

there was in the earlier writings always more than a suggestion of an abundance of iron, and those who apply the term now to distinctly ferruginous weathering products may be no nearer heresy than those who, following up the work of Max Bauer and Dr. Warth, insist on the presence of free aluminium hydroxides as the test of laterite. To me the term seems to be now of little value, and unless we can agree to apply it only to such materials as were described by Buchanan as possessing qualities that make them workable as a substitute for brick, I do not see why it should be retained. Mr. Crook tells me that I am not justified from a scientific standpoint in suggesting that highly aluminous laterite should be called bauxite. I follow Mr. Crook's argument, but since the following phrases occur in the papers by Sir Thomas Holland and Dr. Warth & F. J. Warth published in the *GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE* for 1903—"laterite . . . agrees in essential characters with bauxite"—"the essential chemical similarity between bauxite and laterite"—"laterites in situ which are bauxites"—"these bauxites in blocks and in powder"—"laterite is bauxite in various degrees of purity"—I feel that I am justified in advocating simplicity of diction as opposed to the redefining of a term the utility of which to geologists is doubtful.

The engineers, even if they have misapplied the term, are now the chief users of it, and weight of numbers will compensate such lack of scientific accuracy as exists in the eyes of the world at large. In local publications geologists placed like myself must make use of the term in order that local readers may know what is being discussed, and it was the objection in the Imperial Institute Bulletin to such a local use of the term that led me to write in the first instance, since I foresaw that the same might happen to me also. I believe that all geologists are agreed in aiming at simplicity of terminology. Can any geologist who has kept abreast of the literature use the term 'laterite' now without feeling an obligation to explain what he means by it? And is it not simpler to say directly what we mean without using a term whose original significance we have discarded?

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January 19, 1910.

#### CAPE GEOLOGY.

SIR,—Will you allow me to point out that your reviewer has made a mistake in his otherwise very kind remarks on the book on Cape Geology written by Mr. Du Toit and myself? He says that "no references are given to any of the authorities quoted": a glance through the book will show that references to a considerable number of publications, in fact whenever such a course seemed desirable, are given in the foot-notes. In a book of this sort the omission of references would be a very serious fault, so the oversight on the part of the reviewer should be corrected.

ARTHUR W. ROGERS.

FRASERBURG, CAPE COLONY.  
January 1, 1910.