

"5. Objects of natural history, dried or preserved animals and plants, geological specimens, etc., of which the transmission has no commercial interest, and the packing of which conforms to the general conditions concerning packages of samples of merchandise."

If this amendment be adopted by the Postal Congress, specimens of natural history can be sent to countries of the Universal Postal Union at the rate of one cent for every two ounces.

Statements of previous efforts of the Committee on behalf of the same object will be found in *SCIENCE* for November 17, 1893, p. 267, and for January 26, 1894, p. 49.

H. A. PILSBRY,

LEWIS WOOLMAN,

PHILIP P. CALVERT, *Chairman.*

*Committee of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.*

#### THE LAVOISIER MONUMENT.

FRENCH chemists, as well as physicists, are making an earnest effort to bring about the erection of a monument to perpetuate, in a measure, the memory of the great Lavoisier. They have authorized certain gentlemen in various countries to receive any contributions which non-residents of France may feel disposed to make in behalf of this very laudable undertaking.

The chemists of America fully recognize the services rendered their favorite science by the great French experimenter, and will doubtless be ready to add their mite to bring the proposed monument to an early completion. To facilitate matters the Academy of Sciences of Paris has appointed as its delegate in this country Professor Gustavus Hinrichs, who in turn has called to his aid the following gentlemen, to any one of whom subscriptions may be sent:

Jasper L. Beeson, A. M., Ph. D., Professor of Chemistry in the Audubon Sugar School, Research Chemist for the Louisiana Sugar Experiment Station, etc., New Orleans, Louisiana.

Charles Anthony Goessmann, Ph. D., LL. D., Professor of Chemistry at the Massachusetts Agricultural College, Chemist of the Hatch Experiment Station of the College; Chemist of the Massachusetts State Board of Agriculture, etc., Amherst, Massachusetts.

Eugene W. Hilgard, Ph. D., LL. D., Professor of Agricultural Chemistry in the University of California, Director of the California Experiment Station, Berkeley, California.

Richard Watson Jones, M. A., LL. D., Professor of Chemistry in the University of Mississippi, University, Mississippi.

John Uri Lloyd, Professor of Chemistry in the Eclectic Medical Institute of Cincinnati, President (1887) of the American Pharmaceutical Association, Cincinnati, Ohio.

John H. Long, M. S., Sc. D., Professor of Chemistry and Director of the Chemical Laboratories of the Schools of Medicine and Pharmacy of Northwestern University, 2421 Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois.

John Ulric Nef, Ph. D., Professor of Chemistry and Director of the Kent Chemical Laboratory of the University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois.

James Marion Pickel, A. M., Ph. D., Professor of Chemistry in the University of Alabama, University, Alabama.

Paul Schweitzer, Ph. D., Professor of Agricultural Chemistry and Chemist to the Agricultural Experiment Station, University of the State of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri.

William Simon, Ph. D., M. D., Professor of Chemistry in the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Baltimore, in the Maryland College of Pharmacy and in the Baltimore College of Dental Surgery, 1348 Block Street, Baltimore, Maryland.

Edgar F. Smith, Ph. D., Professor of Chemistry of the University of Pennsylvania, Director of the John Harrison Laboratory of Chemistry; President (for 1895) of the American Chemical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Eugene Allen Smith, Ph. D., State Geologist of Alabama, formerly Professor of Chemistry, now of Mineralogy and Geology in the State University of Alabama, University, Alabama.

Henry Trimble, A. M., Ph. M., Professor of Analytical Chemistry in the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, Editor of the American Journal of Pharmacy, 145 North Tenth Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Francis Preston Venable, Ph. D., Professor of Chemistry in the University of North Carolina, Secretary (for 1896) of the Chemical Section of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Gustavus Detlef Hinrichs, M. D., LL. D., Professor of Chemistry St. Louis College of Pharmacy, Delegate of the Academy of Sciences of Paris, for the United States, 3132 Lafayette Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri.

Every subscription will be promptly acknowledged by a formal souvenir receipt, bearing the portrait of Lavoisier in prison. The original individual subscription papers will be bound and deposited in the Archives of the Academy.

While the American committee was rather late in beginning its work, we are advised that its efforts are slowly bearing fruit. Let every one who reads these lines join in the good work, giving money in accordance with his means and his regard for the conquests of the pioneer who wrought so well in laying the fundamentals of chemical science.

EDGAR F. SMITH.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

#### SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE.

*List of the Vertebrated Animals now or lately living in the Gardens of the Zoological Society of London.* London, Longmans, Green & Co. Ninth edition. 1896. Pp. xvi+724.

The preface to this work states that its principal object is to facilitate the naming of specimens and to render nomenclature uniform. It is merely a transcript of the Society's register of accessions illustrated by a few cuts from the proceedings. Its value would have been greatly increased had there been added statistics showing the number of each species present, the average life of each and the number and causes of the deaths. As the volume treats of all animals that have been in the garden during 12 years past, and embraces 2,557 species, a vast amount of information might thus have been given which would have been of great benefit not only to those having collections in charge, but to pathologists and biologists generally.

We are able to gather from the list some idea of the number and kinds of animals born in the gardens during this period and thus judge how far the conditions were favorable for breeding. Some rather unexpected results are met with. We will consider the mammals only. The lemurs breed much more freely than monkeys; the lion is the only one of the cat tribe that is prolific, though our own puma is credited with five births. Among Esquimaux dogs there were but 9 births; the dingo has 15. From an apparently large number of raccoons but

8 were born, and among 52 squirrels (*Sciurus vulgaris*, common to the British islands) there were no births. On the other hand 14 beaver (*Castor canadensis*), 6 bison (*B. americanus*), 19 American elk, or Wapiti (*Cervus canadensis*), 35 mule deer (*Cariacus macrotis*) were born. The South African fruit bats (*Cynonycteris collaris*) produced 44, and the gerbilles, rat-like animals from western Asia and North Africa, threatened to become a nuisance, the birth of no less than 225 being recorded. Other notable births were 47 coypus, 13 yaks, 11 gayals (*Bibos frontalis*), 18 Himalayan sheep (*Ovis burrhel*) 15 Barbary sheep (*Ovis tragelaphus*), 43 Japanese deer (*Cervus sika*), many kangaroos and phalangers.

Certain species that breed freely in American zoological collections appear not to have bred at all or but rarely. Among these may be mentioned our coyote, prairie dog and chipping squirrel (*Tamias striatus*) the collared peccary, the Virginia deer, and even some domesticated animals like the camel, the llama and the zebu. Some of these results could doubtless be explained were the circumstances of each case fully known.

FRANK BAKER.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.

*Genius and Degeneration.* A Psychological Study. By DR. WILLIAM HIRSCH. D. Appleton & Co. 1896.

This work is published in the same style type as Nordau's 'Degeneration' and is announced as an answer to the latter work. An accompanying circular assures us that Dr. Hirsch 'absolutely refuses to accept Dr. Nordau's conclusions.' This at once removes a good deal of tension from the inquiring critic and leaves him the simpler tasks of finding out who it is that thus deals in the absolute and what are his reasons for so firm an implantation of himself upon an adverse position. The opening chapters of the book discuss the position of modern psychiatry and the nature of insanity and of genius. It is shown that neither of these latter things represents a very definite psychological concept. The author then takes up the relations of genius and insanity to each other. He shows that they are not identical and that "genius resembles insanity as gold resembles