Water-surface is, for the needs of man, so unlike land-surface, that it is natural enough to include all water-basins under the single geographic term, 'lakes.' Wherever they occur, — in narrow mountain-valleys or on broad, level plains; on divides or on deltas; in solid rock or in alluvium, — they are all given one name. But if we in imagination lengthen our life so that we witness the growth of a river-system as we now watch the growth of plants, we must then as readily perceive and as little confuse the several physiographic kinds of lakes as we now distinguish the cotyledons, the leaves, the galls, and the flowers, of a quickly growing annual that produces all these forms in appropriate order and position in the brief course of a single summer. W. M. DAVIS.

Cambridge, Mass., Sept 7.

Corruption of American Geographic Names.

MR. MURDOCK'S friendly criticism and confirmatory note on the pronunciation of 'Arkansas,' in the last *Science*, is gratifying from the fact that it will help disseminate a proper understanding of that word. But 'Arkansas' is only one of hundreds of geographic names which have been corrupted under our very noses, so to speak, and I believe it behooves all educators to assist in their correction. In the West we have many classes of descriptive geographic names, — first, words in the Indian language, which the Spanish, French, or English (and sometimes all) have endeavored to represent phonetically in their own language, such as 'Ouachita,' 'Washita,' 'Wichita,' etc., all derived from the name of a tribe of Indians first noted by La Salle, and which has now been applied in its modifications to six rivers (not including creeks) in Indian Territory, Arkansas, and Texas, two mountain areas, and innumerable political divisions, such as counties, post-offices, etc.; second, descriptive names. To the credit of the Spaniards, it must be said that they seldom adopted Indian names, but gave either descriptive names, such as 'Sabinas,' 'Ulmas,' 'Puercos,' 'Colorado,' often of the forest-growth and character of sediment of rivers; or religious names, such as 'Corpus Christi,' 'Vera Cruz;' or sometimes a combination of both, such as 'Sangre de Cristo' Mountains.

Most of our American names in the West, and especially the South-west, are simply abominable. They are either corruptions of the French, Indian, or Spanish, or indefinite appellatives, often of lewd and repulsive meaning. This is especially true of the names given by my fellow-southerners, as they followed the law of migrations along degrees of latitude. In central and western Texas there is another corruption which is more misleading than that of mispronunciation or misspelling. The generic topographic terms are all erroneously used for the subgeneric, such as 'river' for 'creek' (or what can only be properly expressed by the Spanish *arroyo*), and 'mountain,' 'peak,' etc., for 'knolls,' 'buttes,' or 'mesas.' For instance: while there is not a true mountain in Texas east of the Pecos River, there are no less than a dozen 'Round Mountains,' 'Pilot Peaks,' 'Comanche Peaks,' 'Hog and Packsaddle Mountains,' etc., in central Texas, none of which in any way are entitled to the dignity of the terms, and which can only be described as buttes and mesas of secondary proportions. The creeks and rivers are either 'Hog' creeks, 'Muddy,' 'Snake,' 'Buffalo,' 'Dry,' 'Indian,' or 'Post Oaks.'

Not only have these corruptions been going on in the past, but they are being perpetrated at present, and our government publications are innocently the chief instruments in so doing. A remarkable instance came under my observation two years ago. While sitting upon the stone that marks the north-west corner of the State of Kansas, examining some geological specimens, and conversing with Texan cowboy friends who had 'wintered' near there a year or two, I inquired the nearest post-office. One of them informed me that a [tent] village had just been established a few miles distant, and that its name was 'Bueno.' This word, from my past experience on the Texan frontier, I knew to constitute nine tenths of the cow-boy's knowledge of pigeon Spanish (the other tenth being 'cuss' words), and that it had been imported from the Rio Grande by him into Kansas, and that the 'short-horns' (the cowboys' term of inferiority for the Kansas settler) had been fascinated by it, and applied it to their new town. A capital idea, I thought, until I looked up the name of the town in the latest post-office guide, when, to my horror, I found my pet Spanish word 'bueno' anglicized into 'Wano.' The other instance of governmental perpetration is on the topographic maps of both the Post-Office and War Departments, and Geological and Coast Surveys, where these dry creeks continue to appear as rivers, and buttes as mountains, etc.

Since my arrival in Arkansas, I have been delighted to find numerous minor French geographic names which have not been corrupted, such as 'L'Eau Frais,' 'Terre Noir,' 'Antoine,' and other streams; and from the oldest Anglo-American inhabitants I learn that nearly every geographic feature of southern Arkansas was named, not by French missionaries, but by the trappers and *voyageurs*, who had traded with the Indians for a hundred years or more, and who dominated here almost until the State was admitted to the Union (1836). Many descendants of these old French pioneers inhabit south-eastern Arkansas, and it is a source of gratification that the Anglo-American settlers here, however illiterate, pronounce the names with approximate correctness, even if their attempts at spelling them are oftentimes ridiculous. ROB'T T. HILL.

Ouachita River, Ark., Sept. 8.

Romantic Love and Personal Beauty.

THE latest contribution to the theory of evolution is the attempt of Mr. Finck to show that the phase of human character known as romantic (pre-nuptial) love is strictly modern, having developed within the last 1,000 years. The book in which the argument is set forth, recently reviewed in this magazine, is a remarkable combination, which one hardly knows whether to accept as a joke or in earnest. In this one work we find a scientific discussion of love as found in plants and animals, theories as to its origin and import; we find many surprising statements concerning modern society, such as that there can never be too much of flirtation, since it is one of the most valuable discoveries of the English people; that beauty in children is dependent upon the pre-nuptial love of their parents; we find directions to the maiden how to win her lover, directions to the love-sick swain as to his cure, directions to the lover how to kiss, etc.; the whole making such a curious combination that we hardly know whether to set the book aside with a laugh, or to regard it as an important contribution to knowledge. The latter feeling, however, predominates. The fundamental proposition of the discussion, viz., the strictly modern nature of romantic love, is one of great importance, giving as it does entirely new thoughts upon certain phases of modern life. It certainly merits the discussion given it, as well as the further discussion which is sure to follow the study of Mr. Finck's argument.

One cannot read this discussion of romantic love without acknowledging that Mr. Finck has made out a very strong case. The facts which are brought out plainly show that there has been a gradual but great change in the pre-nuptial relations of the sexes, and as a result a great change in the sentiments which precede marriage. A romantic love, which was curbed and repressed by the customs of ancient nations, has, under the influence of modern society, expanded into a greatly exaggerated form, until now it is the theme of about all novels, plays, and poems, occupies largely the thoughts of all young people, and is perhaps the most powerful lever for influencing the lives of mankind. But while we may go thus far with the theory, and recognize that ancient life and literature had very little of love, though modern life and literature are full of it, and that it is only modern society that recognizes the desirability of love-matches, the interpretations which may be drawn from the facts are varied. Mr. Finck interprets these facts as representing the development of a new factor in man's nature, and one which was not and could not have been present in earlier periods of history. It is at least questionable whether this interpretation be the true one.

The author is doubtless right in pointing out the impossibility of any feeling akin to the higher phases of love in the lower races of men. Romantic love is a feeling of high sensitiveness, and only those with highly developed sensibilities can experience it in its fullest degree. Indeed, the bulk of civilized people to-day are not capable of having very lofty experiences in this line. The love which Mr. Finck is writing about is largely ideal rather than actual. It belongs to emotional poets rather than to the common people.