living, is without parallel, and there is no indication that the climax has been reached. It is not, indeed, improbable that our age may come to be looked upon as plodding and unprogressive.

It is not, however, to the development of the world's resources to which I would direct attention, but to some of the effects impending from the ascendency of many, and the duty of zoölogists in connection therewith.

Some of the great changes in the zoölogical condition of the globe, incident upon the increase of human populations, the extension of railroads and the introduction of steam-power and horse-power, agricultural machinery, and the general use of perfected fire-arms, are familiar to everybody. The existence of vast herds of bison on the western plains of North America has become a matter of history. The aurochs, the bison's European cousin, is likewise menaced with destruction. "It no longer exists," says M. de Tribolet, "but in the condition, as one may say, of a living zoölogical specimen." Similarly the bands of destruction are daily tightening about the wapiti, the moose deer, the antelope, the manatee, and the mountain sheep and mountain goat, in North America; the chamois, the wild goat, the beaver, and the stag, in Europe; the kangaroo, in Australia; the elephant, the gorilla, and the chimpanzee, in Africa; and a score of other mammals, as well as birds and reptiles, in different parts of the world.

The reckless slaughter of some of these animals is painful to contemplate. "Some years ago," writes the author from whom we have just quoted, "a little family of beavers was discovered on an island in the Rhone; it was a happy accident, there was hope that we should see the revival of a species well-nigh extinct. All have been slaughtered without pity, — a folly which one could not have supposed possible, except among a non-civilized people, where the culprit is unconscious of his guilt." Words cannot entirely express the sorrow with which the true lover of nature witnesses the wanton annihilation of so many of the greatest and most interesting of living creatures.

But there is room for more than sorrow. There is good cause to fear, that, unless anatomists bestir themselves, many large species of vertebrates now existing will become extinct before their structure is at all thoroughly known. Gosse's dictum, that "it is better to err on the side of minuteness than of vagueness," should be applied to this matter. It would be best to lay aside thesis and hypothesis, and to record facts, — as many and as much in detail as possible. From the stand-point of to-day, rudimentary, defective, and 'nascent' structures attract an inordinate amount of attention, because of the light they shed upon the theory of evolution. But ten or twenty centuries hence a new theory may dominate, a new stand-point be taken, and a new standard adopted. Then the anatomical details we ignore may perhaps be diligently inquired into. We do not find fault with the early historians because they recorded so many facts, but because they recorded so few, and these so imperfectly. It may be that the fool *collects* facts, while the wise man *selects* them; but the wise man — the supreme genius — is one man of a million, and the fools had best content themselves with piling up the store of truths against his coming.

But whether fools or wise, posterity will certainly charge us with slothfulness if we fail to record, so far as our opportunities and appliances and the condition of zoölogical knowledge permit, the last details of the structure of those species of animals we know to be about to become extinct.

A work similar in character to this is being carried on at the present time by the Smithsonian institution's bureau of ethnology, the Davenport academy, and other similar organizations. American ethnographers have awakened to the fact that the study of the aborigines is becoming every day more difficult, and with most commendable zeal have set to work to record all that can be learned regarding the history, languages, religions, and customs of our Indian tribes. Let anatomists in all parts of the world follow the example of these investigators. In the case of vanishing peoples and species of animals, what the ethnographer and anatomist of to-day fail to record, the future archeologist and paleontologist can never find out, or can only guess at. F. W. TRUE.

THE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.

THE American historical association held its third annual meeting at Washington on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, April 29–May 1. The venerable George Bancroft presided at all but two sessions, when the first vice-president, Mr. Justin Winsor, librarian of Harvard college, took his place. The sessions were held in the large hall of the Columbian university, and were well attended. Mr. Bancroft's address of welcome was very well received. It will be printed in the next number of the *Magazine of American history*. Gen. J. G. Wilson of New York followed with a paper on Columbus, advocating an international celebration of the discovery of America by the great explorer. At a subsequent meeting a committee was appointed to wait on the President, to ask him to call the attention of congress to the matter. It is understood that the President received the

