fall is 15 inches and the winds in spring often are of sufficient intensity and persistence to scour out cotton fields to the depth of a foot in a few hours and to drive quarter-inch pebbles through the air. The preservation of the selenite in Salt Draw is due not to the absence of wind action but rather to the lack of tools sufficient to make wind action effective. The character of the material available to the wind at any given place is dependent upon the composition of the terrain over which it blows, as is readily shown by a comparison of the color of the material transported by storms. The prevailing westerly winds sweeping down the Sacramento cuesta fill the air with dust of a sickly yellowish hue, acquired from the limestone and gypsum surfaces over which they have swept; whereas winds from the same direction crossing the Pecos River and moving eastward into Texas become, when violent, a coffee-brown, because they are laden with fine sand and redbed silt.

Bright selenite fragments may indeed serve to indicate the local ineffectiveness of wind action in isolated or protected places, but they also suggest a scarcity of abrasive material in the windswept terrain. Certainly, they do not prove the absence of wind action or that the selenite fragments have been so recently broken as to present fresh cleavage surfaces. On the other hand, selenite crystals that have grown in earthy ground may contain diffused impurities that give the selenite a frosted appearance, which on insufficient observation may be mistaken for wind scouring.

The appearance of selenite crystals may lend some support to other criteria in judging the nature of wind action at a given place, but as selenite is a sensitive indicator, deductions from it may prove erroneous. Caution should therefore be exercised in applying to the geomorphological history of an area interpretations based on the presence and appearance of selenite.

WALTER B. LANG

ON A WHALE SKELETON IN THE COLLECTIONS OF THE CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

IN his recent article on a blue whale skeleton in the British Museum, Mr. F. C. Fraser[1] states regarding the specimen he has under consideration that it is: ". . . almost certainly the largest articulated skeleton in any Museum in the world. The only exception to this statement may possibly be in the Museum at Buitenzorg, Java, where there is a skeleton of a whale 27.8 meters in length, but I do not know whether it is articulated."

The specimen in the British Museum yielded the following measurements: total length about 82 feet; length of flippers 10½ feet; width of flippers 2½ feet. The dorsal fin was 11 inches high and 28 inches long. The tail measured 16 feet across its outer edge. The blubber was rather tough and not very rich; it was from 10 to 4 inches thick on the back.

In view of this record it may be worth publishing the measurements of an articulated specimen of a male blue whale (*Sibbaldus musculus*)[2] in the collections of the California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, California. This specimen was taken off the west coast of Vancouver Island in 1908, by the whaler *St. Lawrence,* operating from the Pacific Whaling Company's station at Kyuquot, British Columbia. In the flesh this whale measured 87 feet; and from it was obtained 60 barrels of oil, 8 tons of fertilizer and 400 pounds of baleen. The skeleton measures: Length, 75 feet; head (total length), 20 feet 6 inches; mandible, 19 feet; fore flipper, 10 feet 10 inches; longest rib, 10 feet 4 inches.

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A NEW MAMMOTH RECORD FOR ILLINOIS

A RECENT acquisition of Pleistocene mammal material in the Museum of Natural History of the University of Illinois appears to be worthy of record. It consists of the lower jaw with teeth intact and two upper first molars. The lower molars represent the third milk teeth, which had cut through the gums and had been used. The upper molars are the third milk teeth, but they had not cut through the gums when the baby elephant died, the crowns being wholly unworn. The animal was apparently about six years of age, as compared with the recent elephant.

The location from which the skeletal material came is situated about eight miles southwest of Paris, Edgar County, Illinois. The deposit is gravel, representing, probably, outwash from the Shelbyville moraine of the Wisconsin glacier. The teeth and jaw were on top of the clay, evidently the Illinoian till, at the base of the gravel and at a depth of 10 or 12 feet below the surface. The animal, therefore, lived in the Sangamon interglacial interval. The specimen belongs to the hairy mammoth species, *Elephas primigenius boreus* Hay.

During the work of the CWA in Illinois many reports of elephant finds were recorded in the newspapers, but few of these appear to have gotten into scientific journals. It is to be regretted that these finds were not permanently preserved in some of our museums. It is probable that two species of Elephas and one of Mastodon or Mammut were represented.

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[1] *Nat. Hist. Mag.*, 4: 30, 228–230, 1934.

[2] *Vide* Miller, *U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull.*, No. 128, p. 506, 1924.