

dence for submergence in a number of localities in Europe, and concludes that the amelioration of the climate began about 30,000 years ago, 'which synchronizes with the astronomical calculations to marvellous nicety.'

ETHNOGRAPHY OF GERMAN EAST AFRICA.

THE Germans set a good example by their investigations of the native tribes in their newly acquired possessions. An instance of this is an article by Dr. F. von Luschan on the Wassandaui, Warangi, Wambugwe and neighboring peoples of German East Africa. It is amply illustrated and presents a clear idea of their general stage of culture. Among other curious facts mentioned is one explaining the rapid diminution of the tribe known as the Wataturu. The men of this tribe are industrious and accustomed to do the work which in neighboring tribes is performed by the women; hence, they are in great demand in these tribes as husbands, and, as the rule is that they follow their wives, their own tribe diminishes. (*Beiträge zur Ethnographie des abflusslosen Gebiets von Deutsch-Ost-Africa*, Berlin, 1898.)

D. G. BRINTON.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

TWELVE scientific societies, representing more than half of the most important scientific work accomplished in America, are beginning their meetings at Columbia University as we go to press. We have already called attention to the dates and other arrangements for these meetings, and full reports of the proceedings of the different societies will be given in subsequent issues. The address of Professor Bowditch, President of the American Society of Naturalists, is published in this number, and other important addresses and papers will follow.

THE International Astronomical Society appears to have held a successful meeting at Buda-Pesth, though it scarcely deserves the

name 'international' when American, English and French astronomers are unrepresented at its meetings. The existing organization might, however, be developed so that international congresses could be held as important as those in mathematics, zoology, geology, physiology and psychology.

A CABLEGRAM from London announces that Lord Iveagh (Edward Cecil Guinness) has presented to the Jenner Institute of Preventive Medicine, London, the sum of £250,000, in aid of scientific research in bacteriology and other branches of biology, concerned with the cause, nature, prevention and treatment of disease.

THE Regents of the University of the State of New York have decided to divide the work in geology and paleontology which was for so many years in charge of the late Professor James Hall, and in so doing have erected two co-ordinate departments, one of paleontology and stratigraphic geology and the other of 'pure geology,' the latter to cover dynamic and physical geology, the crystalline rocks, surficial geology, etc. They have appointed to the charge of the former Professor John M. Clarke, with the title of State Paleontologist, and to the latter Dr. F. J. H. Merrill, with the title of State Geologist. They have also appointed Dr. E. P. Felt to the position of State Entomologist as successor to the late Dr. J. A. Lintner.

PROFESSOR E. B. WILSON, of Columbia University, whose departure for Europe on a year's leave of absence we recently announced, intends to visit the Nile region in order to study, if possible, the embryonic stages of the African ganoid *Polypterus*, the supposed ancestor of the Amphibia. Those who read Dr. Harrington's article in this JOURNAL will remember that he and Dr. Hunt found this fish in the Nile last summer, but were unable to wait for the breeding season.

M. GRAVIER has been made Assistant in the Paris Museum of Natural History in the room of the late M. Bernard.

THE University of Marburg has conferred the degree of Ph.D. *honoris causa* on Professor J. M. Clarke, of Albany.

PROFESSOR ERIC GERARD, of the University of Liège, known for his contributions to elec-

tricity and magnetism, has been admitted to the Belgian order of Leopold.

THE Paris Academy of Sciences has awarded the Desmazières prize to Dr. J. B. de Toni for his *Sylloge Algarum*.

THE Paris Anthropological Society has chosen Dr. Capitan as President for 1899.

DR. J. KOLLMAN, professor of anatomy in the University of Bâle, has been elected a member of the Munich Academy of Fine Arts.

SIR WILLIAM JENNER, F.R.S., the eminent physician, died on December 11th, in his eighty-third year. He was for many years professor, first of pathological anatomy and later of medicine, at University College, London. He had published works on fevers and other subjects.

THE death is also announced of M. Jacques Passé, an assistant in the laboratory of physiological psychology at the Sorbonne, Paris, known for his researches on the sense of smell, etc.

