

ZIRKELITE—A QUESTION OF PRIORITY.

IN the *Mineralogical Magazine*, Vol. XI., pp. 86-88 (read June 18, 1895) is described a new mineral containing zirconium, titanium, lime, iron, etc., under the name of Zirkelite. This paper was prepared by my friend Dr. E. Hussak and Mr. G. T. Prior.

Later Mr. Prior (l. c., pp. 180-183, Read Nov. 17, 1896) published an analysis of the same mineral.

I wish to protest against the use of the name Zirkelite for this mineral on the ground of the prior use of it to designate a commonly occurring rock belonging to the basaltic family.

When two subjects are so intimately connected as mineralogy and petrography it does not seem to be for the interest of science that names should be duplicated in them. So true is this that I abandoned the name Rosenbuschite, which I had given to a class of rocks in honor of Professor Rosenbusch, because only a few weeks previously it had been employed to designate a new mineral.

The term Zirkelite was used by me in 1887, or seven years before it was taken by Messrs. Hussak and Prior. (See Preliminary Description of the Perioditites, Gabbros, Diabases and Andesites of Minnesota. Bulletin No. 2; Geological Survey of Minnesota, 1887, pp. 30-32.) It was used to designate the commonly occurring altered conditions of basaltic glassy lavas which are often called diabase glass, etc. Zirkelite occurs forming the entire mass of thin dikes, and the exterior parts of many dikes of diabase and melaphyr, as well as the surface of old lava flows like the melaphyrs and diabases of Lake Superior, Newfoundland and elsewhere. Zirkelite holds the same relation to tachylite that diabase and melaphyr do to basalt, *i. e.*, an older and altered type. The macroscopic and microscopic characters of this rock were given in the locality cited above.

The term Zirkelite was again used in the same way in my Report to the Geological Survey of Michigan for 1891-1892 (1893, pp. 30, 97, 138, etc.).

It was also published in my classification of rocks given in the Catalogue of the Michigan College of Mines (Michigan Mining School) 1891-

1892, p. 104; 1892-1894, Table XI.; 1894-1896, Table XI.

Further, the term Zirkelite is defined in accordance with my usage in Loewinson-Lessing's Petrographisches Lexikon, 1893, p. 252; and accounts of it are given in the Neues Jahrbuch für Mineralogie, 1893, II., p. 292, and in Kemp's Handbook of Rocks, 1896, p. 170.

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SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE.

Catalogus Mammalium tam viventium quam fossilium. DR. E. L. TROUESSART. New Ed. Fascic. II., Carnivora, Pinnipedia, Rodentia (Protrogomorpha and Sciuromorpha), pp. 219-452, June, 1897. Fascic. III., Rodentia (concluded), pp. 453-664, Oct., 1897. Berlin, R. Friedländer und Sohn. Price, \$2.50 each part.

The second and third parts of Trouessart's 'Catalogue of Mammals, living and fossil,' have come to hand and carry the work through the Carnivora and Rodentia. These parts are less satisfactory than the first, and cannot be said to represent the present state of knowledge of the groups treated, particularly with respect to American forms. Among the latter many synonyms are accorded full specific rank, many good species are degraded to synonymy, and many forms are transposed in a manner that shows an absence of appreciation of their affinities. And when it comes to the geographic distribution of American species the most astonishing inaccuracies creep in, as might be expected.

In matters of nomenclature Dr. Trouessart seems to be a law unto himself, and consistency does not seem to be one of his canons. In using Brisson he quotes the pre-Linnæan edition (1756), which has no status in nomenclature, instead of the edition of 1762; while in quoting Linnæus he takes the opposite course and uses the 12th edition (1766) instead of the 10th (1758), which is accepted the world over as marking the beginning of Zoological nomenclature. With respect to Brisson's genera it will be interesting to know what rules, if any, led to the adoption of *Hydrochaerus* and the re-