

With regard to the angle of the cliff-slope, my observations entirely confirm Mr. Carus Wilson's opinion that the cliffs are steeper now than formerly.

W. T. ORD, F.G.S.

BRAMBER,
18 LITLEDOWN ROAD,
BOURNEMOUTH, E.

NOMENCLATURE OF THE HEAVY LIQUIDS.

SIR,—In dealing with laboratory methods for the separation of minerals of different densities, some writers speak of Klein's solution, Brauns' solution, Rohrbach's solution, and Sonstadt's (or Thoulet's) solution. Others use the chemical names of the fluids—cadmium borotungstate, methylene iodide, etc. This double nomenclature is confusing and a tax on the memory, and it would be well if one or other set of names were adhered to and the other abandoned.

In the case of the double iodide solutions, the personal name has the advantage of brevity over the chemical. The desire to give honour where honour is due may also incline some workers to its use. But in this respect we are far from consistent. Bromoform, the most generally useful of all the heavy liquids, might with justice be called Schroeder van der Kolk's liquid. Moreover, Professor Brauns was not the discoverer of methylene iodide, he was merely the first to describe its application to mineralogy; and some of the other authors have even slighter claims to the liquids with which their names are associated.

The chief objection to the personal name is that it has no intrinsic relation to the fluid and suggests none of its properties. The chemical name, on the other hand, specifies the composition of the fluid referred to, and so recalls to mind its physical properties. The chemists will not be persuaded to call methylene iodide Brauns' solution, though they are not free from a similar practice (e.g. Fehling's solution, Condy's fluid, etc.). It would be a good thing if mineralogists would avoid the needless duplication of names and always use the chemical instead of the personal names for the heavy liquids.

G. M. DAVIES.

17 ELMWOOD ROAD, CROYDON.
May 4, 1920.

OBITUARY.

Walter R. Billings.

THROUGH the death of Mr. Walter R. Billings, Canada has lost a citizen of unusual attainments. His death occurred at his home in Ottawa on March 1, in his 71st year. Mr. Billings was an architect by profession and a palæontologist by natural taste and inclination.