

upon Mr. H. F. Allen, a fellow at the Johns Hopkins, made the announcement that the Semitic seminary of the university proposed publishing at an early date a complete Assyrian glossary. The work would be issued under the superintendence of Professor Haupt, and, while not intending to supersede the great Assyrian dictionary now in course of publication by Prof. Friedrich Delitzsch of Leipzig, will aim to supply the need of students of Assyrian better than the latter work does. The principles which will guide the compilers in their work were briefly set forth. Professor Haupt followed with a second announcement, also of great interest to Semitic scholars, regarding a series of contributions to Semitic comparative philology, which he proposes editing in conjunction with the above-mentioned Professor Delitzsch; and it must have seemed to many as though an Assyriological 'craze' had broken out when Dr. Cyrus Adler added a third announcement, which was no less gratifying than the preceding ones.

The National Museum at Washington has recently entered into an arrangement with the Johns Hopkins University with a view of obtaining as complete a collection as possible of facsimiles and casts of seals coming from Mesopotamia, and to include eventually in the collection also important cylinders and tablets bearing cuneiform inscriptions. The beginning will be made with the antiquities scattered throughout the museums and private collections in this country. Besides the copy of each piece to be deposited in Washington, another copy will be given to the Johns Hopkins, in consideration of which the latter institution will superintend the collection at the national capital. The project is one which promises to arouse considerable interest; and the hope that it may yet lead to an exploring and excavating expedition from this country to the mounds in Mesopotamia, which still harbor such untold treasures, may not be an utterly futile one.

President Gilman exhibited photographs of the famous Greek manuscript, 'The Teachings of the Apostles,' the discovery of which some years ago created a veritable sensation. The original manuscript is in an Eastern monastery, but the photographic reproductions are executed with an excellence that makes them fully as reliable for students as the original copy. Dr. Binion of Baltimore had some specimens of a magnificent illustrated work on the art of ancient Egypt, which he is about issuing. The cost of the work, which will contain all the important Egyptian monuments, will be one hundred and fifty dollars a copy. Professor Frothingham closed the interesting programme with a description of a monastery he recently saw in Italy, dating from the Byzantine period, and which possesses a most remarkable twelve-sided tower, — the only instance of the kind in the world.

Thursday morning again found the members in Hopkins Hall. Professor Lanman presented a brief paper from Professor Whitney. Dr. Peet had an interesting treatise on animal and sun worship among the American Indians, which brought forth some curious points of coincidence between the religious notions of the Indians and other ancient peoples. Dr. Cyrus Adler of the Johns Hopkins presented two papers bearing on Assyriological research. One of these treated of the views of the Assyrians on life after death. They believed in a future life, but the notion of a future punishment does not seem to have arisen among them, nor do we find that any distinction is made by them between the abode of the good and of the wicked. It is probable that they supposed all would share in the life to come.

Professor Hopkins of Bryn Mawr called attention to some proverbs in the Mahabharata paralleling those found among other nations. Among these, there is the 'golden rule,' which, however, is formulated negatively in the Sanscrit: "Do not unto others what thou wouldst not have others do unto you." A discussion followed in which several members participated. Professor Lanman remarked that in Chinese the maxim also has the negative form, as is also the case in the Talmud, where the saying is put in the mouth of the famous rabbi Hillel.

Mr. Allen had a suggestive paper on a proposed method of transliterating the letters of the Semitic languages. There is scarcely any point in regard to which scholars differ so much as in the method of reproducing the Semitic sounds, and yet it is eminently desirable that some uniform method be adopted. The system proposed by Mr. Allen endeavors to proceed upon the principles of

phonetics, and has at least the advantage of simplicity; but whether it will meet with the approbation of scholars remains to be seen.

Further papers were presented by Dr. Ward on some Babylonian mythological symbols; by Professor Bloomfield on 'The Fire-Ordeal Hymn in the Athavar-Veda,' by Dr. T. W. Jackson; and finally one — which, however, was only read in abstract by Professor Lanman — from Mr. Rockhill, of the American legation at Peking, on the relations of Corea to China. Mr. Rockhill is engaged in important researches which promise to clear up many obscure points in Chinese history. In a communication to Secretary Lanman, he cites an instance to show how untrustworthy the ordinary information concerning China is. It seems that in the recent census an entire province was overlooked, which contained some sixty million inhabitants; so that the figures usually given must be changed to three hundred and seventy-nine millions. A number of new members, both corporate and corresponding, were elected, and the following honorary members: Sir Henry C. Rawlinson, the well known Assyriologist, and editor of the great publication undertaken by the British Museum, 'The Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia'; Prof. George F. Böhler, a distinguished Sanscrit scholar of Germany, and editor of the latest volume of the 'Sacred Books of the East'; and Prof. Edward Sachau of the University of Berlin, who has been called to take charge of the Oriental institute which has just been established by the German Government for the training of diplomates and officials in the Eastern service. All the chief European capitals, with the exception of London, now possess institutions of this nature, where the important Oriental languages are taught, and it has been said that the Emperor of Brazil contemplates the establishment of one at Rio Janeiro. The Berlin school has opened with the amazingly large number of one hundred pupils.

