vast drainage systems in that country. Engineer C. C. Vermuele has made a report stating that underlying the 27,000 acres of marsh is a mass of alluvium mixed with peat, wood and other vegetable matter, more or less decayed. The depth of this accumulation ranges generally from seven to fifteen feet. The natural level of the surface is three to four inches above mean high tide, but the whole is frequently overflowed, and such extreme tides as that of the second week of last November cover it to an average depth of eighteen inches. Lately an unhealthy and undesirable population is beginning to be crowded upon them. It is stated that of the two systems of reclamation, filling and diking, the latter is the better and, indeed, the only one feasible in this case. The area can be embanked and pumping works installed for about $1,000,000, or less than $40 per acre. The interest charges and operating expenses are estimated at $6 to $7 per acre, and it is predicted that in a few years this charge could be entirely covered by assessments on the property itself, any deficiencies in the interim being met by the surrounding districts that are benefited by the undertaking.

ACCORDING to *Natural Science* a new departure has been made this winter at the Science and Art Museum, Dublin, in a series of Museum demonstrations, undertaken by members of the staff and other helpers. Two demonstrations a week have been given through December and January, natural history alternating with art subjects. The difficulty of exhibiting small Museum specimens to a large audience led to a restriction of the number of tickets issued for each occasion to thirty, or at most fifty. It is satisfactory to record that there was a large demand for tickets, and that the audiences seemed thoroughly interested with the explanations of the objects.

THE Tree-Planting Association of New York has been incorporated, Mayor Strong being President; Cornelius B. Mitchell, Vice-President; James Macnaughtan, Treasurer, and W. A. Styles, Secretary. The Association supplies to its members the fullest information as to the kind of trees most suitable for city planting, together with the names of responsible nurserymen and the prices they charge for the completed work. Applications for membership may be made to the Tree-Planting Association office, Nos. 64 and 66 White Street.

IN the current number of the *American Naturalist*, Dr. Bessey suggests that the recent appearance of two important works on North American botany, in which the English units and measurements are less used throughout, calls attention to the need of some missionary work among American botanists. "We take part, from time to time, in the action of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in which, in vigorous and logical sentences, we express our admiration for the metric system and our conviction that the United States Congress is derelict toward this important matter. We urge Congress to make the use of this system compulsory, and yet we go on calmly writing books in which we use the most antiquated of measuring units. Not content with using feet and inches, we express fractions of inches in lines! We vote enthusiastically that mechanics, surveyors, farmers, statisticians and schoolmasters shall use the metric system exclusively, and yet we, the botanists, who, of course, are 'the salt of the earth,' are slow in doing what we so urgently recommend others to do."

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS.

THE last number of the *Academische Revue* contains details regarding the salaries and fees of university professors in the Prussian universities which are of interest in view of the proposed plan to equalize the salaries. Of 492 full professors in the eleven universities 40 per cent. receive less than $1,200, and 40 per cent. receive $2,000 or more in salaries. The additional amount received in fees is on the average about $400, though there are four cases in which the fees amount to $5,000 or more. The salaries of associate professors are about half those of ordinary professors.

IT is reported that Professor Munk, of Berlin, or Professor Kühne, of Heidelberg, will be appointed to the chair of physiology at Berlin, vacant by the death of Du Bois-Reymond.

IT is understood that the presidency of Washington and Lee University, Lexington,

Va., has been tendered informally to Postmaster-General William L. Wilson and that he will accept the office.

The students of the University of Athens have again been engaged in rioting. The trouble originated in a rebuke addressed by Dr. Galvani, professor of medicine, to some students who interrupted him while he was performing a critical operation. The University was closed, but the students refused to leave the building and were blockaded in it. According to the latest reports quiet has been restored, but in the riots one student was killed and a number of persons were injured.

The Yale *Alumni Weekly* has published figures showing the relative amount of time spent by undergraduate students of the academic departments of Yale and Harvard Universities. The percentages for the more important groups of studies are as follows:

	Yale.	Harvard.
Classics	24.2	8.7
European languages	14.5	22.8
Political science	11.2	9.9
English	10.9	16.8
History	10.4	14.3
Mathematics	9.6	4.4
Philosophy	8.9	6.1
Natural sciences	8.1	10.2

It thus appears that under the elective system at Harvard only one-third as much time is given to the classics and one-half as much time is given to mathematics as is given at Yale, where these studies are prescribed. The time taken from the classics seems to be given chiefly to modern languages, English and history, but there is a slight increase in the sciences. The same facts would be shown by a comparison of the courses now taken at Yale under a partial elective system, as compared with the courses taken ten years ago.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

LIEUTENANT PEARY'S EXPEDITION.

To the Editor of Science: At the Washington meeting of the Geological Society of America in December, 1896, a letter from Lieutenant R. E. Peary was read, in which the writer stated that a ship would be sent to northern Greenland in the summer of 1897 for the purpose of obtaining the large meteorite there and that this ship would offer means of transportation for other parties who might like to avail themselves of the opportunity. He further stated that the coast of Greenland furnishes exceptional facilities for the study of glacial phenomena and suggested the feasibility of several parties being formed to take part in work there during next summer. After a slight discussion of the subject the following resolutions were drawn up and adopted by the Society without opposition:

"*Resolved*, That the Geological Society of America endorse Lieutenant Peary's suggestion that the coast of Greenland presents an exceptionally fine field for the investigation of glacial phenomena as well as in a more limited degree of the other natural sciences, and recommend that the various universities, colleges and other scientific organizations of the country consider the matter of cooperation with Lieutenant Peary's expedition in the summer of 1897, by sending independent parties to be placed at various localities along the Greenland coast to carry on synchronous work for a period of five or six weeks.

"*Resolved*, That the thanks of the Geological Society of America be tendered to Lieutenant Peary for having brought the matter of this form of Arctic work to the attention of the Fellows of the Society."

In the summer of 1896 two parties of six members each, one from Cornell University under the direction of Professor Ralph S. Tarr, and from Boston under the direction of Professor Alfred E. Burton, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, availed themselves of the means of transportation offered by the Sixth Peary Expedition to Greenland. The former party was landed in the vicinity of the Devil's Thumb, in the southern portion of Melville Bay, latitude 74° 7′. A brief statement of this work has been published in this journal by Professor Tarr*.

The latter party, of which the present writer was a member, was landed at Umanak, latitude 70° 35′, and spent five weeks in making observations upon the numerous glaciers and the marginal area of the inland ice along the region

*Science, N. S. IV., 520–523.