deputation favorably, and will recommend co-operation with other powers in his next annual message. Prof. E. N. Horsford of Cambridge then read a paper on the landfall of John Cabot in 1497. The substance of it has already appeared in Mr. Horsford's letter to Judge Daly, printed in the journal of the American geographical society, and also in the form of a monograph. Dr. A. B. Hart of Harvard came next, with 'A description of some graphic methods of illustrating history,' with examples of some maps and charts actually used by him in his lecture-room. The paper was listened to with great interest. But the only paper of the morning which evoked discussion was one by Prof. M. C. Tyler of Cornell, on the neglect and destruction of historical materials in this country. The reverend doctor was most justifiably severe on the almost criminal way in which American families, with a few notable exceptions, have treated the papers left by their ancestors. Judge Mellen Chamberlain of the Boston public library agreed with Dr. Tyler, and, in addition, called attention to the duty that certain families who have inherited public papers from their ancestors owe to the public to return all documents that really form part of the public archives to the public depositaries, whether state or national; and a motion to that effect was introduced and carried. It may seem singular that such a motion should be necessary, but one hundred years ago it was by no means uncommon for a governor or secretary of state, on his departure from office, to take away with him such public papers as interested him; and to-day many documents which form, or rather should form, a part of the archives, are in the hands of persons who know nothing of their value, and take no more care of them than they take of their own family papers.

In the evening Mr. Charles Deane of Cambridge presented, in behalf of Mr. Alexander Brown of Nelson county, Va., a paper embodying what may be called the modern views of the early history of his state. The Hon. William Wirt Henry of Richmond followed with a paper describing the part taken by Virginia in establishing religious liberty under the leadership of his grandfather, Patrick Henry. As might have been expected, Mr. Henry did full justice both to his ancestor and his native state. Dr. Channing of Cambridge followed with an abstract of a paper on the social condition of New England in the middle of the last century. He especially emphasized the fact that in one corner of New England slavery then existed on an extensive scale. Mr. T. Jefferson Coolidge, jun., who has been studying with him the past year at Harvard, then read a carefully prepared paper on the development of municipal government in Massachusetts. He showed that the first charter of Boston was a direct outgrowth of the New England town system. Judge Chamberlain, in the course of some remarks on this paper, pointed out how completely the individual masses of Americans had become accustomed to organizing.

The morning session of the second day was opened by Edward G. Mason, Esq., of Chicago, with a thoroughly enjoyable essay on the march of the Spaniards across Illinois. This was in many respects the most valuable paper presented. It will shortly be printed in the *Magazine of American history*, and needs no further mention here. At this session Mr. William A. Mowry of the *Journal of education* presented his well-known views upon the disputed question as to whether the Louisiana purchase included Oregon. Mr. Mowry's argument is in many respects a strong one; but it may pertinently be asked, supposing that he is correct in his assertion that Oregon was not within the limits of that purchase, how did the United States acquire it? Mr. E. B. Scott of Wilkesbarre, Penn., closed the session with an account of the settlement of the lower St. Lawrence.

In the evening Prof. A. Scott of Rutgers led off with a paper on the origin of the highest function of the American judiciary, in the course of which he remarked that he thought that New Jersey had some share in the revolution, which, judging from the general drift of the papers, seemed to have been the exclusive work of Massachusetts and Virginia. Mr. J. M. Merriam, an undergraduate student at Harvard, then read a paper showing that the number of removals usually attributed to Jefferson was much too small. This paper attracted considerable interest, and was printed in full in one of the Washington daily papers. Another of Dr. Channing's pupils, Mr. A. B. Houghton, was put down for a paper on the international aspect of the Panama canal. He was unavoidably absent, and a very short account of his work was presented. The last paper on the list for the evening was an address by Dr. F. W. Taussig of Harvard on the early protection movement and the tariff of 1828, in which it was shown that the Jackson and Adams men so angled for the votes of all sections that the tariff of 1828, as passed, pleased no one. Mr. Henry Adams, whose history of the period from 1783 to 1812 is so anxiously awaited by students of American history, closed the session with a few remarks supplementary to Mr. Merriam's paper. He thought, however, that credit was still due to Mr. Jefferson for not making even more removals than, according to the essayist, he did make.

