

among his collections which were sent to Germany are twenty-six new species. It is to be hoped that the gallant explorer will soon be saved from his perilous position, and succeed in taking with him his collections and the valuable results of his many years' researches in equatorial Africa.

Asia.

The observations of E. Michaelis on the signs of an ice-period in the Altai Mountains, mentioned in *Science*, Feb. 11, 1887, are confirmed by A. Bialoveski, who found glacier deposits, remains of moraines, and glacial striae in the southern part of the Altai (*Nature*, March 31, 1887).

La gazette géographique says that Sarat Chandra Das, an Indian explorer, who was sent out by the English government in order to study the religions of Indo-China, has arrived at Bangkok. He pretends to have explored the upper course of the Bramaputra and Jamdok-Tso (Palte Lake), which is situated about fifty miles south of Lassa.

Africa.

The new expedition of Lieutenant Wissmann left Luluaburg Nov. 16, 1886. The proposed field of exploration is the district between the Sankuru and Nyangwe. He went by steamer to the place where the Lubi discharges into the Sankuru. From there he will try to go north and to explore the unknown region where the Lulongo, Juapa, and Lomami have their sources (*Mouv. géogr.*, No. 7). During his stay in Luluaburg, Wissmann was not idle. He and de Macar, the new commander of the station, made a reconnaissance in the land of the Baluba and the basin of the Lubilash. They visited the residence of Mona Tenda, near the river Lukula. The country is inhabited by the Bashilange, and densely populated, the villages being built on the summits of the hills. The eastern bank of the Lukula belongs to the Baluba. While the country west of the river is very fertile, the Baluba country forms an undulating prairie. Though its appearance is barren and desolate, the population is very numerous. Unfortunately the visitors were attacked by the natives and forced to return to Luluaburg (*Mouv. géogr.*, No. 7).

In his letter to the London *Times*, Stanley criticises the methods of colonization of the Germans in eastern Africa. He advises them to penetrate the Somali peninsula instead of establishing scattered stations in the most unhealthy regions of equatorial Africa. He proposes that they should establish a permanent post or fort at the mouth of the Jub or Rufiji, and advance by degrees inland. In fact, the German East African association follows a similar course to the Kongo association by establishing factories on the coast and inland.

The district they selected for their operations is one of the most important in Africa, and includes all the caravan routes from the upper Kongo and Nile to the harbors of the east coast. Stanley's observations in Zanzibar on the predominant influence of the Germans and the decreasing power of the English do not confirm his criticism.

America.

The Brazilian and Argentinian commissions for determining the disputed boundary of the territory of the Missions were going to meet in the beginning of April. Important additions to our knowledge of the geography of that district may be expected from their surveys.

Antarctic regions.

The cable informs us that Nordenskjöld is planning an Antarctic expedition, and that he assumes eighteen months for accomplishing it. The interest in Antarctic exploration is rapidly increasing everywhere. The Royal geographical society of London, the Scotch geographical society, the German Geographentage, the Australian royal society, have expressed themselves in favor of Antarctic explorations, but since Lieutenant Bove's unsuccessful journey, this is the first attempt of organizing an expedition.

NOTES AND NEWS.

THE Elizabeth Thompson science fund, which has been established by Mrs. Elizabeth Thompson of Stamford, Conn., "for the advancement and prosecution of scientific research in its broadest sense," now amounts to \$25,000. As accumulated income is again available, the trustees desire to receive applications for appropriations in aid of scientific work. This endowment is not for the benefit of any one department of science, but it is the intention of the trustees to give the preference to those investigations *which cannot otherwise be provided for*, which have for their object the advancement of human knowledge or the benefit of mankind in general, rather than to researches directed to the solution of questions of merely local importance. Applications for assistance from this fund should be accompanied by a full statement of the nature of the investigation, of the conditions under which it is to be prosecuted, and of the manner in which the appropriation asked for is to be expended. The applications should be forwarded to the secretary of the board of trustees, Dr. C. S. Minot, Harvard medical school, Boston, Mass., U.S.A. The new grants will probably be made in May, 1887. The following grants have been made: 1. \$200 to the New England meteorological society for the investigation of

cyclonic movements in New England; 2. \$150 to Samuel Rideal, Esq., of University college, London, England, for investigations on the absorption of heat by odorous gases; 3. \$75, to H. M. Howe, Esq., of Boston, Mass., for the investigation of fusible slags of copper and lead smelting; 4. \$500 to Prof. J. Rosenthal of Erlangen, Germany, for investigations on animal heat in health and disease; 5. \$50 to Joseph Jastrow, Esq., of the Johns Hopkins university, Baltimore, Md., for investigations on the laws of psychophysics. The board of trustees consists of H. P. Bowditch, president; William Minot, jun., treasurer; Francis A. Walker; Edward C. Pickering; Charles Sedgwick Minot, secretary.

