

were probably the starting-point of that affection also, and that its symptoms in an ordinary sufferer might be alleviated by blistering or otherwise counter-irritating the skin around the ears. Later, in crossing the English Channel, he thought he prevented an attack of sea-sickness in himself by rubbing the mastoid processes with his fingers. He has since been unable to get any one to try the plan. He refers to an account of an accident which happened to the editor of the *Gulf review*, of Florida, as confirmatory of his views of the cause of sea-sickness. In this accident the editor received a blow on the mastoid process just behind the right ear, crushing the outer table of the skull, and destroying the delicate nervous portion of the internal ear, including the semicircular canals. The immediate consequences of the injury were, first, the most distressing nausea of a character identical with sea-sickness, which lasted, with intervals of ease, for two or three days; and, secondly, complete destruction of the function of the ear, being deaf in that ear ever after. Shortly after convalescence, the writer made a voyage to Cuba and back in rough weather, exposed to a very rough sea for six days each way, and, although previously very susceptible, he found himself proof against sea-sickness; and this immunity has continued ever since, now nearly twenty-eight years. Dr. James requests that travellers will bear his suggestion in mind, and report to him the result, whether successful or failures.

Dr. Fordyce Barker, an eminent physician of New York, and a traveller by ocean of great experience, has also suggested a method for the treatment of sea-sickness. He recommends that in making a short passage over rough water a hearty meal should be eaten not more than two or three hours before sailing, and that the individual should, if possible, keep in the centre of the vessel, and lie down before starting, and that he should avoid disagreeable sights and smells. In making ocean voyages, he should select his berth with these same objects in view, and should remain in bed for one or two days, and eat regularly and heartily. He should take a cup of coffee or tea each morning before rising, and should keep the bowels regulated. If diarrhoea sets in, it should be controlled by the remedies usually given for cholera-morbus. If the weather becomes rough, he should go to bed before becoming sick.

It may be of interest to note that a large number of remedies has been recommended from time to time, by physicians and others, for sea-sickness. Among them are the bromides of potassium and sodium, hydrate of chloral, opium, chloroform,

hydrocyanic acid, alcohol, nitrite of amyl, cocaine, strong coffee, Hoffman's anodyne, bismuth, bicarbonate of soda, and nitroglycerine; for external application, ice, stimulating liniments of belladonna, chloroform and camphor, and hot bottles to the feet. It is a safe principle in medicine that when, for any given disease, a large number of remedies is recommended, the specific remedy, or that which will cure all the cases of that disease, or the most of them, has not yet been discovered. The writer in Quain's dictionary says, on the subject of treatment, it may be premised that there is no known means of preventing sea-sickness in those susceptible of it. We should be glad to have the recommendation of Dr. James carried out, and to receive reports from those who, during the coming summer, may try his plan.

#### THE MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC AND HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS.

ON Tuesday morning, May 24, the Historical association listened to papers on 'A study in Swiss history,' by J. M. Vincent of Johns Hopkins university; 'The Spaniard in New Mexico,' by Gen. W. W. H. Davis; and 'The historic name of our country,' by Prof. Moses Coit Tyler of Cornell. The Economic association first heard the report of its committee on the 'Condition and organization of retail trade,' which was the subject of some discussion, and then Prof. Henry C. Adams read a report on 'Municipal public works.' The replies to the committee's circulars to gas companies were interesting.

Circulars were sent to 971 gas companies in the United States; and of these, 675 sent replies to various questions relative to price of gas per thousand cubic feet. The prices ranged all the way from 75 cents to \$20 a thousand feet. All over \$6 were considered so abnormal as to be put out of consideration. It was found that the average price of the coal-gas companies was \$1.73, that of water-gas \$1.85, and the total average \$1.75, per thousand feet. It was remarked, that, although the average cost of producing water-gas was not as great as that of the coal-gas, the price of the former was greater. This is due to the fact that popular ideas of relative danger and other circumstances did not warrant the production of the water-gas on so large a scale as the coal-gas companies are warranted in producing it.