The next meeting of the Oriental Association will be held in Boston during the month of May, 1888.

HEALTH MATTERS.

Cholera Cases at Quarantine.

IN *Science* of Oct. 14 we noted the arrival at New York of the steamship 'Alesia' from Italy, with cholera on board. Since then another steamer, the 'Britannia,' from the same ports, has arrived. This vessel was detained at quarantine, and during this detention one of the passengers, a child, was taken sick with what is now known to have been cholera. Two other cases of cholera have developed on this same vessel, the latter of them on Oct. 24. It is said that the report of the surgeon of the vessel gave not the slightest indication of the existence of cholera on board, and it is more than probable, that, had not the arrival of the 'Alesia' with developed cholera on board occurred prior to that of the 'Britannia,' the cases of cholera which occurred on the latter steamer would have first been heard of in some hotel or boarding-house of New York.

So far as we have seen, no statement has yet been made of the health of the passengers and crew of the 'Britannia' during the voyage from Italy to New York. It would be criminal on the part of the surgeon of that steamer to have concealed the fact if cases of cholera occurred during the voyage; and, if they did not, it would seem to be a warrantable inference that cholera may develop on a ship even after a voyage across the Atlantic, and that, as happened in the case of the 'Britannia,' the health-officer is justified in detaining in quarantine a vessel from ports in which cholera is known to exist, even though she may not have had sickness on board during the voyage. It is stated that urgent demands were made on the health-officer to permit the 'Britannia' to come to the city without detention, and that it was claimed that the sickness of the child passenger was simply cholera-infantum.

Dr. Smith is to be congratulated on having exercised the authority which the State has conferred upon him, in having detained the 'Britannia,' and he may be assured that the people of this great country will uphold him in the exercise of the most arbitrary powers so long as the public health is in the imminent danger that it is in at the present time. A lack of intelligent action now may result in the introduction of cholera germs, which, though they may lie dormant during the winter, may result in a plentiful harvest when next summer comes.

AMERICAN CATTLE-PLAGUE.—Dr. Frank S. Billings, director of the patho-biological laboratory of the State University of Nebraska, claims to have discovered the germ of the American cattle-plague, commonly known as Texas-fever. This germ, he says, belongs to that class of septic germs represented by our swine-plague and rabbit septicaemia. It is a bacterium. It colors at its poles, and has a clear or non-coloring middle piece to its body. It has a motility in hanging drop-cultures, and also in the blood serum from the original blood of a diseased animal. Dr. Billings gives no experimental evidence to support his claim, but states that this will follow in course of time.

HEALTH OF PRISONERS.—Dr. Watkins, inspector of the State Board of Health of Louisiana, has recently examined the prisoners in the parish prison of New Orleans. He found a number of the inmates suffering from acute dropsy of the legs, arms, face, and body, due to confinement and insufficient and unwholesome food. Each prisoner is allowed a piece of bread and a pint of tea early in the morning, and one meal consisting of soup, the beef cooked in the soup, and bread. The beef is supplied by a contractor at five cents and a half per pound, and has been repeatedly condemned by the resident surgeon.

TYPHOID-FEVER CONTAGION.—We have repeatedly called the attention of our readers to what we believe to be a dangerous error in the management of typhoid-fever. The tendency to look upon drinking-water as the usual, if not indeed the only, channel by which the disease is propagated, is so prevalent among sanitarians and physicians, that other means are very liable to be overlooked, and the necessary precautionary measures neglected. An instance of the probable communication of this fever by other instrumentality than water is reported by M. Bonamy of Nantes. Two households used drinking-water from the same source. In one six cases of typhoid-fever occurred, four of which were fatal: in the other no cases occurred. It is true that this is negative evidence. It is, however, notwithstanding, of some value; not perhaps taken alone, but in connection with other facts which have from time to time been recorded touching the methods by which typhoid is propagated.

SCARLET-FEVER IN LONDON.—Scarlet-fever is very prevalent in London, there being in the hospitals alone nineteen hundred cases under treatment.

YELLOW-FEVER AT TAMPA.—The disease which appeared in Tampa, Fla., in the early part of October, has developed into undoubted yellow-fever. To Oct. 24 there had been 180 cases reported, with 27 deaths. Under the auspices of the United States Marine Hospital Bureau, a hospital has been provided, and a corps of experienced nurses has been obtained from Savannah to take care of the sick. The weather is very favorable for the spread of the fever, and the extension of the disease to the suburbs of the town is conceded.

