Hard Stuff

Jonathan W. Hooper

When soils are old and weathered profusely
and kaolinitic clays are present diffusely,
then with additions of iron, aluminum, and time,
one does not know what one is likely to find.

Perhaps a soft pedon, hyperthermic and cuddly,
or concretions and mottles which appear and go suddenly.
But a collection of sesquioxides can only lead to a mess!
Will they be plinthic, placic, or ortstein at best?

You see aluminum and iron make things in irregular duplication
such as glaebules, pisoliths, and other ferruginous inventions.
But the presence of Goethite or Gibbsite in mass
means that things have been cooking and are likely to last.

Now a scientist of soil is not to be mislead,
his search for new horizons is his butter and bread.
But this process of irreversible induration
sends many to change their chosen occupation.

The word laterite says it all, I insist!
But my teachers declare, the word no longer exists.
And so in all seriousness I pose the following question
Tell me, can I use the term, “Ironstonation”?

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The Soil Song

F.D. Hole ’85

It’s dark vital spark;
where the plants are seen

It’s soft it’s full of above is green

and we hear the meadow lark.