But the third day was in many respects the most interesting day of all. Gen. G. W. Cullum,

at one time commander at West Point, opened the morning session with an interesting account of the attack on Washington in 1814. He was followed by two of the lecturers in the course recently given at the Lowell institute in Boston, under the auspices of the Military historical society of Massachusetts, — Col. William Allan of Maryland, formerly on 'Stonewall' Jackson's staff; and Major Jedidiah Hotchkiss of Staunton, who served through the war on Jackson's, Lee's, Ewell's, and Early's staffs. Colonel Allan gave an exposition of the confederate and federal strategy in the 'Pope campaign' before Washington in 1862. His remarks were illustrated by two large plans of the scene of those operations, and were listened to with the greatest interest, even by those to whom the subject was not familiar. Major Hotchkiss followed with an illustration of the value of topographical knowledge in battles and campaigns. He drew on the board with colored crayons a map of Virginia to illustrate his remarks. His dexterity was viewed with wonderment by those in the audience who have tried — though unsuccessfully — to accomplish the same results. In the evening the attendance was even larger than at any previous meeting. Mr. Bancroft presided, and was the recipient of an ovation which was as unexpected as it was genuine and merited. Mr. Justin Winsor was elected president for the coming year, with President Adams of Cornell and William F. Poole of Chicago as vice-presidents, while William Wirt Henry of Richmond took Mr. Weeden's place on the council. At this session Dr. J. F. Jameson of the Johns Hopkins read an abstract of a very valuable paper on Usselinx, founder of the Dutch and Swedish West India companies. The venerable president of the Massachusetts historical society, Dr. George E. Ellis, spoke of the necessity of an occasional reconstruction of history. He gave as an example the work now being edited by Mr. Winsor, — 'The narrative and critical history of America.'

Altogether the meeting was a most enjoyable one. The papers were for the most part creditable to the association, and especially to its secretary, to whom the making-up of the programme was in great measure left. The one regrettable feature was the continued absence of papers on other than American history. Why is it that the teachers of other periods do not come forward? Surely there must be good work done in other fields; and the hearty reception accorded Professor Emerton last year showed that the members are interested in what many regard as really more historical subjects than the comparatively recent history of America. The absence of papers on economic subjects, and on matters of present discussion, was marked. Excursions to Arlington, Mount Vernon, and points nearer headquarters, filled up the spare hours, and the experiment of holding meetings in some place other than Saratoga may be regarded as highly successful.

PROPOSED ENGLISH FISHERY BOARD.[1]

I HAVE read with considerable interest Professor Huxley's memorandum on the proposed fishery board, and with much of what he says I agree. It seems to me, however, that attention is likely to be diverted from the real question demanding consideration, by Professor Huxley's attack upon certain persons unknown, who appear to have demanded in some newspaper which Professor Huxley has seen, that men of science should 'manage the fisheries.' That men of science should interfere with commercial speculation, and manage the fisheries in that sense, is a proposition so preposterous, that it is difficult to understand why Professor Huxley should have thought it worthy of notice.

The question which really demands consideration is another one altogether, and is simply this: Is it desirable that men of science should be definitely and permanently employed to manage the inquiries which are necessary in order that a satisfactory basis may be obtained for legislation in regard to a variety of fishery questions? And, further, is it desirable that such persons should be employed by the state in order to ascertain whether certain steps in the way of protection and cultivation of fishes can be usefully carried out by the state for the benefit of the community? Professor Huxley does not, in my judgment, attach sufficient importance to such inquiries, and the necessity for a permanent organization of officials to deal with them, when he says, "Let the department obtain such scientific help as is needful from persons of recognized competency, who are not under the control of the administrative department." This proposal seems to be somewhat inconsistent with another statement in the memorandum, where Professor Huxley says, "I should say that any amount of money bestowed upon the scientific investigation of the effect of some modes of fishing might be well spent." If 'any amount of money' is to be spent, and so large a question as 'the effect of some modes of fishing' is to be investigated scientifically, then it would seem well that the department should have a trained and permanent staff of expert naturalists, and a scientific authority to direct their inquiries.

The fact is, that enough time and money have

[1] From the *Journal of the society of arts*, April 30.