—The fish-commission schooner *Grampus*, recently finished, has been engaged during the winter in catching cod-fish and gathering cod-eggs, and also in catching mackerel. It is the purpose of the commission to study the migrations of the mackerel from its first appearance until it enters the Gulf of Maine. The seasons and conditions favorable to spawning will be closely observed. The migrations of menhaden, blue-fish, and other fishes, will also be studied.

—The conference of astronomers called by Admiral Mouchez, director of the Paris observatory, for the purpose of forming a plan of co-operation in photographing the whole sky, will doubtless result in the accomplishment of this project. The proposition is to enlist ten or twelve observatories in the undertaking, so located that their combined range will take in the whole sky. It is suggested that each plate be four degrees square, which if adopted, would require eleven thousand plates. It is estimated, that, with an average of one hundred plates per year from eleven observatories, each plate covering four degrees square, it would take ten years to complete the whole work.

—We learn from the *Athenaeum* that the Hibbert lecturer this year will be Professor Sayce, and the subject will be Assyrian and Babylonian religion. The lectures will be delivered at the end of April and during May, both in London and Oxford. The Hibbert trustees have also in the press a work by one of their scholars, Mr. H. W. Wallis of Cambridge, 'On the cosmology of the Rig Veda: a study in Indian logic.'

—Rev. W. Lucas Collins, editor of the popular series of 'Ancient classics for English readers,' is dead.

—Professor Möbius of Kiel is the new director of the Zoölogical museum at Berlin.

—Messrs. B. Westermann & Co., New York, have published a second edition of Lemcke's "An

illustrated grammar of skat, the famous German game of cards now attracting so much attention."

—Entrance examinations for the Massachusetts institute of technology will be held in Boston, Mass., on Thursday and Friday, June 2 and 3; also in New York, Philadelphia, Montreal, Chicago, St. Louis, Cincinnati, San Francisco, Washington, Nashville, St. Paul, Atlanta, and Pittsburgh.

—The *Lancet* reports the case of a woman dying from myxedema whose temperature ranged from 66° F. to 76° F., the normal temperature being 98.5° F. The pulsations of this patient's heart were 36, and her respirations 12 to the minute. The temperature is said to be the lowest human temperature on record.

—The *New York medical journal* of April 9 contains a detailed account, with illustrations, of the induction balance and the telephonic probe employed for the detection and location of metallic masses in the human body.

—The *Boston medical and surgical journal* reports that a large number of calves from one hour to three days old are said to have been slaughtered in Herkimer and Oneida counties, and sent to New York, where they are put up as 'canned chicken.'

—From the report of the hospital for Chinese, in Shanghai, we learn that in China small-pox inoculation is still in vogue. For this purpose a rag is moistened with the variolous matter and placed in the nostril. That the disease is prevalent in China is easily understood after this explanation.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

* * *The attention of scientific men is called to the advantages of the correspondence columns of SCIENCE for placing promptly on record brief preliminary notices of their investigations. Twenty copies of the number containing his communication will be furnished free to any correspondent on request.

The editor will be glad to publish any queries consonant with the character of the journal.

Correspondents are requested to be as brief as possible. The writer's name is in all cases required as proof of good faith.

Mole-lore.

HERE are three items of mole lore in the District of Columbia:—

1. A mole's feet cut off and hung around a child's neck will help it in teething. In some instances in Virginia these odd amulets have been handed down, I am told, for generations. They are equally believed in by colored people of Maryland. 'That's what the old-time people say,' is the only explanation. The superstition comes into the District from both these neighboring states.

2. Once the mole was an over-proud young lady. She is condemned to travel under ground as a punishment for her pride. Unlike the former, this is told with a smile, and probably quite without belief.