thing seemed ready, especially as the *Kana-no-kai* (the *Kana* association) was already in the field, and making the urgency of radical reforms in the mode of writing a familiar idea to everybody.

The Roman alphabet movement originated principally within the University of Tokio. The first meeting for the purpose of organizing an association to carry on the movement was called on Dec. 2, 1884, at which seventy persons were present. The work of organization was completed early in the following January. A committee of forty, including several well-known foreign scholars, was then appointed to draw up a scheme of transliteration (adapting Roman letters to our sound). As Japanese does not contain any very peculiar sound, this task was comparatively easy, although it was not until after some heated discussion that the committee could come to a decision. The committee, wisely it seems to me, seized on what was already in vogue, — for of course Japanese had been written with the Roman alphabet before this, — and fixed it into a convenient and simple scheme. The system adopted is very much like that of Dr. Hepburn, the venerable American missionary who published some years ago a Japanese-English dictionary. With the completion of a transliteration scheme, the Roman alphabet association, or *Roma-ji-kai*, as it called itself, was in fair working-order. Its publications, setting forth its objects or explaining its scheme of transliteration, were cast broadside. The association was received with enthusiasm, and was a great success from the first. In June, 1885, — that is, six months after its organization, — its members numbered 2,904 persons; in December of the same year, 6,202 persons; and at the present date of writing, the membership is about 7,000. These belong to all parts of the country, and are from every station in life, from cabinet-ministers to story-tellers. In the first meeting, held in December, 1884, there were present only 70 persons. In the general meeting, held in January of the present year, the large Central hall of the Engineering college in Tokio was filled. At least 1,200 persons listened to interesting addresses made on that occasion by Count Inouye, the minister of foreign affairs, and by the Hon. F. R. Plunkett, the English minister in Japan. The association publishes a monthly magazine, named *Rōmaji Zasshi*, and distributes it gratis among members. It contains essays on all sorts of subjects by well-known writers, besides the transliterations of extracts from popular books. In it the entire practicability of writing Japanese with the Roman alphabet has been demonstrated. The association is also having a Japanese dictionary compiled.

Some of the newspapers make a practice of printing a small part of their issue in Roman letters, and thus aid in familiarizing people with it. In some provinces local societies have been organized to cultivate the use of the Roman alphabet.

The movement is likely to make its way fastest among scientific publications. Already the Tokio physico-mathematical society publishes its proceedings in the Roman letters.

Stupendous as is the task which the Roman alphabet association has before itself, its friends are sanguine that it will accomplish its purpose. The prospects are very favorable in every respect. For instance: the Department of education some time ago sanctioned the teaching of English in primary schools. The knowledge of English, of course, implies the knowledge of reading and writing Japanese in the Roman alphabet. Let the Roman alphabet be taught in public schools, and in a generation or two we shall have accomplished the desired reform. If the change were toward any thing very difficult or disagreeable, it might be hopeless. As things are, however, the prospects are very bright.

From the first, foreigners have been in favor of the movement, and have furnished some very useful and active members. Altogether several hundred, including diplomatists, editors, missionaries, teachers, scientific men, are enrolled in its membership list. The association has also received pleasant recognition abroad from newspapers and societies. Conspicuous among this stands the action of the London philological association. At the meeting held Dec. 18, 1885, that learned body passed a resolution of sympathy with the Roman alphabet movement in Japan, moved by Dr. Furnisvall, and seconded by Professor Skeet, the president, and Henry Sweet, the philologist.

The Roman alphabet association has thus accomplished a great deal in one year of its existence. As in all similar undertakings, it suffers from lack of funds. This alone limits the sphere of its activity and usefulness. K. MITSUKURI.

Tokio, April 23.

THE AMERICAN CLIMATOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.

