

The American baby of the future, moreover, may have an expectation of living to be 70 years old in the light of present knowledge, and not as a result of any "radical innovations or phantastic evolutionary change in our physiological make-up, such as we have no competent reason to assume," Dr. Dublin pointed out.

Some of the factors that will increase the life expectancy are probable continued reduction in tuberculosis deaths, reduction in infant deaths as a result of better prenatal care of the mother, and even reduction in cancer deaths which should result with the present knowledge of the disease.

Science News Letter, January 14, 1933

SEISMOLOGY

Epicenter of Alaskan Quake Located in Mountains

THE ALASKAN earthquake reported as having shaken the city of Seward had its epicenter some distance from the place, in the mountains north of the Kenai peninsula, according to calculations based by scientists of the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey on seismological reports gathered by Science Service from American and Canadian observatories. The approximate location of the point of greatest disturbance was in 62 degrees north latitude, 148 degrees west longitude, and the time of origin was four-tenths of a second before eleven o'clock, eastern standard time, on the night of Tuesday, Jan. 3.

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ECOLOGY

Studies Show Alaskan Forest Is Marching Into Arctic

Forest Front is Made Up of Young Trees While Few Miles To Rear Three-Century-Old Specimens Abound

THE FOREST of Alaska is marching northward. Its front is made of young trees, none of them over a hundred years old, though a few miles to the rear there are plenty of specimens that can boast three centuries.

This and other evidence of advancing tree line in the North was presented before the Ecological Society of America by Prof. Robert F. Griggs of the George Washington University. His observations in Alaska are supported by similar studies made by other botanists in the Scandinavian countries.

Prof. Griggs' most striking observations were made at Kodiak, which is now just beyond the timbered area, though old records indicate that areas now heavily forested were treeless a few generations ago.

"The trees at the edge of the forest are small and squat, suggesting an adverse climate," he said, "but when examined they were found to be growing as rapidly as the same species a thousand miles within its borders to the southeastward. They are likewise reproducing freely.

"The marginal trees are small because they are young. None of the trees within a mile of the forest border at Kodiak is more than a hundred years old. There are no fallen logs nor other remains of trees older than the present generation. Many trees now standing in thick forest have large dead branches clear to the ground and evidently began life in the open. Three miles back from the forest border the trees are more than three hundred years old and have attained great size. Dead trees and fallen logs are present as in ordinary forests.

"Instead of being held in check by climatic factors this forest is rapidly migrating into new territory . . .

Not Recovered From Ice Age

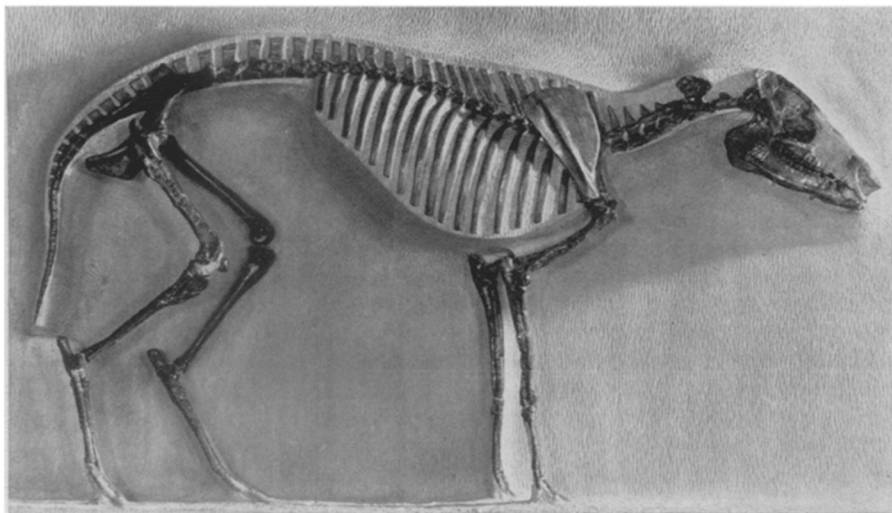
"The forest migration thus demonstrated is taken to be a continuance of the readjustment since the last glaciation. It suggests that the vegetation of boreal and north temperate regions generally may not yet have fully recovered from the last glacial period."

Additional support for the theory that the Alaskan forest is migrating northward is offered by microscopic examination of peat from a bog near Kodiak, collected by Prof. Griggs and analyzed by his associate, Dr. Paul W. Bowman.

The bog is thirteen feet deep, and situated several miles within the edge of the spruce forest and surrounded by well-grown trees. The upper three feet of this deposit were too soupy to permit the collection of material for analysis, but below this level core-cuttings were made all the way to the bottom.

Microscopic analysis of this material showed great numbers of spores, but they all belonged to several species of ferns, with exceedingly few pollen grains from trees. This is taken to indicate that when the lower ten feet of peat were being formed, the bog stood in open country with ferns dominating the vegetation, and that the forest has moved in and taken possession of the land since that time.

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THE HORSE THAT RAN LIKE A DOG

The whippet-like outline of this skeleton could easily fool one unversed in anatomy into guessing the animal to be a dog. But it is an Eohippus, the earliest and smallest of known fossil horses, recently mounted for the American Museum of Natural History.