

IN addition to the customary gifts to the Yale Alumni Fund and to gifts made during the year for buildings as already announced, the university has received by gift and bequest several new endowment funds totaling about \$475,000 since the report made by the president to the alumni at commencement a year ago.

FRANK A. HITCHCOCK, physicist of the U. S. Bureau of Standards, has been appointed professor of civil engineering at George Washington University.

DR. ARTHUR G. BILLS, of the University of Chicago, and Dr. William T. Heron, of the University of Kansas, have been appointed assistant professors of psychology in the University of Minnesota.

DR. FREEMAN WARD, state geologist of South Dakota and professor of geology at the university, has been appointed head of the department of zoology at Lafayette College, to succeed the late Professor Peck.

DR. A. L. MELANDER, for twenty-two years entomologist at the State College of Washington and head of the department of zoology, has been appointed professor of biology and chairman of the biological faculty at the College of the City of New York.

DR. WILLIAM T. RICHARDS, son of Dr. Theodore W. Richards, of Harvard University, after two years spent abroad (at Cambridge, London, Copenhagen, Paris and Göttingen) as fellow in science of the International Education Board, has been appointed instructor in chemistry at Princeton University.

PROFESSOR A. J. CLARK, of University College, London, will succeed the late Professor A. R. Cushny in the chair of materia medica at the University of Edinburgh.

## DISCUSSION

### THE TERM PSYCHOZOIC

FACETIOUS undergraduates have more than once suggested that the familiar geologic succession of the Cenozoic, of Eocene, Oligocene, Miocene, Pliocene and Pleistocene might be fittingly concluded by the term Obscene for the Recent—an idea doubtless suggested by either the modern novel or the modern psychology.

The problem of just how we shall round out the upper end of the geologic time table is much like the similar problem of how we shall start it at its beginning—one not easily decided satisfactorily. To be sure, we live in the present, at least some of us hope that we do, and the past is behind us—I have even heard it said of some that their future was also behind them.

It is probably good philosophy to commence earth history with a hypothetical Archeozoic era, but is it

equally good philosophy to terminate earth history with a Psychozoic era? No one would probably gainsay the magnitude and multifarious effects of human activity, but these are scarcely of geologic magnitude, and I can conceive of many past events as being of much greater importance than the advent of man, if viewed with a certain degree of detachment. Such, for example, as the origin of life itself, or the transfer of the main theater of organic operations—both animal and plant—from the water to the land. It might be conceivable that the first mammal or the first flowering plant (Angiosperm) was more of an event than the first man. Man becomes impressive as one of a gang, and the necessity for these weakest of mammals, among their contemporaries of the Old Stone age, to hunt in packs, was doubtless the inception of that nationalistic impulse of which we see such a strong recrudescence at the present time.

It seems to me that a Psychozoic era is not only a false assumption, but altogether wrong in principle, and is really nurtured as a surviving or atavistic idea from the holocentric philosophy of the Middle Ages—typified by our contemporary ancestors of the south.

There can be no objection to speaking of the present as the Age of Man—or Woman, for that matter—but this is a quite different thing from setting up Psychozoic as a formal era. For this the term possesses no qualifications, either with respect to the time involved, the sediments deposited or the distinctness of a lower boundary—either stratigraphic, faunal or floral.

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### THE WEST FORK OF THE GILA RIVER

MENTION is made of Mr. T. T. Swift's contribution in reference to Mr. Kirk Bryan's article "Date of Channel Trenching (Arroyo cutting) in the Arid Southwest."<sup>1</sup> Like Mr. Swift, the writer's knowledge of the Gila River region has extended over a period of twenty-five years, of which nineteen have been spent in the Forest Service, but this experience has been confined to the upper reaches of that stream near its sources. In all probability, the first white man to invade the fastness of the upper Gila was James Pattie with a party of Kentuckians on a beaver-trapping expedition in the midwinter of 1825. Fortunately, Pattie left an intensely interesting account of his wanderings in the southwestern wilderness of one hundred years ago. Pattie's "Personal Narrative" throws some illuminating light on conditions in the vicinity of the Gila River and its adjacent terrain, before the white man brought his so-called civilization into the region. Pattie and his party first encountered what is now known as the West Fork of

<sup>1</sup> SCIENCE, October 16, 1925.