THE death of Mr. Hayter Lewis, formerly professor of architecture in University College, London, deserves mention in this place, if only because he was one of the first to recognize relations between sanitary science and architecture. We also regret to record the death, at the age of 73, of M. Laboulbène, since 1879 professor of the history of medicine and surgery, at Paris.

THE Paris Exposition of 1900 will include a museum of the history of chemistry. It will include apparatus, products of chemical laboratories, plans, portraits of investigators, etc.

It is stated in *Nature* that an informal committee will shortly meet in Calcutta to consider the reports by the Astronomer Royal and Sir Norman Lockyer, who were recently asked for advice regarding Indian astronomical and solar observatories. The future working of these observatories will be discussed, and Sir James Westland, Messrs. T. Holderness and J. Elliot, and General Strahan, Surveyor-General, will probably be members of the committee.

MR. MICHAEL LAKIN'S donation of a large Liassic *Ichthyosaurus* to the British Museum, says *Natural Science*, has necessitated a considerable rearrangement of the existing collection.

We understand that the old cases are to be removed, while the fine slabs containing these fossils will be simply covered with glass and exhibited upon the wall. Space is to be gained by raising a number of the specimens above the top of the present wall-cases.

It appears that the School of Tropical Medicine, at London, to which we have several times recently called attention, will receive a subsidy from the British Treasury on behalf of the Protectorates under the administration of the Foreign Office.

CAPTAIN BORCHGREVINK'S expedition, which left London on August 3d, has started from Hobart, Tasmania, for the Antarctic regions.

GENERAL VÉNUTCOFF announces that a Russian expedition will shortly leave for Spitzbergen to make geodetic and astronomical observations.

THE steam yacht *Ulowana* left New York on December 24th for Yucatan on the botanical expedition to which we have already called attention. Dr. C. F. Millspaugh, of the Botanical Department of the Field Columbian Museum, is in charge, and the party includes Mr. A. V. Armour, the owner of the yacht.

Nature states that owing to the unique and extremely interesting nature of the fauna in Lake Tanganyika, the study of which was recently the object of an expedition supported by the Royal Society, and led by Mr. J. E. S. Moore, a committee has been formed, consisting of Sir John Kirk, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., F.R.S. (late British Resident at Zanzibar); Dr. P. L. Sclater, F.R.S. (Secretary of the Zoological Society); Mr. Thiselton-Dyer, C.M.G., F.R.S. (Director of the Kew Gardens); Professor Ray Lankester, F.R.S. (Director of the Natural History Departments of the British Museum), and Mr. G. A. Boulenger, F.R.S. (of the British Museum), for the purpose of organizing another expedition to the same regions, to thoroughly survey the basin, not only of Lake Tanganyika, but also the unknown portions of the northern extension of the great series of valleys in which Tanganyika, together with Lakes Kivu and the Albert Nyanza, lie; to collect specimens of the aquatic fauna and flora and to study the geological history of this part.

of Africa. The sum of £1,000 has been subscribed from one source towards the expenses of the expedition, which are estimated at not less than £5,000.

THE Washington Academy of Medicine held its sixth annual meeting on December 14th, when Dr. Samuel C. Bussey delivered the presidential address, on 'The History and Progress of Sanitation of the City of Washington and the Efforts of the Medical Profession in Relation Thereto.'

THE New England Association of Chemistry Teachers will hereafter publish records of its meetings. We have received a report of the nineteenth meeting, held in Boston on November 12th. Dr. H. M. Goodwin, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, read a paper on the advance in physical chemistry during the last decade, and a report was presented on the progress of the movement instituted by the Association to promote efficiency in the teaching of chemistry.

THE second annual convention of the directors of physical education of the colleges and universities of the United States will be held at Columbia University, New York, on December 30th.

M. DUSSAUD, of Geneva, has sent the Paris Academy of Sciences a description of a new telephone with which he has successfully experimented. From a distant laboratory he was able to send messages that could be distinctly heard in a large room by an audience of 1,000 people.

MR. A. B. BAKER, of the National Zoological Park, notes that the large snakes refuse to eat rats captured about the buildings, but quickly devour those caught out of doors. Rats taken indoors were then kept for a day or so in a cage with an earth floor, after which they were readily eaten. A very similar experience was had with smaller snakes, copperheads, these declining to eat house mice, permitting them to run about the cage, or even over their bodies, with impunity, while field mice were quickly taken even after they had been dead for some little time. These facts seem to show that snakes have a very keen sense of smell and are largely guided by it in the choice of their food.

