

illustrated by some Rhode Island examples.' Its contents are well worth perusal and reflection.

#### THE MAYAN HIEROGLYPHICS.

IN the *Deutsche Literaturzeitung*, August, 1898, Dr. Ed. Seler gives what is intended to be a withering review of the 'Primer of Mayan Hieroglyphics,' written by me and published in 1895. It could hardly be expected that Dr. Seler should be pleasantly impressed on reading the book, for I felt constrained in various passages (pp. 83, 87, 89, 91, 92, 99, 112, 114, etc.) to point out the patent errors into which he had fallen, and how often he had adopted the Abbé Brasseur's views, always without acknowledgment of his French authority. He makes himself especially merry over what I explain (p. 24) as the 'cosmic sign,' representing the world as a whole in the pictography of the Mayas. Had he been really acquainted with the symbolism of native American art, as shown, for instance, by Professor Putnam and Dr. Willoughby in their model paper on the subject (*Proc. Am. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1896), or as appreciated in the writings of such students as Mr. Cushing, Dr. Matthews and Miss Fletcher, he would probably have been less humorous, certainly less dogmatic and possibly more just.

#### COINCIDENCES.

UNDER this title Professor Max Müller has an article in the *Fortnightly Review* which he closes in these words: "I shall remain true to my conviction that all coincidences, whether in mythology, religion, art or literature, have a reason, if only we can find it."

It is evident from the examples in the article that the Professor means an objective reason, one from external suggestion, and that coincidences to him signify appropriations.

Of course, in a certain percentage of cases this is so, and nobody would deny it; but

in another and large percentage it is not so. The coincidences are due to independent mental evolution along the same lines, under the impulse of the same desires. This is true in all four of the fields named by the essayist, as well as others; and it is perhaps the most significant discovery in modern ethnology. That Professor Max Müller has refused to accept it is the reason why his vast labors on Comparative Religion have exerted such incommensurate influence on anthropologic science.

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#### SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

A MONUMENT to Pasteur was unveiled, if the arrangements were carried out, at Lille, on November 5th, an oration in memory of Pasteur being made by M. Duclaux.

THE University of Vienna will place in the hall of the University a bust of Dr. Müller, whose life was sacrificed in attending the laboratory servant Barisch, infected with the plague in Professor Nothnagel's laboratory.

THE Royal University of Ireland has conferred its honorary D.Sc. on Mr. Thomas Preston, the physicist.

DR. T. H. BEAN has recently spent a month in making collections of fishes along the southern shore of Long Island, in the interest of the U. S. Fish Commission.

A VACANCY in the position of Marine Meteorologist, Mare Island Navy Yard, California, will be filled by a civil service examination on December 6th.

WE record with much regret the death of Dr. James I. Peck, assistant professor of biology in Williams College and Assistant Director of the Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Holl. We hope to give in a subsequent issue some account of Dr. Peck's life and work. His untimely death is a serious loss to zoology and will be deplored by many friends.

THE death is announced of Dr. David A. Wells, the eminent writer on economics. It is, perhaps, not well known that he began his

career as a scientific author, to which, perhaps, may be attributed, in part at least, the valuable character of his work in economics. After graduating from Williams College, Wells entered the Lawrence Scientific School at Harvard as a special pupil of Louis Agassiz, and was subsequently lecturer on physics and chemistry at Groton Academy, Mass. At Cambridge, in 1849, he began, with George Bliss, the publication of *The Annual of Scientific Discovery*, which was continued until 1886. In 1856 he invented valuable improvements in the method of manufacturing textile fabrics. He also compiled several scientific text-books, including 'Science of Common Things,' 'Elements of Natural Philosophy,' 'Principles and Applications of Chemistry' and 'First Principles of Geology.'

WE are compelled also to record the death of Professor George Vestal, professor of agriculture and horticulture at the New Mexico Agricultural College, on October 24th, aged 41 years; of Dr. W. Kochs, docent for physiology at Bonn, and of M. J. V. Barbier, a well-known French geographer.

DR. H. F. MOORE, of the United States Fish Commission, has been making a careful examination of the physical conditions of Great Salt Lake, with a view to determine its adaptability to oysters and other salt-water and brackish-water animals. While it is known that the salinity of the open lake is so great as to preclude the possibility of the acclimatization of useful marine animals, it has been suggested that there are certain bays or arms of the lake, in which rivers discharge, where the density is lowered to a point somewhat less than that of ocean water, and where it may be possible for clams, oysters, crabs, terrapins and such animals to survive and multiply. Dr. Moore has not completed his inquiries, but it may be said that the outlook for an augmentation of the aquatic food resources of this region is not very promising, the amount of fresh water entering the lake being subject to great variation, and the existence of a natural food supply for the introduced species being uncertain. For a number of years people living near the lake have from time to time importuned the Fish Commission to make experimental plants of

fish and other animals in the lake and its tributary streams. Considerable numbers of young shad have been deposited in the rivers, but there is no evidence of their survival. The present inquiries will, it is thought, definitely settle the question.

