

WE learn from *Nature* that arrangements are being made to commemorate the sixtieth year of the reign of Queen Victoria by an exhibition at the Crystal Palace, to be opened on May 24, 1897. It is proposed to illustrate by models and practical examples the famous inventions in arts and industries during the past sixty years, and also the progress of other sides of national development. As a sort of prologue to this exhibition, a series of popular lectures, dealing with the advancements in science made during Her Majesty's reign, will be delivered during March and April next.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS.

THE Pope has appointed the Rev. Dr. Thomas J. Conaty, rector of the Church of the Sacred Heart, Worcester, Mass., to succeed Bishop John J. Keane as rector of the Catholic University at Washington. Dr. Conaty is a native of Ireland and is supposed to be more conservative than his predecessor.

PROF. WILLIAM M. SLOANE, of Princeton University, has been elected to the Seth Low professorship of American history in Columbia University.

HAVERFORD COLLEGE will soon come into possession of property valued at nearly \$500,000, bequeathed by Jacob P. Jones in 1885, subject to a life estate for his wife, who died a few days ago.

COLONEL C. S. VENABLE, for thirty-one years professor of mathematics in the University of Virginia, has retired.

ACCORDING to the *Academische Rundschau*, the additional yearly appropriations granted to the French universities under the new laws, to take effect January 1, 1898, will be approximately as follows: Lyons, 130,000 fr.; Bordeaux, 100,000 fr.; Toulouse, 80,000 fr. The remaining universities will receive sums varying from 20,000 to 50,000 frs. The amount of the appropriation to the University of Paris has not yet been decided, but it is expected that the five Paris Faculties, with their large number of students, will receive four or five times the amount appropriated to the Faculty at Lyons.

THE following foreign appointments are announced: Professor Lenard, director of the physical laboratory, Polytechnic Institute, at

Aachen, has been called to the University of Heidelberg; Dr. Czapek, Privatdocent at the University at Vienna, has been made associate professor of botany in the Polytechnic Institute in Prague; Dr. Seeliger, Privatdocent in zoology at Berlin, and Dr. Karl Mez, Privatdocent in botany at Breslau, have been promoted to professorships.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

AN OPTICAL ILLUSION.

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: I reproduce, in one of the accompanying diagrams (A), the arrangement used in a research published in the *Psychological Review* (II., May, 1895, p. 244), and reprinted in the *Princeton Contributions to Psychology* (No. 2, Sept., 1895), the result of which was to show that the judgment, *i. e.*, of the midpoint between two such squares as those of Fig. A, is subject to illusion. The actual midpoint, marked by the short line on the line of connection between the squares, is regularly judged to be too far toward the larger square, the real midpoint being judged farther toward the smaller. I should like to gather further results by the use of the Figures A and B, and your readers may be willing to assist as follows:

Ask people of both sexes, but recording the difference of sex, the following questions strictly in the order named, first of Fig. A. They should be entirely ignorant of the experiment and its results.

Question 1. Holding the figure before the eyes with *the bottom of the page down*, is the line connecting the squares bisected by the short line or not, and if not, is the real midpoint further to the right (R) or to the left (L)?

Question 2. Holding the page with *the bottom of it turned to the right hand*, ask whether the midpoint is marked by the line or whether it is farther up (U) or farther down (D).

Question 3. Holding the figure with *the bottom of the page upwards*, ask as in question 1.

Question 4. Holding the figure with *the bottom of the page toward the left hand*, ask as in question 2.

Then taking figure B., ask *the same questions in the same order*, being careful to have the person still altogether uninstructed as to the results of the first series and also to connect the