

It is many years since Sir Thomas Holland suggested that bacteria might be concerned in bringing about the changes by which various rocks are converted into laterite. In the literature of the subject this is referred to many times.

Closer study of the laterization process will reveal the fact that lowering of the water table by denudation has not "aided in the formation of the lateritoids" in the plateau referred to, but stopped it completely.

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THE SHELL OF *CORNULITES*.

SIR,—Dr. Bather's communication on the structure of the shell of *Cornulites serpularius* (GEOL. MAG., Vol. LX, No. 714, Dec. 1923, p. 542) indicates that he has not yet made up his mind about the zoological position of this genus. It may therefore be of interest to remark that since the publication of my paper on certain Girvan species of the genus to which Dr. Bather refers, Mr. F. W. Chapman, of the National Museum, Melbourne, has written to me that he had some time previously arrived at my conclusion, and he has referred me to his paper (*Proc. Roy. Soc. Victoria*, vol. xxxi, N.S., pt. ii, 1919, art. x, p. 321), in which he states: "The present writer holds that the evidence for the annelid nature of these tubes is quite convincing, since the internal microscopic structure of the shell as shown by G. R. Vine is identical in many points with some living tubicolar forms belonging to the family *Serpulidæ*, and this is further strengthened by the frequent occurrence of attachment in the earlier stage to foreign bodies." Further, Professor W. N. Parks in his recent description of a species of *Cornulites* from the Toronto district (*21st Ann. Report Ontario Dept. Mines*, vol. xxxi, pt. ix, No. 4, 1923, p. 37) places the genus in the order Tubicola of the Vermes without hesitation. With regard to Dr. Bather's figures of the internal structure of *Cornulites serpularius*, the characters which he depicts (without stating the enlargement) have been long known to me, but unfortunately none of the Girvan specimens (which belong to other species) lent themselves to section-cutting. Dr. Bather correctly states that the tube of *Cornulites* does not consist of *separate* imbricating rings, but is a perfectly continuous structure. With that statement I am in complete accord, as Dr. Bather will see if he reads my paper carefully, for I do not adopt Ludwig's opinion. The distinction between the imperfectly known and unsatisfactorily defined genus *Tentaculites* and the genus *Cornulites* is "a problem for future solution".

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