

been worked on Mindanao, and some gold has been obtained in a region of schistose rocks. The Sulu group consists mainly of volcanic rocks and coral formations.

11. MUSEUM OF PRACTICAL GEOLOGY, JERMYN STREET, S.W.—A Short Guide to the Museum (pp. 48, and price 1*d.*) has just been issued. It contains useful plans of the several floors of the Museum, and descriptions of the principal objects exhibited, including minerals, rocks, fossils, geological maps, and models. Many changes and improvements have been made in the display and arrangement of specimens since 1896, when the last handbook to the Museum was published. Space might have been found in this new Guide for a Table of Contents.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE USE OF THE WORD 'LATERITE'.

SIR,—I have just seen in the last number of the Imperial Institute Bulletin (1909, vol. vii, No. i) a review of Professor J. B. Harrison's *Geology of the Goldfields of British Guiana*, in which the reviewer takes exception to Professor Harrison's use of the word 'laterite' as being "wider than is either usual or desirable" (p. 134 of the Bulletin), and the reviewer states that only products of weathering containing free aluminium hydroxide in hot, moist climates should be considered as laterite.

In the light of the recent literature on the subject, the proposition that it is desirable to restrict the term 'laterite' to that product of weathering in hot, moist climates which contains free aluminium hydroxide carries great weight; indeed, I had almost said that it is the counsel of perfection, one attribute of which it certainly possesses, namely, that it is impracticable. The reason of this is that the term 'laterite' has been used, in the Malay Peninsula at least, for many years by a large body of engineers for what are essentially masses of iron oxide replacing portions of weathered rock and filling fissures in such rocks near the surface. This (Malayan) laterite is most abundant in weathered schists, and is largely used for public works. Small quantities of aluminium hydroxide may or may not be present in these masses of ironstone, but that question is of no immediate importance to the engineer, who values the stone for its hardness.

I have talked this matter over with one of the senior officers of the Public Works Department and he agrees with me that 'laterite' is an engineer's rather than a geologist's term, covering rocks of varying composition; and I am strongly inclined to think that we should do well to call rock that we say are bauxites by their accepted mineral name, instead of attempting to lay down what shall and what shall not be called 'laterite'.

It is clear that the reviewer of Professor Harrison's book does not appreciate the difficulties awaiting those who attempt to instruct engineers in the use of the term 'laterite'. It is a task that would,

I think, end in only unnecessary friction, a result such as would be expected were a geologist to insist on the controllers of the asbestos industry in Canada labelling their goods 'fibrous serpentine' or 'chrysotile'.

J. B. SCRIVENOR..

BATU GAJAH,
FEDERATED MALAY STATES.
July 4, 1909.

OBITUARY.

EDWARD DELMAR MORGAN.

BORN 1840.

DIED MAY 18, 1909.

BORN at Stratford, in Essex, in 1840, Mr. Morgan was well known as an ardent geographer who had travelled much in Russia, in Persia, Central Asia, in the Congo region, and East Africa. For many years he was a resident in St. Petersburg. Since returning to England he lived at 15, Roland Gardens, S. W., and at Effingham House, Copthorne Crawley. Here he undertook the duties of Honorary Secretary of the Hakluyt Society, and edited volumes of *Early Voyages to Madagascar and the Mascarene Islands* (with notes on the extinct birds the Dodo and Solitaire); also of *Travels in Russia and Persia*. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society in 1869, and had served on the Council.—*Geographical Journal*, July, 1909.

JOSEPH FREDERICK WHITEAVES, LL.D., F.G.S., ETC.

BORN DECEMBER 26, 1835.

DIED AUGUST 8, 1909.

We regret to record the death at Ottawa, in his 74th year, of Dr. Whiteaves, Palæontologist, Zoologist, and Assistant Director to the Geological Survey of Canada. In October, 1906, we published in the *GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE* a full account up to that date of the life and work of Dr. Whiteaves, together with a portrait. He continued his researches on palæontological and zoological subjects until the close of his life, and we are glad to add that he was awarded the Lyell Medal by the Council of the Geological Society in 1907.

MISCELLANEOUS.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.—Under the Irish Universities Act of 1908 the Dublin Commissioners advertize appointments to be made to the various professorships. The differences in the stipends are remarkable. Experimental Physics is estimated to be of the value of £800 a year, Chemistry £750, Zoology £600, and Geology £500.
