

Captain Dutton, although originally inclined to refer the lava-fields of the Western Territories of the United States to "fissure-eruptions," has, since his visit to Mauna Loa, and his study of the floods of basalt that have flowed from that volcano, very candidly confessed that, in view of these later observations, he is no longer prepared to maintain his original position.

If the effusive action taking place at many volcanoes be rightly understood and appreciated—and the recent very interesting researches of Prof. J. D. Dana in the Sandwich Islands have thrown much new and important light on this subject—the theory of "fissure-eruption" will be found to be as unnecessary as it is vague. At some volcanic centres there is a preponderance of explosive action; at others the main result consists in the extrusion of lavacurrents; while in most cases we find a combination of both kinds of action. The Tertiary volcanoes of Scotland, like the existing volcanoes of Iceland, are interesting as exhibiting evidence of both the effusive and the explosive action on the very grandest scale.

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SIR,—Mr. Davison's suggestion in the *GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE* for January, that the British Association should appoint a committee for securing a uniform and intelligible system of quotation of scientific serials is a very good one. Experience, however, shows us that many compilers, from carelessness or conceit, do not trouble to use those intelligible abbreviations which are employed in Bibliographic lists already published, and therefore, *not seeing the necessity* of making their references clear to those outside their subject, they possibly may not take any notice of another list, even though it receive the authority of the British Association.

Mr. Davison proposes a rearrangement of titles of serials, which is decidedly open to very serious objections. The experience of those who have had to deal with large libraries and bibliographic work finds that it is misleading and disadvantageous to alter the plan of the title or use any other than that on the title-page of the volume. If once the rearrangement of titles be permitted, individual idiosyncrasies would come into play, and we should have the same serial in two, three, or more disguises.

Nor can we take the place of meeting as a guide for library reference; but the systematist must take the place of *publication*, this being the method at all large libraries and in all the best catalogues.

The best plan in making references is to give the title of a serial in the perfect sequence in which it is printed on the title-page of the identical volume referred to, abbreviating the necessary words only, so as to be perfectly intelligible to one unacquainted with the serial, and give the name of the place of meeting in full (or if, as is often the case, no place is mentioned, it is as well to insert it in parenthesis), add the place of publication at the end of the quotation, and

the reference will be complete. This method, followed by all who have dealt with the subject in an extensive and practical way, is found to be the only one that will work satisfactorily.

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SIR,—Concerning the manner of quoting works of reference, I also have to make complaint, namely, that authors sometimes quote, as if it were a complete work, a paper which may be part of some larger publication.

Authors, however, are not always to blame in this matter, because it arises from the cause upon which I have another complaint, namely, that some of the Societies who issue Proceedings, etc., often fail to state on the "Authors' copies" anything at all concerning the fact that the papers are extracts from their publications.

Some of our County Field Clubs are adepts at withholding information. Sometimes they append no date at all to their publications; while their authors' copies suffer, in addition to the omission mentioned, from absence of date, absence of number of volume, and changed paging. I notice that even the Geological Society omits to give the volume number upon its "authors' copies."

I would suggest that the Council of the Geological Society first rectify this matter, and then issue a strongly-worded circular to every Secretary or Editor of every scientific society in the kingdom drawing attention to these omissions, and stating what is required.

Since it is the habit of some booksellers and private individuals to break up odd volumes of Proceedings into their different papers, I would suggest that it is also recommended that these data be printed at the heading of every paper in every volume of Proceedings; at present such information is lost if one happens to buy the parts of volumes so treated.

Date of papers.—I cannot agree with Mr. Davison (GEOL. MAG. Dec. III. Vol. VI. No. I. p. 48) that the date of reading be taken as the date of a paper. A new species must date from the time when it is figured, and this cannot happen until the publication of the volume. If authors' copies be printed in advance, they should be so dated, both themselves and in the volume.

S. S. BUCKMAN.

STONEHOUSE, Jan. 7, 1889.

PROFESSOR BLAKE'S "MONIAN SYSTEM."

SIR,—Professor Blake's reply to my "Notes" on his "Monian System" requires a few brief comments.

Prof. Blake now admits the presence of true schists as derived fragments in the Upper Archæan of Anglesey; but he attempts to neutralize their effect by alleging examples where such fragments occur in the upper part of the formation from which they are derived. He says, "The conglomerate of Bull Bay is made of the underlying quartz rock." But he has to prove that the quartz rock was not of contemporaneous origin, if the cases are to be parallel.