MR. AXEL DANIELSON, of Stockholm, writes to the *Scientific American* in regard to the status of the Nobel bequest. He says that the case has been decided, or rather a compromise has been effected between the contesting parties. The relatives of the deceased will receive 3,800,000 Swedish crowns, a little more than \$1,000,000, so that there still remains for the prizes the sum of 25,000,000 crowns, equivalent to \$6,950,000. The income, computed at the rate of three per cent., will make the five prizes worth 150,000 crowns, or \$41,600 each. It is expected that the compound interest during the time, which will necessarily be long, that will elapse before the prizes can be awarded will increase the capital so as to cover the cost of managing the funds and the work entailed in properly distributing the prizes. It will be remembered that these prizes are to be awarded annually to persons making the most important discoveries in physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine. There is also to be a prize for the best literary contribution upon the subject of physiology or medicine, and also one for any person who has achieved the most or done the best things looking toward the promotion of the cause of peace throughout the world.

THE New York *Evening Post* learns from the *Berlingske Tidende* that the first competition offered by the Nansen fund, which was established soon after the return of the Fram in 1896, has just been advertised. The subject is a thorough work in embryology based on original investigation, and the amount of the prize is 1,500 kroners (about \$400). The result will be announced at the annual meeting of the Christiania Academy of Science, May 3, 1900.

THE German Colonial Council has requested the government to provide, as soon as possible, stations for agricultural experiments in German Southwest Africa and to establish a service for meteorological observations extending over the entire territory.

M. HENRI LECONTE made an address before the Paris Society of Commercial Geography on October 20th, on the colonial botanical gardens of France, in which he called attention to their inadequate support by the State. The total amount spent on these gardens is said to be only half as much as that given to the Dutch garden at Buitenzorg, and the results are small in proportion. M. Guy, representing the Minister of the Colonies, stated after the address that a commission would shortly be formed to study the administration of the experimental botanical gardens in the colonies.

THE Imperial Russian Geographical Society has decided to establish a Seismological Station at Irkutsk.

A CABLEGRAM to the London *Times* states that Sir John Forrest, Premier of Western Australia, has received a report from Sir Frederick McCoy, professor of natural science in the University of Melbourne, stating that his examination of fossils from the seams of the Collie coalfield, in Western Australia, shows that the deposit is of exactly the same geological age as the Newcastle coalfield, in New South Wales. He adds that the specimens of coal examined are equal to the best Newcastle coal. Professor McCoy congratulates the Premier on the discovery of this magnificent addition to the natural wealth of the colony.

CARNEGIE Library, at Homestead, Pa., was dedicated on November 6th by the founder, Mr. Andrew Carnegie, who spent \$300,000 in its erection.

THE National Educational Association will meet next year at Los Angeles, if favorable railway rates can be secured.

THE New England Association of Chemistry Teachers meets at the United States Hotel, Boston, to-morrow evening. Dr. H. M. Goodwin is the guest of the Association and will give 'An Address on Some Aspects of Physical Chemistry.' The President of the Association, Dr. Lyman C. Newell, will make a preliminary report on the progress of the movement instituted by the Association to promote efficiency in the teaching of chemistry.

THE fifth International Congress of Hydrology, Climatology and Geology met at Liege

from the 25th of September to the 3d of October.

THE Royal Geographical Society, London, will open its session on November 14th, when the meeting will be devoted mainly to a national Antarctic expedition. The President, Sir Clements Markham, will introduce the subject, and will be followed by other distinguished scientific men. The Society has just issued an appeal for funds for a national expedition. At the second meeting, on November 28th, Mr. C. W. Andrews will give an account of the interesting results of his year's investigations on lonely Christmas Island. Other papers that are expected are 'Explorations on the Caroline Islands,' by Mr. F. W. Christian; 'Explorations among the Canadian Rockies,' by Dr. Norman Colley, F.R.S.; 'Explorations in Sokotra,' by Dr. H. O. Forbes; 'Lake Rukwa and Central Africa,' by Mr. L. A. Wallace; and papers by Dr. J. W. Gregory and Professor W. M. Davis, of Harvard University.