EXPLORATION AND TRAVEL.

The Kuango.

MR. MENSE, who accompanied the energetic missionary Grenfell on his exploration of the lower Kuango, has described the interesting journey in a lecture delivered before the Geographical Society of Berlin. He describes the exploring of the tributaries of the Kongo as not connected with great difficulties, which only begin when an overland journey is attempted. In the trip up the Kuango a lady even participated. The principal difficulty was the obtaining of fuel for the boiler of the steamboat. Food was plentiful, as the river swarmed with hippopotamuses. In many places their meat could be bartered for fuel. When arriving near Kindjungi, a reef running right across the river, the hippopotamuses got scarce, but in their stead an abundance of shell-fish was found. The intercourse with the natives was generally peaceable; but, as those tribes who had hostile intentions had no fire-arms, their attacks were not dangerous. Grenfell had provided his steamer with a net of steel, which protects the crew and the passengers from the arrows. The reef Kindjungi stopped the progress of the expedition. The river forms a fall three feet in height, and has dangerous whirlpools. It rushes through a narrow gorge cut about a thou-

sand feet into the plateau, which consists of laterite. The tribes inhabiting this district have had no intercourse with Europeans. They wear self-manufactured clothing, and their language differs from those spoken near Stanley Pool. The country is thickly wooded, and caoutchouc is found in considerable quantities. Elephants and buffaloes are numerous, but there are only few villages. The lower part of the river runs through a grassy plain, while near Kindjungi the country becomes mountainous. As Major von Mechow descended the Kuango to Kindjungi, and as Dr. Büttner reached its middle course coming from the west, the position of the whole river is now fairly laid down.

TRAVELS IN AFRICA.—Captain van Gèle's attempt to reach the Welle, according to *Le Mouvement Géographique*, has unfortunately been unsuccessful. When he arrived on the upper Itimbiri, he unexpectedly found the country uninhabited and poor. As he was not prepared for this, and had no provisions to last him for a journey through unknown territory, he had to return. He will probably resume his enterprise. According to the Proceedings of the Geographical Society of Berlin, Dr. H. Meyer has succeeded in reaching the summit of the Kilima Njaro, while all former travellers failed in their attempts. The summit is occupied by a crater. It is covered with snow, which sends forth a glacier that extends to a comparatively low level. The Germans are making vigorous attempts to penetrate into the extensive unknown area of West Africa. Two expeditions are being organized in Kamerun to explore the interior, which forms the watershed between the Kongo and Benue systems. Lieutenants Kund and Tappenbeck, who made important discoveries in the southern Kongo basin, will push eastward, while Dr. Zindgraff will try to penetrate into the interior in a north-easterly direction. So far, the hostility and jealousy of those tribes who command the trade between the interior and the coast have prevented all expeditions from entering the unknown country.

GREENLAND.—The Danish expedition to the coast of northern Greenland, says *Nature*, has just returned to Copenhagen. It has been absent since the spring of 1886, and was directed by Mr. C. Ryder. During the two summers it was enabled to proceed from latitude 72° to latitude 74½°. It investigated the Upernivik glacier during the winter. Many meteorological, magnetic, and astronomical observations were made, many anthropological measurements were taken, and botanical and zoological collections have been brought back. The investigations of the western coast of Greenland are not likely to be continued for the present. It is to be regretted if the latter statement should be true. The Danish expeditions to Greenland have resulted in so numerous and valuable contributions to our knowledge of this immense island that their continuation seems very desirable. The exploration of Melville Bay is of the greatest importance, as here many questions regarding the character of the ice of Davis Strait must be solved, and as its topography is utterly unknown; but so far the Danes have not extended their researches beyond their most northern settlement, Tassiusak, which lies at the southern extremity of Melville Bay.

BRITISH COLUMBIA.—Dr. George M. Dawson, chief of the party sent by the Canadian Government to explore the country adjacent to the Alaska boundary, has returned to Victoria. Two of his party, Messrs. Ogilvie and McConnell, will winter in the district, making astronomical observations, which will give data for the establishment of the international boundary. The expedition so far has secured a great deal of geological, geographical, and general information of the country. The point from which the doctor turned back was at the junction of the Lewis and Pelly Rivers. It is one thousand miles north of Victoria. There the flora was found to differ but little from that on the banks of the Fraser. A great deal of open, grassy country exists along the streams tributary to the Yukon. No areas of tundra or frozen swamps, such as are to be met with in the interior of Alaska, were discovered by the expedition. The doctor's conclusion is that the whole country from Cassian to the vicinity of Forty Mile Creek, on the Yukon River, yields more or less gold in placer deposits. This would constitute a gold-bearing region fully five hundred miles in length by an indefinite width, and which so far, in comparison to the area, has been very little prospected.