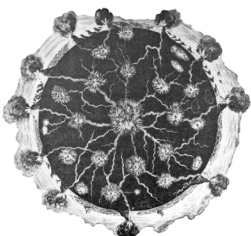
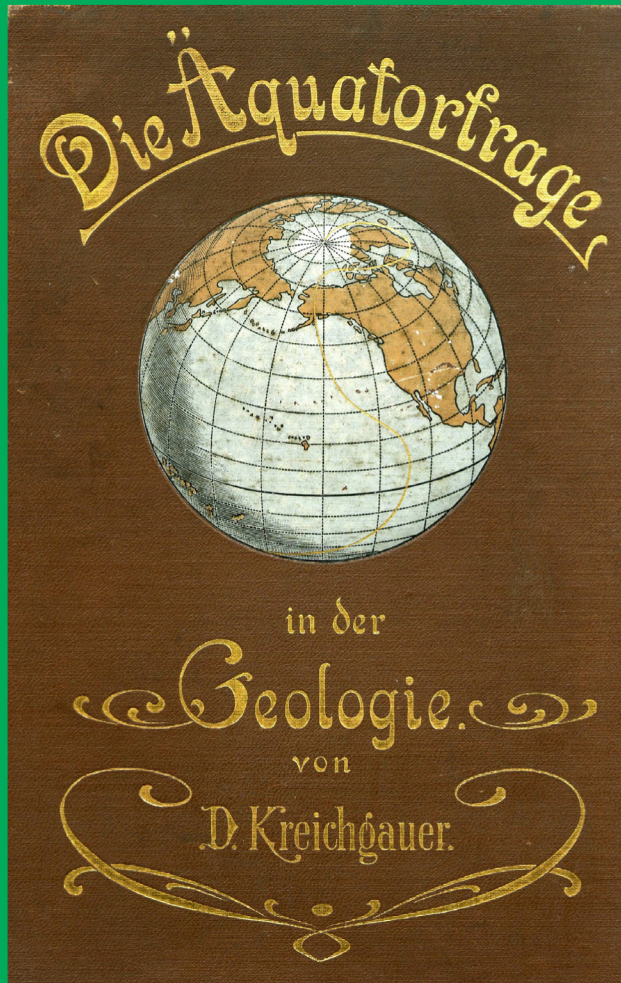


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HESS logo: Athanasius Kircher's (1602–1680) *Systema ideale prophyliaciorum*—imagined view of subterranean fires and surface volcanoes, from *Mundus subterraneus*, 1678, Vol. 1, between pp. 186 and 187.

Front-cover image: Illustration on the front cover of Damian Kreichgauer's *Die Äquatorfrage in der Geologie*, 1902.

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

DAVID OLDROYD

It is a pleasure to introduce another set of interesting and stimulating papers, on a wide range of themes.

Leonard Wilson writes on a topic that has been much discussed in the past but on which he takes a view that is different from previous authors, arguing that Lord Kelvin's ideas on the age of the Earth were significantly influenced by his religious convictions. Kelvin's ideas contained scientific errors which, however, went unremarked for a long time, due to his high reputation and perhaps because the conclusions he reached were congenial to opponents of Darwinism, even if not to geologists.

The Netherlands author, **Willemjan Barzilay**, offers important insights into the work of Vening Meinesz, which may not be possible to achieve for those (of us) unable to read Dutch. He also discusses changing attitudes towards Wegener's theories in The Netherlands.

David Branagan completes his detailed account of the life and work of the Jesuit priest, Edward Pigot, showing the important work he did in seismology and other branches of geophysics, working in an observatory that he established in the grounds of a Catholic secondary school in Sydney, Australia; while being fully engaged with the worldwide community of geophysicists.

Davis Young continues with his fine series of papers on the work of the men who sought to establish the 'CIPW' system for the classification of minerals on a chemical basis. This completes the arduous work involved in understanding and explaining how the system was *created*. In 2011, we shall see how it was *received* in the scientific community. When the series of papers is completed, it will, I say with confidence, form the definitive study of the history of the CIPW system.

Next, **Barbara Mohr** provides readers with an appreciation of the social scene amongst intellectuals in Berlin in the latter part of the nineteenth century, considering particularly the role of women in that society. She uses studies of three women who were, in quite different ways, 'helpmeets' to their male relatives, to see how they functioned in Germany in the pre-War period.

In a somewhat related paper **Martina Kölbl-Ebert** looks at the work of two largely forgotten German scientists, both of whom were Catholic priests and made scientific contributions of geological interest. The issue here is the constraints and freedoms that such men felt in their work in conservative social situations. Again Anglophones will find convenient access to aspects of German social history useful.

Donald Hogarth then looks at a rather little-known aspect of the history of mining for radioactive minerals in Madagascar and their export to France for use in medicine by Marie Curie. He considers the economic as well as the technical issues involved.

And in an essay review **Noah Heringman** provides a detailed account of Dennis Dean's book on the relationships between the Romantic movement, geology and English literature. This book is published with a small print run and is, we must say, expensive. *Earth Sciences History* is therefore pleased to give space to an account of what is a most important study.

The issue concludes with five interesting book reviews, one of them by the Reviews Editor **Vic Baker**, who discusses the controversial topic 'intelligent design'.