The afternoon session was a joint one of both associations, and was held at Sander's theatre, Harvard university. Three papers were presented. The first, by Prof. E. J. James of Philadelphia, was on 'Our legal tender decisions,' and

was a defence of the last decision of the supreme court against the criticism of George Bancroft. Dr. A. B. Hart of Harvard read an amusing 'Biography of a river and harbor bill,' in which he traced the history of this bill for 1887 as an illustration of congressional methods and financial legislation. The paper by Col. Carroll D. Wright, on the 'Study of statistics in colleges,' was by many considered the most valuable of the meeting, and we are glad to learn that it will shortly appear in pamphlet form. Colonel Wright showed what Europe was doing in statistical studies, and paid a deserved compliment to Prof. Richmond M. Smith of Columbia for his work in this field. He pointed out the difficulty of applying statistics properly, and insisted on the necessity for trained statisticians. He would arrange the teaching of statistical science in three grand divisions: 1. The basis of statistical science, or, as it has been generally termed in college-work, the theory of statistics; 2. The practice of statistics, which involves the preparation of inquiries, the collection and examination of the information sought, and the tabulation and presentation of results; 3. The analytical treatment of the results secured. He remarked that our census could be more scientifically taken, could more of the subordinate workers be men who had had a statistical training.

The active work of both associations closed Tuesday evening. The closing papers before the Historical society were, 'The government of London,' by Prof. Arthur M. Wheeler of Yale university; 'Religious liberty in Virginia, and Patrick Henry,' by Charles J. Stillé, LL.D., of Philadelphia; 'The American church in history,' by Dr. Philip Schaff of Union theological seminary, New York; 'Brief report on historical studies in Canada,' by George Stewart, jun., president of the Historical society, Quebec. The following committee was appointed to urge congress to establish a national commission to collect and care for the manuscripts and documents relating to U. S. history: Justin Winsor, George F. Hoar, John Jay, Andrew D. White, Rutherford B. Hayes, Ainsworth R. Spofford, and President Dwight of Yale. The officers elected for the ensuing year were as follows: president, William F. Poole, Chicago public library; vice-presidents, President Charles K. Adams of Cornell, John Jay of New York; secretary, Prof. H. B. Adams, Johns Hopkins university; treasurer, Clarence W. Bowen, New York City; executive committee, Rutherford B. Hayes of Ohio, Prof. John W. Burgess of Columbia, Prof. Arthur M. Wheeler of Yale, and William Wirt Henry of Richmond.

The principal paper at the closing session of the

Economic association was by Prof. Frank J. Goodnow of Columbia, and was on the 'Administrative aspect of municipal franchises and finance in Europe and America.' The paper was an able study in comparative administrative law, and commanded the closest attention. It was discussed by Professor Johnston of Princeton, Professor James of Philadelphia, Mr. Giddings of Springfield, Mass., and others. Professor Ely read his report, which spoke most encouragingly of the society's prospects. The total membership is now over three hundred, and much interest is shown in the work, even in England.

Pres. Francis A. Walker of Boston, and Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia, were appointed a special committee to report on the economic effects of industrial and technical education in the United States. The officers elected were as follows: president, Francis A. Walker; vice-presidents, Prof. Henry C. Adams, Prof. E. J. James, Prof. J. B. Clark; secretary, Prof. R. T. Ely; treasurer, Dr. E. R. A. Seligman. On Wednesday, the 25th, both associations made an excursion to Plymouth, and dined together at the Samoset house. The meeting was a most successful one, and the officers of the Institute of technology and of Harvard university did every thing in their power to render it enjoyable. It is proposed to hold the next meeting at Columbus, O., in September, 1888.

#### NEW ZEALAND LETTER.

THAT portion of the year which extends from May to October inclusive, is the busiest in this part of the world for politicians, university men, and members of scientific and literary societies.

In matters political, the question upon which public opinion in the colony is being most exercised, and around which parties are gradually crystallizing, is that of free trade *v.* protection. This also is the question which will probably prove the one of chief interest outside our own borders; and those who have borne their part in the long-continued struggle still being fought out in the states, will naturally feel more or less interest as they see these small but growing Australasian communities entering upon the same struggle. We have two noted examples before us in Victoria and New South Wales: the latter—free trade to the backbone—is apparently far outstripping its rivals in the race for wealth and progress. One aspect of the question, on which, however, it is pre-eminently difficult to frame an opinion, is as to which of the two communities enjoys the greatest amount of social peace and harmony, and in which is there the least amount