

useful scientific toy. They are sold at the moderate price of seventy-five cents.

Nature states that an International Marine and Fisheries Exhibit will be held at Kiel next year, in connection with a provincial exhibition in Schleswig-Holstein, and will be opened from May 13th to the end of September.

JOHANNES ADOLF OVERBECK, for forty-two years professor of archaeology at the University of Leipzig, died recently, aged sixty-nine years.

M. POINCARÉ reported to the Paris Academy on November 11th that he had found that the moon influences the production and direction of cyclones.

MR. W. R. BROOKS, director of Smith Observatory, Geneva, N. Y., discovered on the morning of November 21st a comet in the southeastern sky. The position was right ascension $9^h 51^m 50^s$, and declination S. $17^\circ 40'$. The comet has a northerly motion.

WE have received part I. of Vol. V. of the proceedings of the California Academy of Sciences, issued on November 18th. The proceedings contain 27 papers, extending to 784 pages and including 75 plates. The work of the Academy is of great interest and importance, more especially as most of the papers are concerned with the fauna, flora and physiography of California. Among the papers are a Review of the Herpetology of Lower California, by John van Denburgh; California Water Birds, by Leverett M. Loomis; The Neocene Stratigraphy of the Santa Cruz Mountains of California, by George H. Ashley; The Fishes of Sinaloa, by David Starr Jordan; Contributions to Western Botany, by Marcus E. Jones, and Explorations in the Cape Region of Baja California, by Gustav Eisen.

DR. JULIUS VON SCHRODER, professor of chemistry at the School of Forestry at Tharandt died on October 27th, at the age of 52. The deaths are also announced of Edward Combes, a well-known Australian engineer; of Lieutenant Otto E. Ehler, the German explorer, who was drowned while making his expedition across British New Guinea; of Oscar Borchert, the African traveler, who died of malarial fever at the Bethlehem Institute, near Ludwigslust,

and of George Edward Dobson, a writer on natural history, who died on November 26, at the age of 51.

MR. F. O. T. DELMAR, of Bayswater, who died on October 14th, has left £100,000 to his trustees to form a fund to be called the Delmar Charitable Trust. Nine-tenths of the annual income from this fund is to be divided between selected charitable institutions in London or its neighborhood, 'having regard to the relative importance and magnitude of each institution.' The testator expresses his desire to benefit in particular the establishments for the care and treatment of epileptic and cancerous patients and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS.

THE Medical Department of Vanderbilt University was reorganized last spring. A new faculty was elected and a graded course of three years was adopted. The faculty consists of ten professors and twenty instructors, lecturers and assistants. Dr. Wm. L. Dudley is dean of the faculty and Dr. Richard Douglas secretary. Dr. W. M. L. Coplin, late of Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, fills the chair of pathology and bacteriology. The department has removed this session into the Medical College building lately erected and furnished at a cost of \$70,000.

THE Chemical Laboratory of the Rose Polytechnic Institute was burned on the morning of November 9th. The walls of the Laboratory and a part of the floor were saved, but the rest of the building and the entire equipment were destroyed. The loss was about \$7,500, of which \$5,000 was covered by insurance. The chemical lecture room is in another building, and provisions has already been made for students of the chemical course to continue their laboratory work. A new equipment has been ordered and the building will be rebuilt as soon as possible.

THE ninth annual convention of the Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Middle States and Maryland was held at Lafayette College, Easton, Pa., under the presidency

of Prof. N. M. Butler, of Columbia College, on November 29th and 30th.

THE Brown University Lecture Association has announced the following courses of free public lectures for the coming season: 'The Religions of China,' by Rev. F. Huberty James, formerly of China; 'Lectures on the History of Song,' by Louis C. Elson, of the *Boston Daily Advertiser*; 'Studies in Social Economics,' by Hon. Carrol D. Wright, Esq., of Washington; 'The Divina Commedia, its Predecessors and Successors,' by Prof. Courtney Langdon, of Brown University. Prof. Charles S. Hastings, Ph.D., of Yale University, will give three lectures upon a subject in physical science to be announced later.

THE calender of the Imperial University of Japan for 1894-95 shows that it ranks among the great universities of the world. All the schools are represented; there are laboratories, hospitals and museums, an astronomical observatory, a seismological observatory, botanic gardens, a marine biological station, etc. The number of students is as follows:

University Hall.....	94
College of Law.....	432
College of Medicine.....	175
College of Engineering.....	229
College of Literature.....	179
College of Science.....	98
College of Agriculture.....	261
Total.....	1468

There are fourteen full professors in the college of science, and a majority of those registered in University Hall are engaged in scientific research. A large part of the work accomplished is published in the *Journal of the College of Science*, which maintains a high scientific standard.

DR. STRAHL, of Marburg, has been appointed to the chair of anatomy in the University of Giessen, in succession to Professor Bonnet, and Dr. Charles B. Ball has been appointed regius professor of surgery in the place of the late Sir George Porter in Dublin University.

On November 1st a laboratory for study and research was opened in connection with the school of physical and industrial chemistry at 42

Rue Lhormond, Paris. By paying a fixed sum monthly to the city anyone desiring to work in this laboratory will have all its facilities at his disposal.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TESTIMONY VERSUS EVIDENCE.

"It is, we are told, the special peculiarity of the devil that he was a liar from the beginning. If we set out in life with pretending to know that which we do not know; with professing to accept for proof evidence which we are well aware is inadequate * * * we are assuredly doing our best to deserve the same character."—Huxley. *Essays V.*, 54.

Some weeks ago (*SCIENCE*, Oct. 4, 1895, p. 435) I quoted from recent numbers of the journal extracts to the effect that the phenomena of vitality are not 'explicable' in terms of physical matter and mechanical energy, and that some of them, those of consciousness and volition, are 'agencies' and causes of structure.

Since many thoughtful students believe that the facts warrant nothing more than a humble confession of ignorance of these matters, I called upon the learned bodies which have endorsed the utterances which I quoted to publish the evidence that proves them; and I ventured the prediction that the publication of this evidence would render the said learned bodies memorable for all time.

So far as I am informed this proof has not yet been published; but a number of correspondents have used the pages of *SCIENCE* to discuss my article, which contained the following passage (p. 439): "What can fundamental disagreement among those who speak with authority lead to except disaster? Are we not bound to find first principles which will command the assent of all thinking men?"

Since this correspondence furnishes new evidence of the imperative need for this agreement regarding the foundations of biology I venture to discuss it.

I some time ago (*SCIENCE*, April 5, 1895, p. 384) expressed my conviction that it is better to be called a vitalist or any other hard name by zealous monists than to be convicted of teaching as proven what we know is not proved; and, so far as I am personally concerned, the only answer I care to give these correspondents is that it is better to be called a 'materialist' or a