the glacier at the cirque front, even dashing a little upward on the opposite mountain side; and then, rushing down the steep glacial cascade where it cut off séracs and clogged crévasses, it divided on the convex surface of the lower glacier and overran both lateral moraines but failed to reach the mid-extremity of the tongue on the floor of the Allée blanche. The total distance traversed by the slide was about 8 kilometers according to the map, but only 5 according to the text; the total descent was from altitude 4,300 to 1,500 meters. The time of descent of the first slide on Nov. 14, as estimated by eye witnesses, was between 2 and 3 minutes; the velocity of movement was the greater because winter snows had not yet fallen on the ice in the great cirque. The volume of the slide was roughly estimated at between 4,000,000 and 5,000,000 cubic meters. Dust of rock and ice was spread by the wind blast of the slide, right and left of its course on the glacier and the mountain flanks, for a width of a kilometer or more; trees were overturned by the blast outside of the lower lateral moraines; a temporary lakelet was formed where the right lower branch of the slide, crossing the trough floor and ascending a little on the farther side, obstructed the Dora Baltea. The slide was evidently one of those spasmodic efforts by which the Alpine mountain faces, over-steepened by glacial sapping, try from time to time to regain more moderate slopes, such as they had in Preglacial time; but the volume of the fallen rock was but a trifling fraction of the spur from which it was detached.

W. M. D.

EXTRA-MUNDANE LIFE: A COMMENT

To the Editor of Science: In discussing the highly speculative subject of intelligent life in other worlds it is well to keep in mind two serviceable precepts of scientific reasoning: First, failure to prove that A is B is not a proof that A is not B. Thus, failure to furnish evidence that other worlds are inhabited by intelligent creatures is not to be construed as proof that such extramundane life does not exist. Second, of two discordant propositions: A is B; A is C; one of which must be true and for neither of which any evidence is forthcoming, we are intellectually bound to accord hospitality—not adoption but hospitality—to the one which is marked by the greater likelihood. Viewed without anthropometric bias this earth is, as we know, one of the less important members of the system to which it primarily belongs—a system dominated by a single undersized yellow star. If we had a time word corresponding to the space word *parsec,* and also had more definite geological knowledge of the past and future duration of this planet, we might express quantitatively the fact that the human race is relatively a mere episode in the history of the planet itself; while our increasing knowledge of the Milky Way with its encircled disk of stars must convince us that our solar system is, in turn, only an incident in the history of the stellar system to which it belongs. Which is more probable, that this one insignificant planet is the only world in which creatures capable of feeling and knowing have originated and developed, or that multitudes of other worlds have afforded both conditions and cause for life, including intelligent life, and are the homes of beings of both physical and mental parts. The latter supposition seems to be invested with incomparably greater likelihood.

Ellen Hayes

Wellesley, Mass.,
May 22

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

The Health of the Industrial Worker. By Edgar L. Collis and Major Greenwood, containing a chapter on Reclamation of the Disabled by Arthur J. Collis and an introduction by Sir George Newman. London, J. & A. Churchill, 1921.

The appearance of the first English book on industrial hygiene could not have been more happily timed. With a combination of an industrial depression and a glutted labor market there is a widespread tendency among American managers to scrap the elaborate personnel machinery established during the war—"to safeguard the health and capacity of the