

its numerous variations and mutations, dates back to Miocene time and is abundant to-day along the Atlantic coast, ranging from Florida to Massachusetts, and locally on the southwest coast of Maine and southern shores of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Bay of Chaleur, from low water to 8 fathoms. *Ilyanassa obsoleta* also ranges from Miocene to Recent. Both of these species have been reported from well drillings on Long Island, including east New York City. They are from Pleistocene sediments (Veatch, Merrill, etc.). *I. obsoleta* is to-day one of the common small species of the east coast and ranges from Nova Scotia to Tampa, west Florida, from littoral to 2 fathoms.

The specimens are interesting in that they indicate marine sedimentation within the limits of New York City in Pleistocene or Glacial time. A further and exact study of the sediments of the section at the locality where the shells were discovered might reveal at what stage of that time the marine deposition took place and if the sea occupied the region where the shells were found or if they were transported by flowing water from a near beach and dumped with the drift and boulders. The officials and workmen connected with the Federal Reserve Bank are to be commended for the collection and interest which they have shown, the result of which is the establishment of a new locality of Pleistocene marine sediments in the New York City area.

KATHERINE VAN WINKLE PALMER
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

EVOLUTION IN WEST VIRGINIA

By special invitation, Honorable William Jennings Bryan recently addressed the legislature of West Virginia while it was in session at Charleston. Following this address Mr. Bryan made a tour of the state and gave anti-evolution addresses in several of the larger cities.

A bill prohibiting the teaching of evolution in all state-supported schools had already been introduced into the legislature. Just before the adjournment of the regular session, in the latter part of April, an advocate of the measure attempted to have the bill brought before the House, but the motion was lost and the bill was never allowed to come to vote.

It is stated that the address of Mr. Bryan in Charleston made practically no impression upon the members of the legislature.

One of the bitterest and most active opponents of the teaching of evolution, a minister of Morgantown, has been called to a higher sphere of usefulness(?) in Cincinnati and it is hoped that the anti-evolution agitation in the state has been permanently disposed of.

A. M. REESE

THE REPORTED ERUPTION OF LASSEN PEAK

SEVERAL times within the early months of this year Lassen Peak has been reported by newspapers of that region as in volcanic eruption. To settle conflicting reports I requested George Olsen and Charley Yori, well-known mountaineers of California and Alaska, to climb snow-clad Lassen Peak and determine the record, if any, made by the fall of volcanic ashes in the winter snow. Their letter of May 2 states: "There has been no eruption, as the snow is clean, no visible ash line in it and the crater where the eruption is supposed to have been has clean snow several feet deep covering the entire bottom of it and all other places where an eruption might have occurred show no sign of an eruption."

J. S. DILLER
Geologist

UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

QUOTATIONS

PROPOSED INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BRAIN WORKERS

SOME three years ago M. Henri de Jouvenel, one of the French delegates to the League of Nations, succeeded in establishing in France a *Confédération des travailleurs intellectuels*. This was the first national association of brain workers and now has 150,000 members; similar associations have been formed in eight other countries. A meeting of representatives of these associations was held recently at the Sorbonne, the headquarters of the University of Paris, with the countenance of the French government and under the honorary presidency of M. Léon Bourgeois, one of the most universally respected of French statesmen. It was attended also by "observers" from nine other countries.

Among the "observers" present were persons nominated by the several British societies, among others the British Medical Association, which was represented by Dr. Gustave Monod. The meeting first of all received communications with regard to the position in various countries and after a brief discussion it was decided to found a *Confédération internationale des travailleurs intellectuels*—that is to say, an international association of brain workers. A committee was appointed consisting of two delegates from each of the eight countries having an organized confederation, and an "observer" from each of the other countries represented; the latter having only consultative privileges. This committee was instructed to take steps to invite those countries which had not already done so to establish associations of brain workers and to draw up a constitution for the international association; the draft is to be submitted to the national organizations and afterwards considered at a meeting to be held in Paris before the end of this year. Dr. Monod informs us that medical societies in France are beginning to join the French confederation. The Association Générale des Médecins de France joined a short time ago and on April 11th the members of the Therapeutic Society of Paris, a purely scientific body, unanimously resolved to join also. Among the objects the organization has in view is the prolongation to eighty years of the period during which the author has a property in artistic and literary creations and to extend this principle to scientific workers. With this object it will seek to bring into existence an international code governing the right in intellectual property.—*British Medical Journal*.

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

The Racial History of Man. By ROLAND B. DIXON. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons. 583 pages. \$6.00.

DURING the last quarter of a century, particularly since the development of studies on heredity, the attempts to unravel the history of human types have been based more and more on the investigation of morphological forms. The more mechanical classifications according to metrical features which dominated anthropological inquiry during the end of the past cen-

tury do not play as important a part as they used to do. An excellent instance of this kind is the detailed investigation of the history of the Melanesian-Australian type given by Sarasin in his study of New Caledonia.¹ The same tendencies manifest themselves in the study of the ancient remains of man, particularly of those belonging to the paleolithic period. It is recognized more and more clearly that metrical values must be considered merely as a means of a quantitative statement of descriptive features.

Professor Dixon's attempt to unravel the racial history of man runs counter to this whole development. His book is based on the thesis that three measurements of the head—length, breadth and height—and two measurements of the nose—height and breadth—have remained stable since paleolithic times. The second hypothesis on which his analysis is based is the assumption that all those human types which are characterized by the extreme forms of the length-breadth and length-height index of the head and the height-breadth index of the nose are primary forms and that all intermediate forms are due to intermixture between these primary forms. In this way he obtains necessarily eight fundamental races, representing the eight possible combinations of three independent features.

From a biological point of view it is difficult to see how these two fundamental hypotheses could be maintained. First of all, we have no evidence that human types may be considered as absolutely stable. It is true that not all types of organisms react equally energetically to environmental influences, but there is no evidence that would permit us to assume that man is absolutely resistant to them. We have the best possible evidence that the size of the body and proportions of the limbs are strongly influenced by environment and, so far as I can see, no observations have been made that would contradict my own observations on the changes of head and face form of immigrants in the United States and of the descendants of Spaniards living in Porto Rico. The proof may not have been given that the differences between town population and country population ob-

¹ Fritz Sarasin, *Anthropologie der Neu-Caledonier und Loyalty-Insulaner*, Berlin, 1916-1922.