

room had been cultivated successfully in these beds for two years. Five persons ate the supposed new variety and enjoyed its flavor but were almost immediately stricken with paralysis, their lives being saved only by the prompt action of their family physician. This indicates that it is very unwise to eat or sell any mushroom appearing in mushroom beds except the ordinary cultivated variety with white cap and pink gills. A description of this new poisonous mushroom has been prepared for immediate publication in *Mycologia*.

THE twenty-fifth session of the Marine Biological Laboratory of Stanford University at Pacific Grove, Cal., will begin on May 22, and continue six weeks. Courses will be offered in general zoology and embryology. Provision will also be made for students who are prepared to undertake advanced work in zoology. To investigators who are engaged in research, the use of the laboratory is offered free of charge. The laboratory will be under the general supervision of Associate Professor J. O. Snyder. Further information may be obtained from Mr. Snyder, or from the directors, Charles H. Gilbert, professor of zoology, or Oliver P. Jenkins, professor of physiology, Stanford University, Cal.

THE German Congress for Internal Medicine in Warsaw was planned for May 1 and 2. Last year a similar congress for surgery was held in Brussels. At this congress the diseases which are of particular importance at this time, especially typhoid, typhus, cholera, diarrhea, diseases of the heart and nephritis, will be discussed.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS

THE contest of the will of the late Amos E. Eno is now on trial in a New York court. If the will is sustained Columbia University will receive over \$7,000,000.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY has received \$10,699 from the estate of Miss Rebecca W. Brown, to be added to the fund created by her brother, Buckminster Brown, for the foundation of a professorship of orthopedic surgery.

PROFESSOR CHARLES H. RICHARDSON, of Syracuse University, has given to the department of mineralogy his private collection of minerals and rocks, which is valued at \$5,000. The collection is being relabeled and placed on exhibition in new cases in the natural history building. The collection will bear the name of the donor.

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY will require two years of college preparation as a condition of entrance into the medical college beginning in 1918.

THE degree of bachelor of arts will hereafter be awarded to students of Columbia College, whether or not they have studied Latin, the degree of bachelor of science being abolished.

DR. DAVID STARR JORDAN, chancellor of Stanford University, has retired with the title of chancellor emeritus.

THE council of New York University has appointed Dr. Samuel A. Brown to be dean of the medical department of the university.

THE summer session of the University of California, which last year enrolled 5,388 students, for its session this year, from June 26 to August 5, will include among the visiting members of its faculty B. M. Allen, professor of zoology, University of Kansas; E. R. Clark, professor of anatomy in the University of Missouri; Moses Gomberg, professor of organic chemistry, University of Michigan; D. S. Hill, director of the Bureau of Educational Research, New Orleans, and E. J. Wilczynski, professor of mathematics, Chicago.

In the department of natural science of the Michigan State Normal College at Ypsilanti, Dr. Bertram G. Smith has been promoted from assistant professor to associate professor of zoology.

DR. ERNEST G. MARTIN, of Harvard University, will succeed Professor Oliver P. Jenkins, as head of the physiological department of Stanford University.

DR. ROBERT M. OGDEN, professor of psychology in the University of Kansas, has been elected head of the department of education in Cornell University and will take up his work

there at the beginning of the next academic year. Dr. William S. Foster, now instructor in psychology in Cornell University, has been made assistant professor of education.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

THE ORIGIN OF PACIFIC ISLAND FAUNAS

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: In the current number of SCIENCE (April 14) I read with interest the abstract of a paper by Dr. Pilsbry on the land shells of the Pacific islands as a guide to former geographic conditions. The author rejects "the hypothesis that Pacific snails reached the islands by oversea drift" because it "leaves the absence of higher snails unexplained."

It is perhaps dangerous to criticize an argument from an abstract, but as this point has been cited in other cases where I know it involved a fallacy, I venture to suggest that Doctor Pilsbry may also have overlooked the fact that the older a given group is the longer time there has been for the chances of oversea dispersal, hence the greater the probability of its reaching the more remote islands. Obviously a group which has not become dominant until the later Tertiary has but a very small chance of having reached remote islands as compared with a group that was dominant during the Mesozoic or earlier. Certain features in the Mesozoic and early Tertiary climates would tend to increase greatly the chances of oversea transport, and a third explanation might be cited in the differences of habitat which would tend to facilitate the drift dispersal of some types more than others. That the higher types should be found in the larger islands and those nearer to the continental platforms is quite to be expected; and by the law of chances, where only a limited number of primary stocks of the more ancient groups have reached the more distant islands, one ought not to expect to find any of the groups of comparatively recent dominance.

With many if not most groups of land invertebrates, as with the land vertebrates, the evolution and dispersal of the modern dominant fauna took place during the Tertiary, and

much of it I suspect rather late in the Tertiary. But, as also with vertebrates, the wide oceanic dispersal of the older or lower groups may be due more to their greater facilities for dispersal than to their greater antiquity.

W. D. MATHEW

BELGIAN HARE, A MISLEADING MISNOMER

IN a paper entitled "Anatomical Adaptations in the Thoracic Limbs of the California Pocket Gopher and Other Rodents,"¹ Charles Daniel Holliger has identified the so-called Belgian hare as *Lepus europaeus* (p. 449). At various places in the text and particularly in the last paragraph of the summary (p. 489) he comes to the conclusion that "domestication reduces specialization" and that "the typical cursorial modifications [of the Jack rabbit] have either disappeared or have been much reduced in the Belgian hare."

As a matter of fact the "Belgian hare" is a domestic variety of the European rabbit and the striking differences observed by Holliger are due to inherent generic differences, the Jack rabbit belonging to the genus *Lepus* and the European rabbit and with it the Belgian hare belonging to the rather conspicuously different genus *Oryctolagus*.² Or to put it the other way around, the striking differences observed by Holliger (see especially table p. 487) are part of those on which the genera *Lepus* and *Oryctolagus* are founded.

M. W. LYON, JR.

GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

THE VAPOR PRESSURE OF SOLUTIONS

IN SCIENCE of January 14 last Arthur Tabor Jones describes an apparatus for observing the change in the volume of solutions in the presence of the solvent owing to the difference in the vapor pressures. He could not determine the rate of change owing to the roughness of the bell jar. The following apparatus has

¹ *Univ. Calif. Publ.*, Vol. 13, pp. 447-497, March 7, 1916.

² See Lyon, *Smiths. Miscell. Coll.*, Vol. 45, pp. 323, 406, pl. 98, June 15, 1904; and Miller, *Cat. Museum West. Europe Brit. Mus.*, p. 485, November 23, 1912.