two inches in depth, relatively wide, and are terminated abruptly beneath by a bedding plane.

Such shallow structures represent drying of an unconsolidated top layer deposited upon a layer sufficiently older and more consolidated not to be affected similarly, and may safely be interpreted as sun cracks. The observed cracks, formed by subaqueous settling, could be traced downward to a depth of eight inches and probably extended farther. Extensive drying of unconsolidated materials, as under pleya conditions, may produce cracks of similar surface appearance and depth. No certain criterion seems available to determine whether such markings actually represent sun cracks, or whether they may represent settling cracks which may or may not have been formed subaqueously.

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Soviet Biology

The article on Soviet Biology by Dr. Anton Zhebrak (*Science*, 1945, 102, 357–358) is of great interest. He assures us that the official policy of the Soviet Government toward Genetics is tolerant and even helpful, and always has been. If this is so, it is strange that Russian geneticists were absent from the Sixth International Congress of Genetics held in Edinburgh before the outbreak of the war and from the recent London Conference on Genetics, at which Belgium, Denmark, France, Holland, Norway, Sweden, and the United States were represented. Russian geneticists had also been invited to both conferences at the same time as the others. It would do more to dispell the "misunderstanding" imputed by Zhebrak to geneticists of the Western World if we were told why Russian geneticists do not participate in international conferences. Above all, it would remove our anxiety if we were told what happened to Dr. N. I. Vavilov and to his work after 1939, since this work is regarded as being one of the most important contributions of Soviet Russia to the science of the world.

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Study of Scientific Russian in American Universities

The importance of American scientists closely following the published Russian researches in their fields is gaining general recognition in this country. In this connection the American Association of Teachers of Slavonic and East European Languages, about a year ago, appointed a Committee on Teaching Scientific Russian.

A preliminary inquiry was conducted among universities where scientific Russian was known to be taught. It must be emphasized that practically everywhere in the 81 American institutions of higher learning where Russian was taught in the school year 1944–1945 (A. P. Coleman, *Amer. Slav. East Eur. Rev.*, 1945, 4, 185–208) scientists or students of science were enrolled in Russian classes. Furthermore, a number of industrial organizations in this country now have classes in Russian organized for their technical employees. The figures given below, based on replies from 25 universities, must, therefore, be considered as smaller than the actual numbers. The principal objective of publishing this note consists in calling to the attention of American scientists, language teachers, and all interested individuals the need of introducing Russian wherever scientific and engineering training is given.

Of the institutions covered by this inquiry, 21 now accept or recommend Russian in partial fulfillment of the language requirements for graduate degrees in science. In other universities, acceptance, although not decided upon, is probable. About four hundred students were studying scientific Russian during the 1944–1945 school year. The figures for the current year are too incomplete for use. Chemists studied Russian in larger numbers than did other scientists; biologists, including physicians and medical students, came next and were followed by physicists, including radio engineers.

Organization of special courses in Russian for scientists, apart from courses in general Russian, wider acceptance by American universities of Russian for graduate degrees in science, and procurement of Russian technical books and magazines are urged by this Committee.

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A Correction

Please correct a detail on page 17 of your issue of 4 January. You describe and quote from certain resolutions passed by the Metropolitan Section of the American Physical Society on 9 November; and in the course of your description, you unluckily speak of the position of the "Society" rather than that of the Section. Now, the fact is that fewer than five per cent of the members of the Society were present at that meeting, of which no one had been notified in advance except the members living in and near New York and a few others. The resolutions cannot therefore be taken as an expression of the Society, even though many—myself included—think that a majority of the Society agree with them.

KARL K. DARROW, *Secretary*
The American Physical Society

Scanning Science—

Hon. A. D. White, formerly President of Cornell University, appeared on February 10th before the Senate Committee on a National University. He argued in favor of the plan, saying that in this respect the United States government is behind the European states. He contended that instead of weakening other universities, as had been claimed, the establishment of a National institution would strengthen all other seats of learning. It is expected that the committee will report favorably.

—21 February 1896