THE third annual meeting of the American climatological association was held at the College of physicians, Philadelphia, May 10 and 11, Dr. William Pepper presiding. The opening address of the president was devoted to the subject of the distribution of phthisis in Pennsylvania. The president reviewed the results of similar investigation by Dr. Bowditch in Massachusetts. Dr. Bowditch had found a remarkable correspondence

to exist in Massachusetts between the death-rate from phthisis and the dampness. Dr. Pepper had conducted a similar investigation in regard to Pennsylvania by means of a series of questions addressed to physicians throughout the state. The answers received were somewhat meagre and unsatisfactory, but were sufficient to show certain remarkable facts. The relation between phthisis and dampness was not so clearly shown as in the case of Dr. Bowditch's investigation. As a general rule, the counties of high elevation and sparse population made the best showing. The most striking fact, however, was the remarkable correspondence between the areas of least death-rate from phthisis and the areas of standing hemlock: they seemed to be almost exactly coterminate. In those towns where the mortality was found to be low, the death-rate was increased in those parts which lay along rivers and in swampy regions, and where the cellars of the houses were damp. The direction of the prevailing winds seemed to have no bearing upon the amount of phthisis. The opinion of the physicians addressed in regard to the influence of heredity in phthisis appeared to be almost unanimous, only 7 out of 94 denying it.

Dr. A. L. Loomis read a paper upon the effects of high altitude on cardiac disease, in which he reported several cases of various cardiac disorders, where a sudden change to a high altitude seemed to hasten the fatal event. The doctor advocated extreme caution in making such changes.

Dr. I. H. Platt of Brooklyn read a paper upon the physics and physiological action of pneumatic differentiation, the purport of which was that the action of the pneumatic cabinet was similar to that of compressed-air apparatus, and that no more medicated vapor or spray can be carried into the lungs with the aid of the differential process than without it. The author believed the beneficial result of treatment by this method to be due to the reduction of congestion by the increased atmospheric pressure in the lungs and by the strengthening of the thorax by exercise, as well as to modified nutrition consequent upon the changes in the respiratory and circulatory functions.

Dr. Roland G. Curtin contributed an interesting paper upon the subject of Rocky Mountain fever. The fever commences with a chill, and a rise of temperature to 101 or 102, without the remission of typhoid. The skin is dry. The temperature may fall suddenly and rise suddenly. Quinine seems to be powerless. Delirium may occur, but it is not usual. There is no definite duration to the disease, and its tendency is to recovery: the absence of fatal cases prevents a knowledge of the pathology. The question seems to be unsettled, whether it is a separate disease, or a light form of typhoid.

A very important paper was presented by Dr. C. C. Rice, "How the therapeutic value of our mineral waters may be increased." The fact of so many patients going to the European springs to the neglect of the American is partly the fault of the medical profession in this country, and partly the fault of the owners of the springs. Americans are less acquainted with our own springs than with those of Europe. It is important, that, if the waters are used at all, they should be used intelligently. The general hygiene should be under the direction of a physician.

One of the factors which go to make the European watering-places famous is the mental effect of the vigorous course of training there in vogue. Contrasted with this is the social life at Saratoga and Richfield springs. People go to Carlsbad, not for fashion, but for the waters. The habits at the European watering-places are simple. American springs should be more thoroughly investigated by the profession, and the waters should be given their proper place in the materia medica. He offered the following suggestions in regard to the development of our springs: 1. Analyses of the waters should be made by competent chemists; 2. Clinical investigation of the waters should be made by physicians; 3. Care should be taken to select the special spring adapted to the case; 4. A careful history and diagnosis of the case should be sent with the patient to the local physician; 5. More rigorous discipline should be enforced; 6. Patients should be compelled to abstain from fashion and social dissipation.

Dr. Didima read a paper upon the health-resorts of Mexico. His paper was based upon communications from Mexican physicians, which were somewhat contradictory; but the facts seemed to be that the climate of Mexico was naturally favorable for the relief of phthisis, but its beneficial effects were offset by its lamentable lack of sanitary arrangements. Another drawback to the climate is the great difference between the temperature in the sunshine and in the shade.

'The southern Adirondacks' was the title of Dr. E. F. Bruen's contribution, who was a warm advocate of Blue Mountain Lake. This lake is surrounded by pine-forest, and the air is so pure that no dust is visible in the beams of sunlight. But little rain falls in the winter.

