

that the large andesitic boulders contained in the formation have been transported very far from their source. Judging by the included boulders and pebbles and by the prominence of sun-cracks, the writer inclines to the belief that much of the Gueydan tuff was deposited on the land as a mud flow.

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HYPERSENSITIVITY TO THE CASTOR BEAN

I WAS very much interested in a communication in a recent number of *SCIENCE* by Professor Robbins of the University of Missouri, with regard to a case of hypersensitivity to the castor bean. If any confirmation of such a phenomenon is necessary, I can supply it in plenty, both out of my own troubles and those of my instructor, Mr. Lamb.

I have always handled castor beans with impunity, but last fall I contracted a severe case of what was apparently hay fever, without the agency of either hay or pollen. I contracted it in the laboratory and there only. I noticed it first one day after I had been handling dissected castor beans, although I did not mark the connection at that time. I had the same symptoms as enumerated, without the headache—violent and continued sneezing and coughing, irritated mucous membranes of nose, throat and ears, swollen, puffy and reddened eyes, wheezy breathing—and in addition, violent itching of the skin under my chin and on my throat. The last effects of the above wore off only after three months and I am still in a rather bad condition now after one month of it this fall.

I soon attributed the trouble to something in the laboratory, for I noticed that the sneezing was worse on the three days that I had freshman laboratory classes and that I was not irritated so much on the other three alternate days. In order to try and recuperate, I stayed away from the class for a week and was much better, but got the trouble again the next week when I entered the laboratory. Then I began to experiment by removing various plants and plant parts, chemicals, etc., from the room to see what the cause was. I felt better after removing some sprouting onions, but this lasted only two days and I was just as bad the third day. Then I remembered the day of handling the dissected castor beans and removed those, with the thought that in some way the poisonous ricin might have brought about the trouble by being rubbed into my eyes, etc. As soon as the castor beans were gone, I felt better. The sneezing and coughing ceased, as did the itching of my eyes and chin, although it took me a long time to rid myself of the wheeziness in the bronchial tubes.

This fall the trouble came on one day when Mr. Lamb poured some dry castor beans out of a bottle for use in some germination tests, when I happened to be

in the same room. I was paying no attention to him and did not know what he was doing, but I began to sneeze violently. It seems strange that dry castor beans should have initiated the symptoms of this fall's trouble, and it may have been only a very unusual coincidence, but, nevertheless, it was the first of my sneezing and hay fever this year. There were no growing or germinating castor beans in the laboratory at this time.

I am interested in having my own conclusions substantiated, for consultation with several physician friends of mine gave me no encouragement in blaming the castor beans for my misery.

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MR. BRYAN AND THE BISHOP

THE anti-evolution propagandists are meeting with continued success in certain districts. The latest evidence of this is to be found in the current press dispatches reporting that the schools of North Carolina will have no evolution. Evolution has there been banned, not by the legislators but by order of the state board of education. One wonders if there is any relationship between this action and the unusually large incidence of illiteracy in that state.

I am writing, however, to call attention once again to the familiar repartee reported in the life and letters of Thomas Huxley. In the columns of *Life* first appeared the conjecture that Mr. Bryan was not so much concerned with evolution as he was with elocution; perhaps this explains why the arguments used by the free-silvered-tongued orator savor more of catch phrases than of sound logic. A telling phrase in his anti-Darwinian speeches is the one in which he denies that his grandmother was a monkey.

At the Oxford meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in 1860 the program of Section D centered around Darwinism. One of the closing meetings saw the Bishop of Oxford vent his sarcasms on evolution. Bishop Wilberforce was stifling the cause of evolution under misrepresentation and ridicule and smoothing over the weak portions of his address with rhetoric. We read that the good bishop spoke

for full half an hour with inimitable spirit, emptiness, and unfairness. In a light, scoffing tone, florid and fluent, he assured us there was nothing in the idea of evolution; rock-pigeons were what rock-pigeons had always been. Then, turning to his antagonist with a smiling insolence, he begged to know, was it through his grandfather or his grandmother that he claimed his descent from a monkey?

The bishop's antagonist was Huxley, who at once grasped the fatal mistake in the speech. The way in which Huxley, as a champion of evolution, returned the thrust is described in *Macmillan's Magazine*: