

carelessly. In his *Minéralogie de la France et de ses Colonies*, iii, p. 342, Mons. A. Lacroix says: "Aussi me semble-t-il difficile de considérer la bauxite comme un minéral défini; il est bien plus probable que les produits désignés sous ce nom sont constitués suivant les cas par divers hydroxides d'alumine colloïdes mélangés à des hydroxides correspondants de fer et à diverses impuretés, argile, sable quartzeux, etc. C'est en réalité une véritable roche." The last sentence of the above quotation makes further defence unnecessary.

This question of the use of the term 'laterite' is one in which there is abundant room for quiet discussion. My view may be extreme on the one side—indeed, is, I suppose, without question extreme in that I would like to see the term left to engineers to treat as they wish. Nevertheless, the adoption by the majority of geologists of the proposed 'aluminous' definition would not lead to a crisis, and I cannot believe that anyone or anything would suffer harm thereby. This seems to me to be an admirable opportunity for dropping the term altogether, and for substituting in its stead the term 'bauxite' when the composition justifies it; when this is not the case I would advocate the simple term 'decomposed gneiss', or whatever the rock may be, it being taken for granted that the production of aluminium hydroxides in quantity is a feature of tropical weathering.

J. B. SCRIVENOR.

BATU GAJAH,
FEDERATED MALAY STATES.
June 15, 1910.

OBITUARY.

WILLIAM PHIPPS BLAKE, D.Sc., F.G.S.

BORN JUNE 1, 1826.

DIED — 1910.

W. P. BLAKE was born in New York, and educated at Yale Scientific School. In 1853 he was appointed geologist and mineralogist on the U.S. Pacific Railroad Expedition, later on he was geologist to the California State Board of Agriculture, in 1864 he became professor of mineralogy and geology in the College of California, and at the time of his death he was emeritus professor of metallurgy, geology, and mining, and director of the School of Mines in the University of Arizona. His more important papers relate to the geology and mineralogy of California and Arizona; but he had made observations on the glaciers of Alaska, on the geology of the Island of Yesso, Japan, and was the author of a volume on *The Production of the Precious Metals*, 1869 (see *GEOL. MAG.* for 1868, p. 284, 1869, p. 361, and 1874, p. 464). He was elected a Fellow of the Geological Society of London in 1876.

MISCELLANEOUS.

MR. H. B. MAUFE, B.A., F.G.S., of the Geological Survey of Great Britain, has been appointed Director of the Geological Survey of Southern Rhodesia lately instituted by the Chartered Company.