

63-71.) At the time there was no English equivalent to German usage.

W. A. Horn, in *The New Illustrated Magazine* (London, March, 1897, pp. 597-605), gives a vivid description of the Eremian or Solitary Desert region of Australia. The surface of this deflated plain is described as strewn with "bare shining stones, having a polished surface, from the sand continually blowing over them. They are locally known as 'gibbers' (hard g.)." Those who have occasion to employ a name for such pebbles now have an extended choice of German and Greek compounds and English gibberish.

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#### INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF MATHEMATICIANS AT ZURICH IN 1897.

"It is known that the idea of an international congress of mathematicians has been, above all in these latter days, the object of numerous deliberations on the part of scientists interested in its realization. It has appeared to them, by reason of the excellent results obtained in other scientific domains by an international 'entente,' that assuring the execution of this project would have very weighty advantages.

"As the outcome of a very active exchange of views, accord was reached on a prime point. Switzerland, by its central geographic situation, by its traditions and its experience of international congresses, appeared designated to invite a first attempt at a reunion of mathematicians. In consequence Zurich is chosen as the seat of the congress.

"The mathematicians of Zurich do not disguise from themselves the difficulties they will have to surmount. But in the interest of this enterprise they have thought it their duty not to decline the flattering overtures that have been made them from all sides. They have decided, therefore, to take all preparatory measures for the future congress and, to the extent of their powers, to contribute to its success. So, with the concurrence of mathematicians of other nations, was formed the undersigned committee of organization, charged to bring together, at Zurich in 1897, the mathematicians of the entire world.

"The congress, in which you are cordially in-

vited to take part, will take place at Zurich the 9th, 10th and 11th of August, 1897, in the halls of the Federal Polytechnic School. The committee will not fail to communicate to you, in time, the text of the program determined, begging you to inform them of your adherence. But even at present it may be said that the scientific contributions and questions of policy will pertain to subjects of general interest or recognized importance.

"Scientific congresses have also this great advantage, to favor and keep up personal relations. The local committee will not fail to give great care to this part of its task, and, with this aim, it will arrange a program of fêtes and social reunions.

"May the hopes reposed in this first congress be fully realized! May numerous participants contribute by their presence to create, among colleagues, not alone coherent scientific relations, but also cordial bonds based on personal acquaintance!

"Finally, may our congress serve the advancement and the progress of the mathematical sciences!"

The invitation of which the above is a translation is signed by eleven from Zurich and ten associates, as committee.

Readers of SCIENCE already know of the persistent efforts of Vasiliev, of Kazan, and Laisant, of Paris, to establish this congress. It is matter for rejoicing that their noble endeavors have been crowned with this definite success.

GEORGE BRUCE HALSTED.

#### A NEW GEOGRAPHICAL MAGAZINE.

THE appearance of a new geographical magazine\* is a matter for both congratulation and regret. The magazine referred to is designed to furnish authentic and well-selected geographical data for the use of school teachers, and the opening number gives promise that much good may be expected from it in this direction. The articles presented seem well adapted to the audience addressed and are scarcely open to

\* *The Journal of School Geography*. R. E. Dodge, responsible editor; W. M. Davis, C. W. Hayes, H. B. Kümmel, F. M. McMurry and R. DeC. Ward, associate editors. Published at Lancaster, Pa. Price, \$1.00 a year.

criticism, when the special aim of the publication and the space available are considered. It is not so much the subject-matter contained in the new magazine, or the dress in which it appears, however, as the future of the enterprise and the demands of geography in America that suggest remarks.

If the teachers in our schools will support a magazine devoted to the pedagogical phases of geography there is certainly a broad field open to Professor Dodge and his able associates, but unless the new magazine has such financial support as to be practically independent of the returns received from subscribers, one can scarcely expect it to be long-lived. Other geographical magazines have germinated in this country, blossomed for a short period and, for want of financial support, died or passed to a condition of 'innocuous desuetude.' There is nothing in the appearance or character of the new effort to indicate that it possesses greater vitality than its predecessors.

In addition to the geographic magazines referred to, at least six of the geographical societies of the United States are engaged in publishing magazines and journals. None of these publications are widely known or are exerting an important influence on the development of geography. None of them can be said to have a high standard or to make a near approach to what may reasonably be considered as an ideal geographical magazine.

Instead of welcoming an addition to the number of but little known and far from successful publications already existing, with which the *Journal of School Geography* claims a place, it is for many reasons rather to be wished that the number might be materially decreased and the survivors strengthened.

If our several geographical societies could be induced to put aside what are considered local interests and unite in issuing a single, strong, well-edited and attractively-illustrated monthly magazine, in which the proceedings of the several societies could be reported and the best papers read at the local meetings be published, a great gain would certainly result. Such a plan would do away with duplication in the printing of reviews, current notes, etc., and furnish the members of the affiliating societies with a wider

range of reading matter, probably with a decrease in expense, than is afforded by the present system of multiple publication. An *American Journal of Geography*, in fact as well as in name, published under the auspices of the geographical societies of America, would be welcome in many libraries where scarcely one of the present publications referred to finds a place. The proposed magazine, being supported directly by several societies, would be furnished to each of their members, thus securing a circulation at the start of at least 4,000. The subscriptions of teachers and those interested in geography, but residing at a distance from the cities where geographical societies exist, would largely increase this number. A section devoted to *studies for teachers* would fill the place claimed for the journal that has just appeared.

The good that such a magazine as here suggested might accomplish by reaching a larger audience, furnishing them with more varied and more carefully selected reading matter, and by maintaining a higher standard than the existing geographical publications in this country, would certainly be far greater than under the present system.

The proposed magazine might be placed under the general management of the presidents or secretaries of the affiliating societies, but the responsibility for its appearance and standing should rest with a paid editor. Possibly, also, compensation should be offered for special articles in order to keep abreast of the times and furnish opportunities to those who could not afford to give their services.

The deleterious results of diffused and frequently antagonistic efforts in publication, are painfully apparent in the low grade of many of our newspapers and popular magazines. This almost inevitable result of multiple publication may be avoided in geography by a union of interests.

ISRAEL C. RUSSELL.

#### COMPLIMENT OR PLAGIARISM.

Now that Professor Halsted has made use of three issues of SCIENCE to prefer and establish charges of plagiarism against us, it may be well to make a comparison of the charges with the evidence as brought out in the discussion.