Dr. J. H. Musser discussed the question of the prevention of phthisis among mill-hands, and advocated the extension of the plan adopted by the Willimantic thread company, of supplying the mill-hands with wholesome and nutritious food,

which the experience of this company has shown to be advantageous from a financial as well as a humanitarian stand-point.

Dr. Dana discussed the relation of high altitudes to nervous diseases. He had investigated the subject by means of questions addressed to physicians in various elevated stations, and arrived at the following conclusions: choreiform manifestations are increased by high altitudes; nervousness and irritability are also increased; nervous women especially are rendered more nervous; the weight of opinion seems to be that old age is not prolonged by altitude; epilepsy is not increased, sometimes the patients improve; insomnia is usually benefited, often cured; the gouty diathesis is not helped by the change.

The officers for the coming year are, president, Dr. Frank Donaldson of Baltimore; 1st vice-president, Dr. V. I. Bowditch of Boston; 2d vice-president, Dr. R. G. Curtin of Philadelphia; secretary, Dr. J. R. Walker of Philadelphia.

PROGRAMME OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILOMATHIC CONGRESS.

THE International philomathic congress, having for its object the discussion of commercial and industrial technical instruction, and opening Sept. 20, 1886, has arranged the following programme of questions for discussion: I. General questions: Present condition of commercial and industrial technical instruction in France and abroad; domain of this instruction; importance due it; its influence on the economic, commercial, and industrial condition of the country; general view of an organization of technical instruction; preparation for the various branches of this instruction; action of the state, general councils, municipalities, chambers of commerce, consulting chambers, syndic chambers, and private corporations; on the establishment of schools of technical instruction; on the elaboration of their methods and courses of instruction; on their government; on their financial organization; to what extent should technical instruction be provided with a general and uniform course? to what extent should it have special courses appropriate to the necessities of each district? what position should be allotted in the different schools of technical instruction to general instruction? what proportion is to be allotted to theoretical and what to practical instruction? relations among themselves of similar schools of technical instruction, with a view to common action respecting all general measures intended to aid their development, and assure their prosperity; concerning their representation in the superior council of technical instruction; periodicity of the congress for technical instruction; place and state of the next congress. II. Special questions: organization of commercial technical instruction, first degree (elementary commercial instruction), second degree (more advanced commercial schools), advanced degree (advanced commercial studies); organization of industrial technical instruction, first degree (workmen), second degree (master workmen and foremen), advanced degree (engineers); preparation and admission of the pupils; instruction by the master workmen; apprenticeship; schools; laws and regulations, courses, and methods; theoretical instruction and practical instruction; instruction in drawing; manual labor; staff of administration and instruction; councils of administration and improvement; buildings and material; plans and distribution of the buildings; instruments and material for instruction; libraries; commercial museums: industrial museums; financial organization; fellowships; scholastic excursions and expeditions; travelling fellowships and resident fellowships abroad; finding places for pupils after graduation; places and salaries; complimentary courses of technical instruction; courses for apprentices and adults; public lecturers. All information relating to the congress may be had of the general secretary of the Philomathic society at Bordeaux, Eugene Buhan.

NOTES AND NEWS.

WE have received a pamphlet of fifty-one pages on the Pennsylvania boroughs, which may interest some of our readers. It is written by William P. Holcomb, and forms one of the studies in historical and political science published by the Johns Hopkins university, the fourth series of which is now under way. The author begins with an account of the introduction of the borough system under William Penn, and then sketches the history of some of the leading boroughs, and concludes with a description of the borough system as it now exists. This method of local government is only found in three American states, — Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Connecticut, — and citizens of other states have some difficulty in understanding what a borough is, and wherein it differs from a city. According to Mr. Holcomb, the difference is mainly one of size, ten thousand inhabitants being required, under Pennsylvania laws, to constitute a city, while a borough need not have more than a few hundred. Then a city in that state has two representative councils, while a borough has only one; and these two points, with a few differences in names, seem to be the only distinction between the two kinds of