ON October 25th an international monument in honor of Dr. Hans Wilhelm Meyer, the discoverer of adenoid growths, was unveiled in Copenhagen. The *British Medical Journal* states that the memorial, which is a bronze bust of more than life-size resting upon a granite base, stands in the Gefion Square, in East Copenhagen. It is the work of the Danish artists, Bissen and Runeberg. The Mayor of Copenhagen, several high officers of state and a number of professors of the medical faculty, of medical men and of the general public were present at the ceremony. The memorial was formally handed over to the municipality of Copenhagen by Sir Felix Semon, who delivered an address in which he pointed out the importance of Meyer's discovery, which had already saved thousands of people from life-long deafness and the lasting results of obstructed nasal respiration, and in future times would be similarly beneficial to hundreds of thousands and even to millions. He described Wilhelm Meyer as one of the greatest benefactors to mankind that the profession of medicine had ever known. After the monument was unveiled, M. Ollgaard accepted it on behalf of the City of Copenhagen.

REUTER'S agency reports that the German archæologist Professor Belck was attacked, wounded and robbed by Kurdish marauders in the Sipan Dagh while separated from his escort. As the result of representations immediately made by the German embassy, the Sultan gave orders for the most rigorous pursuit and the punishment of the guilty parties. The perpetrators of the outrage have now been discovered and arrested. The property and a part of the money stolen have been recovered. In accordance with directions personally given by the Sultan, Herr Belck will receive every attention at the cost of the State. He is now at Van, still under medical treatment, but out of danger.

THE Swedish scientific expedition to the Klon-dike, under the conduct of Dr. Otto Nordensk-jöld, is now on its way home, and is expected to arrive in London about the end of the month. The expedition has been exploring since March last, and the results are expected to be of considerable interest.

AN expedition is about to leave England to investigate and make collections of the fauna of the island of Sokotra, situated eastward from Cape Guardafui. The party, consisting of Mr. W. R. Ogilvie Grant, of the Department of Zoology of the Natural History Museum; Dr. H. O. Forbes, the Director, and Mr. Cutmore, Taxidermist of the Liverpool Museums, will be conveyed from Aden by a steamship furnished by the British government. The Royal Society, the Royal Geographical Society and the British Association have made appropriations towards the expenses of the expedition.

It is still an open question whether the fauna of the sea is confined to belts near the surface and the bottom, or whether the intermediate zones are inhabited. To investigate this problem a deep-sea expedition has been organized, as we learn from the London *Times*, through grants by the Royal Geographical Society, the Draper's Company and the Fishmonger's Company, and has been placed under the direction of Mr. George Murray, Keeper of the Botanical Department of the Natural History Museum. The trustees of the British Museum have helped by granting Mr. Murray the necessary leave of absence and lending him the services of two of

the Museum naturalists, Mr. V. H. Blackman and Dr. Gregory. Mr. J. E. S. Moore, Dr. Sambon and Mr. Highly, of whom the last is an artist, complete the staff of the expedition. The steamship *Oceana* has been chartered and is being fitted with its deep-sea gear by the kindness of the Silvertown Telegraph Cable Company. The steamer was expected to be ready by November 5th, when it would proceed directly to the west coast of Ireland. Work will begin at the edge of the 100-fathom platform, about thirty miles west of Dingle Bay. The vessel will steam slowly for 10° westward. Continuous observations will be made with a vertical chain of tow nets, the length of which will be gradually increased until, when the depth of 2,000 fathoms is reached, the series will include thirty-eight tow-nets. Soundings and observations of temperatures will be made, and, if time permit, some deep-sea trawling. Experiments with various forms of self-closing nets, including the Tanner net employed by Professor Agassiz, will be made for the sake of comparison; but the main effort of the expedition is to determine the vertical distribution of oceanic life by a series of open nets.

WE learn from the *Philadelphia Medical Journal* that the State Legislature of Vermont has passed an Act providing for the equipment and maintenance of a State laboratory which shall include in its work 'the chemical and bacteriological examination of water-supplies, milk and all food-products, and the examination of cases, and suspected cases, of diphtheria, typhoid fever, tuberculosis, malaria and other infectious and contagious diseases.' The sum of \$5,000 has been appropriated for the establishment of the laboratory, and \$8,000 per year voted for running expenses. Dr. J. H. Linsley is director of the laboratory. It appears that only three States have established similar laboratories—Michigan, Massachusetts and New York.

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#### UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS.

THE University of Cincinnati has again been presented with a gift of \$60,000, this time by Mr. Asa van Wormer, a retired merchant of