

The father (D. A. of Independence, Io.) has unusually acute hearing. The degree of acuteness cannot well be expressed in terms of normal audition: but it will suffice to say that he distinguishes voices, whispers, and other sounds at considerably beyond the ordinary range; that he frequently hears sounds inaudible to his companions; and that he perceives, discriminates, and comprehends faint sounds with great facility. His wife's audition was normal, and that of the progeny is variable. Expressing normal audition by N, and arbitrarily evaluating acuteness above and below this standard, the status of the family, including consorts (indicated by italics), is about as follows:—

FIRST GENERATION.	SECOND GENERATION.	THIRD GENERATION.
D. A. 65-N+2 <i>Mrs. L. S. A.</i> (deceased) -N }	<i>G. W.</i> 45-N <i>Mrs. M. A. W.</i> 42-N <i>J. A.</i> 40-N+1 <i>Mrs. M. D. A.</i> 38-N <i>G. M.</i> 42-N-1 <i>Mrs. J. A. M.</i> 37-N-3	(5 children, all -N) (7 children, all -N) <i>(Miss E. M.)</i> 11-N+1 <i>J. M.</i> 9-N <i>(Miss B. M.)</i> 7-N
	<i>Miss M. A.</i> 32-N+3 <i>D. H. A.</i> 30-N-3 <i>T. A.</i> 28-N-3	

The partially deaf members do not perceive the ordinary voice, but follow conversation readily if the voice be raised as high, say, as that of an out-door speaker.

It is noteworthy that none of the family were born deaf, but that sensitiveness of the auditory apparatus diminished during youth, either progressively or by stages coinciding with slight catarrhal attacks or other physiologic disturbances. The grandchildren born thus, scarcely reached the age at which deafness began to appear in the second generation.

W. J. MCGEE.

Washington, D.C., March 11.

Preservation of jelly-fishes at the Naples zoölogical stations.

Zoölogists are to be congratulated upon the success which has at last attended the efforts of Signore Lo Bianco, the skilful conservator of the zoölogical station in Naples, towards the preservation of Siphonophoræ. So extremely delicate are these complicated organisms as to have rendered futile all efforts hitherto made for their preservation; and students have been compelled to have recourse to drawings or models for the study of their structure in the absence of living specimens. The least carelessness on the part of the collector, results, as a rule, in the loss of many of the slightly attached parts; and if, perchance, the animals are brought in safety to the laboratory, they are available for study only during a very brief period. For over eight years Signore Lo Bianco has carried on experiments, attended with the greatest patience and skill and no small pecuniary outlay, only to meet with the fate which has ever attended attempts at their preservation, — to see them fall into a hundred pieces. Every working zoölogist can therefore readily imagine the satisfaction following the discovery of a method through which every museum may now place upon its shelves specimens of Mediterranean Siphonophoræ retaining all the beauty and transparency of living specimens, — a privilege of which the directors of the various European museums are by no means

slow in availing themselves, a large number of orders having already been received at the station for complete sets. Henceforth students of inland laboratories can study these interesting animals as satisfactorily as those at seaside laboratories, specimens being furnished, if desired, prepared especially for histological purposes. At no other place in the world has the art of preserving marine animals attained such perfection as in the Naples station, and at no other place is it possible. Owing to the large corps of skilled collectors, and to the rich fauna of the Gulf of Naples, material is constantly on hand for experimentation, and is manipulated by experts, who are instructed to spare no time or expense in the search for methods which shall retain the animals in their natural expanded conditions, and, if possible, with the brilliant colors of living specimens. A most interesting example is that of *Corallium rubrum*; the precious coral in which all the minute polyps are seen, with their tentacles fully expanded, furnishing a much more instructive object than the bits of dried twigs ordinarily to be seen in collections. Of the Siphonophoræ, the most difficult of preservation were *Forskalia contorta*, *Apolemia uvaria*, *Agalma Sarsii*, *Halistemma rubrum*, *Physophora hydrostatica*, and *Praya diphyes*. These, besides many others, may now be obtained at prices which barely cover the cost of preparation, varying according to size, rarity, and process required, from one to thirty francs. The last two forms, owing to their habits, are not always on hand, appearing one day in hundreds, months elapsing before the collector again meets with them. American institutions have thus far been much behind those of Great Britain and the continent in taking advantage of the unparalleled facilities afforded by the Naples zoölogical station; Williams college and the University of Pennsylvania being the only ones which have taken tables and sent representatives, the latter being the only one represented at present. Several Americans have been able to occupy tables for short periods through the courtesy of German universities; but it would be much more creditable to America were her zoölogists able to meet with similar encouragement from home institutions.

C. S. DOLLEY.

Naples, Feb. 28.

Economy of fuel.

In your No. 103 of Jan. 23, 1885, under the heading 'Economy of fuel,' the coal-consumption of the steamship Oregon is stated at 16 tons per mile, which is equivalent to 48,000 tons for the Atlantic voyage! [Corrected, vol. v. p. 122.] I beg to request that you will publish, in correction of the above, the accompanying table, compiled from data furnished me through the courtesy of Mr. A. M. Underhill of the Guion line.

Name of steamer.	Ton-nage.	Horse-power.	No. of boilers.	No. of furnaces.	Average speed of best trip from Sandy Hook to Queenstown, Ireland.	Fuel consumed per 24 hours, at 44 tons per furnace.
Arizona .	5,147	6,000	6	36	Knots. 16.21	Tons. 162
Alaska . .	6,932	11,000	9	54	17.44	243
Oregon . .	7,374	13,000	9	72	18.56	324

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