

general result of subsequent folding will be elevation and denudation, leading to a decrease rather than an increase of load. In so far as this is true, the folding will not be reflected by any variation of rank; while, on the contrary, any circumstance which does lead to a further increment of temperature will leave its mark. Later burial of the whole series below an uncomformable cover may lead to a change of rank in the deeper parts of the seams, while leaving the upper portions untouched. The time factor, moreover, can by no means be left out of account. Geo-isotherms creep with exceeding slowness, even in terms of the rate of sedimentation and denudation. The duration of burial as well as its depth is therefore material. In fact, the whole sequence of events which have determined the maximum temperature and pressure reached at any point must have been much too complicated to be readily decipherable from the present disposition of the rocks.

In all these complications, however, one cardinal

principle remains. At any given place, both temperature and pressure must always have increased downwards—apart, of course, from the influence of igneous intrusions. So, while the interpretation of the lateral variation of rank is involved in many complicating factors, Hilt's law remains as a simple and significant sign. Even in this case the significance is liable to be obscured by the variation of the original coal substance of the different seams; but the technique of the microscopic study of coal has now reached the point at which, I believe, the effect of this factor can be almost completely assessed and eliminated. If this be so, then we are in a position to use coal as a geological thermometer—or, perhaps, combined thermometer and barometer—and we may set about calibrating it by means of a thorough study of Hilt's law and of the effects of igneous intrusions. But we must never forget that the thermometer has one peculiarity—it is a maximum thermometer only.

Obituary

Prof. Sylvain Lévi

THE death is reported from Paris of Prof. Sylvain Lévi, France's most distinguished orientalist, which took place suddenly on October 30, at the age of seventy-two years.

Sylvain Lévi was born in Paris on March 28, 1863. From an early age he applied himself to the study of oriental languages, especially those of China and Tibet, and in 1886 he was appointed a lecturer in the Ecole des Hautes Etudes. He was a special lecturer in Sanskrit in the Faculty of Letters of the University of Paris from 1889 until 1894, when he was appointed to a chair in the College de France. At the time of his death, he was president of the Societe Asiatique and of the section of religious studies in the Ecole des Hautes Etudes. Among other honours he was an officer of the Legion d'Honneur and an Hon. Litt.D. of the University of Calcutta.

Lévi had travelled frequently and far in the East to further his researches, applying himself deeply to the study of epigraphy, manuscripts and art, notably in China, Tonkin, India and Nepal, spending three years in the last-named country. On several occasions he held temporary appointments in Asia, at one time being a tutor in Sir Rabindranath Tagore's school at Santiniketan at Bolpur, Bengal, and later in charge of the Franco-Japanese Institute at Tokyo.

Although Lévi's approach to oriental studies had been through linguistics, his outlook and interests were never bounded by the limitations of the philologist or the purely literary scholar. His wide knowledge of eastern iconography, his sympathetic under-

standing of Eastern art, and his profound study of Buddhism, gave him an insight into the strength as well as the weaknesses of Indian culture, tradition and character, such as have been possessed by few European scholars. It was this quality, perhaps, more than any other, that gave Lévi his position of authority and influence among British orientalists, to whom, indeed, he was perhaps more closely akin than to the members of the German school of orientalists of his day. He was continuously in close touch with the Royal Asiatic Society and the India Society; and it is said that it was largely owing to his advice and his evidence before the committee, of which Lord Reay was chairman, that the School of Oriental Studies of the University of London was founded.

Among Lévi's more important works, apart from a large number of valuable contributions to the journal of the Societe Asiatique and other specialist publications, are a study of the Indian theatre (1900), monographs on Nepal (1905-8), "Buddhachariya", an epic life of the Buddha by Asbaghosh, a dictionary of Buddhism from Chinese and Japanese sources, and two books on India, which appeared in 1925.

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Prof. Jakob Schetelig, professor of mineralogy and geology in the University of Oslo.

Dr. Eugene W. Shaw, chief geologist of the Iraq Petroleum Co., formerly of the U.S. Geological Survey, on October 7, aged fifty-four years.