

the statement that the War Office authorities have decided to do away with part of the scientific training at the Royal Military College at Woolwich, by closing the chemical laboratory—a curious step backwards for modern times.

IN investigating pitchblende to find why the activity of the Becquerel rays is not proportionate to the amount of uranium present, a rule holding in general for compounds of uranium, M. P. Curie and Mme. S. Curie have isolated a new substance which appears to be a new metal. It is, according to the *Comptes Rendus*, thrown down with the bismuth sulfid and partly separated by heating in vacuum to 700° C., the sublimate obtained having 400 times the activity of uranium. The spectrum, however, emits no characteristic lines. The name of *polonium* is suggested for the new substance, from the country where the pitchblende was found. J. L. H.

ZOOLOGICAL NOTES.

IN a recently issued excerpt from the Bulletin of the U. S. Fish Commission, Dr. Hugh M. Smith treats of the Florida Commercial Sponges, briefly describing the species taken and discussing the causes of their decrease and the possible remedies for it. The causes of decrease are the usual ones, the taking of small sponges and excessive fishing; the proposed remedies are the enforcement of the laws against taking small sponges and the prohibition of sponging on certain grounds for definite periods. From the very rapid rate of growth assigned to the most valuable species, the sheepswool sponge; it is evident that the restocking of the depleted sponge beds would be a very simple matter if the above remedial measures could be enforced. Dr. Smith tells us that experiments seem to show that the sheepswool may, under favorable conditions, attain a weight of one tenth of a pound in six months and reach

a commercial size in a year. He considers that sponge culture promises well for Florida waters, where, for some reason, growth is more rapid than in the Mediterranean. On the other hand, the introduction of Mediterranean sponges is regarded as problematical, and it is a question if the introduced sponges would retain their superiority under the changed environment. The paper is illustrated by numerous half-tone plates of commercial sponges.

F. A. L.

CURRENT NOTES ON ANTHROPOLOGY.

THE ZOQUE LANGUAGE.

AN important contribution to American linguistics is the 22d volume of the 'Bibliothèque Linguistique Américaine' (Paris, Maisonneuve), which has just appeared. It is entitled 'Langue Zoque et Langue Mixe,' and is edited by M. Raoul de la Grasserie (1898, pp. 384). Most of it is occupied with the Zoque, of which a grammatical outline is given and a vocabulary of nearly 7,000 words from the MS. of Father Luis Gonzales (1672). This is further compared with the modern Zoque as spoken at present in Chiapas.

The Mixe is represented by the Grammar of Father Quintana (1730), a short vocabulary and some texts.

The work closes with a comparison of the Zoque and Mixe, showing them rather closely related members of the same stock, though with notable differences in words and in morphology, especially that the Mixe prefixes the pronoun in the conjugation, while the Zoque suffixes it.

M. de la Grasserie has edited these materials with great care, and the volume is a valuable addition to linguistic literature.

THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF BRUNSWICK.

ON the occasion of the meeting this year of the German Anthropological Society at Brunswick, a little volume has been issued