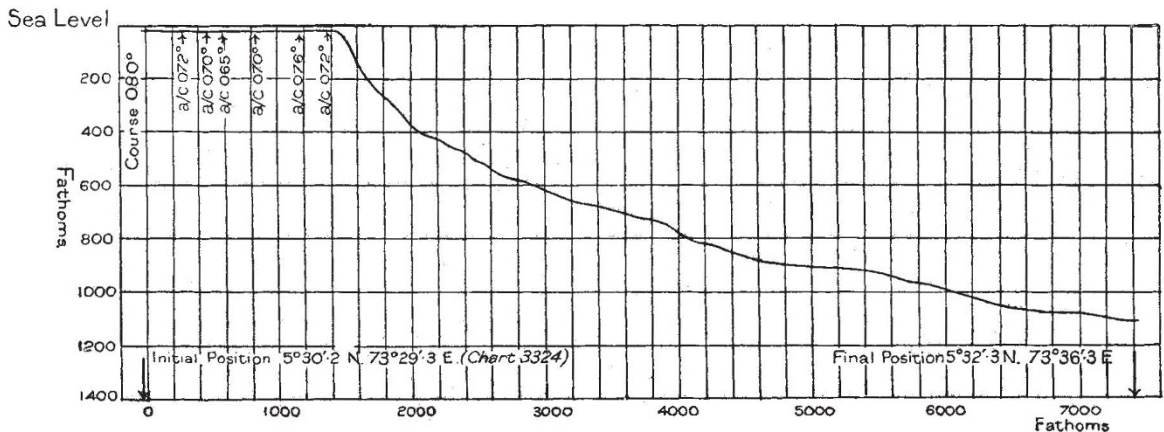
J. A. EDGELL.

#### Fatigue in Selenium Rectifier Photocells

FATIGUE in selenium rectifier photocells is generally marked by a falling off in the current output, during exposure to steady radiation, of cells which have been kept for some time in darkness. The rate of decrease is greatest initially and diminishes until a practically steady current is attained after perhaps several hours. If the cell be again darkened, recovery



MALDIVE ISLANDS. FADIFFOLU ATOLL (NORTHERN PORTION)



MALDIVE ISLANDS. FADIFFOLU ATOLL. SECTION DRAWN ON A LINE 072° THROUGH THE N.E. ENTRANCE TO THE LAGOON.