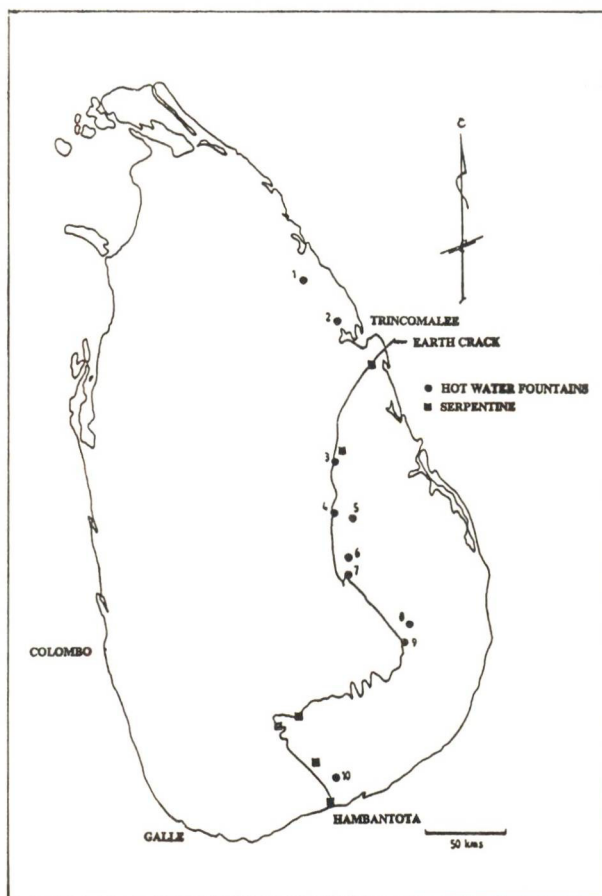


An Earth Crack with Mineral Resources

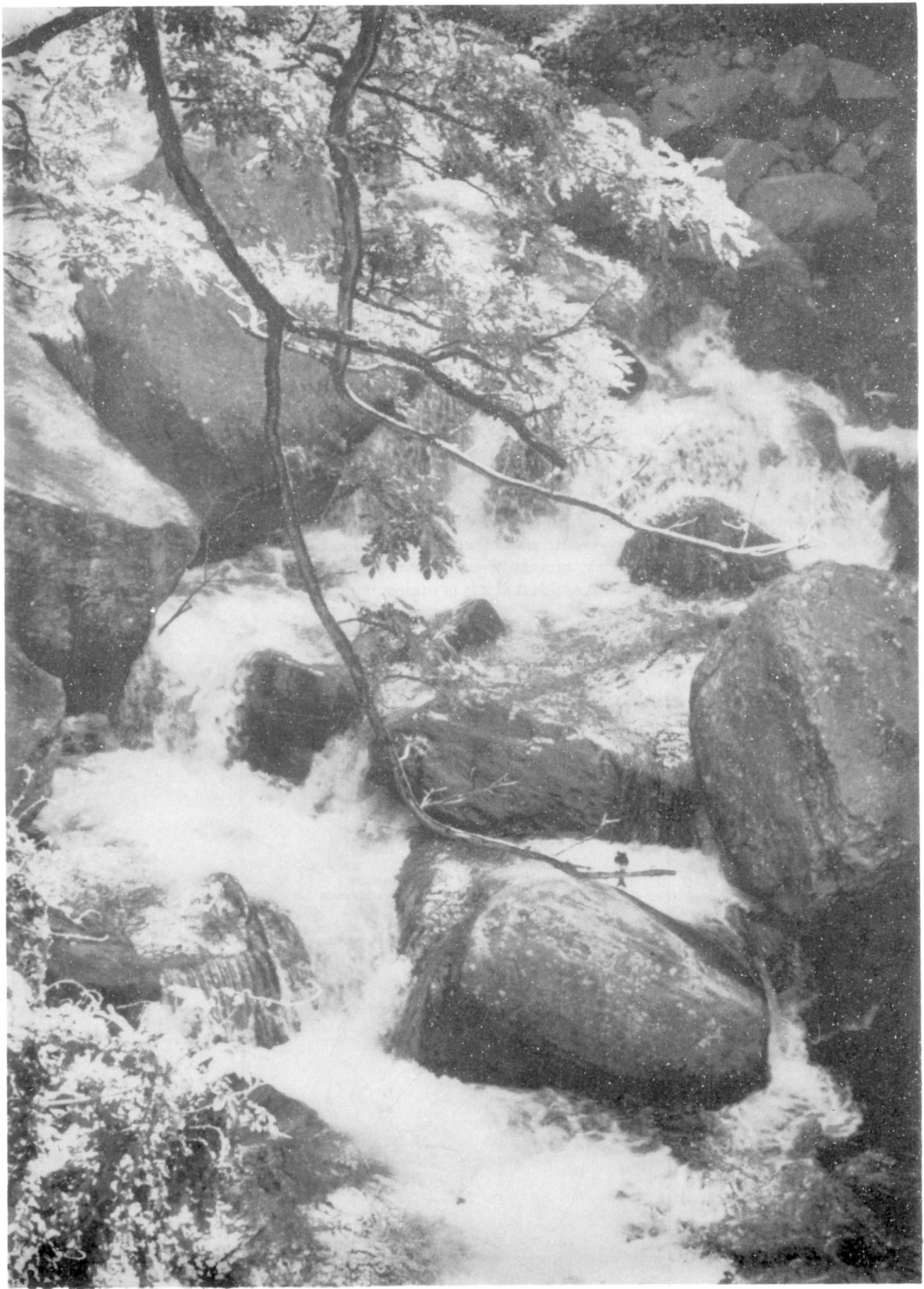
Several matters of importance regarding geological features that have aroused great interest and controversy among Sri Lankan and foreign geologists for a long time have been brought to light through research work by Professor C. B. Dissanayake, Senior Professor and Head of the Faculty of Geology, University of Peradeniya. The bone of contention that has aroused anxiety among geologists is the earth crack nearly 350 kilometers in length extending from Trincomalee to Hambantota. As shown in the map this earth-crack is located between the highland series and the eastern Vijayanu complex.

Prof. Dissanayake points out that this earth-crack could have been a boundary between two small planes in the distant history of geology. The special importance of these boundaries of planes is the possibility of the presence of mineral resources of economic importance close to such boundaries. The reason for special explorations near this earth-crack or the plane boundary in Sri Lanka is the presence of copper and iron deposits, gem deposits, sulphides containing important metals, serpentine deposits containing nickel, chromium and gold etc. and the range of hot water fountains in Seruwila area. Prof. Dissanayake's research work has been mostly centered to the serpentine deposits and the line of hot water fountains at Uda Walawe and Ginigalpelessa. According to him, the serpentine deposits found along this earth-crack have come up to the surface from the very deep areas of the earth and are for the same reason, valuable mineral resources enriched with very scarce metals of high economic value such as platinum and gold. In the other regions of the world, diamond is found with these rock fossils. He has pointed out that the percentage of nickel contents of the serpentine deposit at Uda Walawe is 1 - 2%.

The hot water fountains along this earth-crack are an evidence of the excessive heat presumed to be present below the crack, says Prof. Dissanayake. He states that even if this heat is not sufficient for the setting up of a thermal power station, the earthen heat present beneath the crack can be utilized for the purpose which are economically effective. Prof. Dissanayake adds that it is of utmost importance to do further research work about this earth-crack.



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