

the Railway convention, held in Philadelphia, Oct. 9, and reciting the importance of retaining this meridian. The resolution to adopt Greenwich was then passed with only one dissenting vote, that of San Domingo, France and Brazil not voting.

Mr. Rutherford then introduced a resolution to count longitudes in two directions from Greenwich up to 180°, east longitude being plus, and west minus. This was favored by the delegates from Great Britain and Russia, and opposed by Commander Sampson, the latter advocating the plan of counting only in one direction, from 0° to 360°, as simpler. This plan was also favored by the delegate from Sweden, Count Lewenhaupt, who moved to adopt the fourth resolution of the Roman conference, counting longitude continuously through the whole 360°. Pending further discussion, the conference adjourned till Tuesday at one o'clock. On Tuesday the discussion was continued, and the resolution offered by Mr. Rutherford passed by a small majority.

SEMITIC NOTES.

AN interesting collection of oriental antiquities has been brought to this country by Mr. Bernhard Maimon. The collection consists of bronzes, lamps, manuscripts, seals, and an Assyrian barrel-cylinder with inscription. Mr. Maimon offered it for sale at one thousand dollars, but, finding no purchaser for the whole, he leaves the seals and cylinder in the Metropolitan museum in New York, and has sold the other objects to Professor Marquand of Princeton, N.J.

Information dated London, Sept. 28, has been received, that Dr. W. H. Ward, the leader of the Wolfe expedition to Chaldaea, would set out the following week for Constantinople. Here he hopes to be joined by Dr. Sterrett, who has returned to Constantinople from his extensive tour in Asia Minor. From Constantinople the party will perhaps go by Alexandretta, Aleppo, and Mosul, reaching Bagdad toward the close of November. The months of December, January, and February are those most favorable for a visit to Chaldaea; and the Wolfe party expects during this time to accomplish its task. During his stay in London, preparatory to his trip to Chaldaea, Dr. Ward spent his time in the British museum, studying the Assyrian antiquities, and specially acquainting himself with those which are forged. Cylinders are so valuable, that a flourishing business is done in forgeries by some of the enterprising orientals; but the practical eye can always detect traces of the forgery. Usually a mould is made from a genuine cylinder, and the forgery is cast in this mould. The joining of the two halves of the cast cannot be successfully concealed.

Mr. J. R. Jewett, who graduated at Harvard last year, is now in Beyrout, Syria, engaged in the study of modern Arabic. His favorite studies during his last two college-years were the Semitic languages.

D. G. LYON.

TURNER'S SAMOA.

Samoa a hundred years ago, and long before, together with notes on the cults and customs of twenty-three other islands in the Pacific. By GEORGE TURNER, LL.D., of the London missionary society; with a preface by E. B. TYLOR, F.R.S. London, Macmillan, 1884. 16+395 p. 12°.

THIS work was prepared under very exceptional circumstances favorable to its value and accuracy. The author published, in 1861, a volume entitled 'Nineteen years in Polynesia,' which was chiefly directed to narrate the introduction of Christianity into, and the missionary work in, the group of volcanic islands in Central Polynesia, long known as Navigator's Islands, but correctly called Samoa. In the present volume he abandons the missionary style, as well as its subject, and gives the result of his miscellaneous researches for upwards of forty years. He has clearly apprehended the desiderata in the presentation of the results of ethnological research: i.e., he has confined himself almost exclusively to the detail of facts, classified so as to assist students, but has left to specialists all promulgation or advocacy of theories. The result is that very few works are of greater value in assisting the study of comparative ethnology, or in the solution of problems in physiology, mythology, history, and philology.

The volume, being a repository of an immense number of details in all branches of anthropology, affords little opportunity for such quotation as would give any true idea of its value. It must rather be regarded as a brief encyclopedia of the various titles to which the sociologist, the linguist, the student of folk-lore, the physiologist, and indeed all persons interested in the several divisions of anthropology, can turn with profit. The mythic traditions and the folk-lore constitute, to the general reader, perhaps the most attractive part of the work. In this connection it may be proper to offer a slight criticism.

In the cosmical genealogy, an early character is called 'Valevalenaoa,' or, as translated, 'Space.' This deity had a long-legged seat; and, after a time, 'Cloudy Heavens' brought forth a head, which fell from the heavens. 'Space' set it up on his high stool, and said to it, 'Be a son, be a second with me on the earth.' Space started back, for all of a sudden the body of a man-child was added to the head. The child was sensible, and inquired who his father was. Space replied, "Your father is yonder in the east, yonder in the west, yonder towards the sea, yonder in the land,