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NOTE ON THE PALAEOONTOLOGY OF THE INLE MOLLUSCA.

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The shells occurring in various geological formations have been classified, by Dr. Annandale, according to their relative antiquity, as sub-fossil and fossil. How far these two groups correspond with the two divisions generally recognised by geologists in the Quaternary era, the “ Pleistocene ” and the “ Holocene ” (or “ sub-recent ” or “ recent ”) cannot at present be definitely settled.

In Europe and in many other temperate regions, the termination of the Glacial Period forms a convenient datum line for separating the two divisions. In India, the study of the corresponding formations has not yet progressed far enough to correlate them in detail with the sequence of local physical changes.

Nevertheless, the shells which Dr. Annandale has classified as “ sub-fossil ” may confidently be regarded as “ holocene ” or “ sub-recent,” but it would be difficult at present to say for certain whether those described as “ fossil ” should be ascribed to an earlier phase of the “ holocene,” or else regarded as frankly pleistocene, though the latter alternative is more probable.

Considering the great plasticity of some of the forms above described, length of time need not represent a factor of primary importance in the evolution of the extinct and living mutations or species under consideration. Their transformations seem directly connected with the changes in physical geography of the Shan plateau, and, without precise information as to the geological dates of the physiographical evolution of that region, we are unable to fix the exact period of the correlated biological changes,