PROFESSOR BEHRING, in conjunction with Dr. Ruppel, has applied for a German patent for a tuberculosis serum: 'A method for producing a highly poisonous and immunifying substance from tubercle bacilli or from cultures of tubercle bacilli.'

THE Prince of Wales presided at a private meeting at Marlborough House, on December 20th, convened by him to promote a war against tuberculosis. The Marquis of Salisbury, the Earl of Rosebery and a number of men of science and physicians spoke on the urgent necessity of educating the people in the means of preventing consumption and of checking the spread of tuberculous disease among cattle.

REUTER's agency states that advices from the Russian provinces of Livonia and Courland report that leprosy is spreading to a marked extent. The military authorities in these districts have been compelled to reject for the army many young men found to be infected with the disease. Notwithstanding the precautions taken, the number of victims amounts at the present time in Russia to more than 5,000.

GIVING evidence before the Plague Commission, at Bangalore, on December 12th, Colonel Robertson, the Resident at Mysore, stated, according to the *London Times*, that the attitude of the people was uncompromisingly hostile to the plague measures. It was impossible in the large cities to deal effectively with the epidemic, the fear of which destroyed natural affection. Captain Roe, chief plague officer, maintained that segregation was unsuccessful, owing to the difficulty of catching the people; if segregation were abolished the natives would not run away. Major Deané declared that Yersin's serum was useless. Haffkine's serum, he said, conferred a temporary immunity, but not to the extent supposed. Colonel McGann stated that the plague had been prevalent among native soldiers, but not among the Europeans. Haffkine's prophylactic had been found valuable. The plague was in the middle of December again increasing in Bombay city, but a decrease was reported in the Presidency districts. Madras, Mysore and Haidarabad remain unchanged, but a number of cases have occurred in the Central Provinces.

WE learn from the *British Medical Journal* that the Nizam's government has sanctioned the immediate construction of a complete and thoroughly-equipped Pasteur Institute for Haiderabad. It will adjoin the hospital and medical school, and will be available in about six months for patients. The Colombo Pasteur Institute, which is being constructed near the Lady Havelock Hospital out of funds towards which Mr. J. W. C. De Soysa contributed 10,000 Rs. in memory of his father, is approaching completion, and will be opened probably early next year. Meanwhile the Pasteur Institute for India hangs fire, and the delay is calling forth some expression of impatience on the part of subscribers.

DR. CROSBY, of the New York City Board of Health, has given out the following statistics of deaths from influenza in the city :

	1890.	'91.	'92.	'93.	'94.	'95.	'96.	'97.	'98.
Jan	264	1	281	5	71	242	16	10	—
Feb	30	—	109	4	33	165	18	28	8
March.....	12	45	50	47	29	84	17	64	19
April	3	507	20	86	16	44	26	51	16
May.....	1	123	13	30	5	15	5	21	2
June	2	34	3	9	6	2	—	4	2
July	—	4	1	—	4	—	1	1	2
August...	—	3	—	—	1	1	1	—	—
Sept.....	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	2	—
Oct.	—	4	—	4	4	2	2	2	—
Nov.....	1	4	13	5	6	4	4	3	12
Dec.	1	129	5	35	13	8	11	10	?
Totals..	314	854	495	227	188	567	101	196	58

The mortality attributed to other sources has also been greatly increased during epidemics of 'the grip.' It appears that the disease grows in severity for two or three months, and the outlook for New York and other cities is consequently unfavorable. Until December, 1889, when the disease was imported from Europe, having apparently traveled from China to Russia, there had been no epidemic since 1849.

THE question has of late been often raised among professional men whether it would not be wise and practical to seek to evade many of the difficulties and objections arising from the employment of 'experts' by litigants on both sides, leaving Court and jury to gather the es-

sential facts and the technical merits of the case, as best they can, from prejudicial and admittedly partisan testimony, the usual suggestion being the appointment by the Court of its own experts. We find in '*Der Ingenieria*' of Buenos Ayres, 1898, pp. 91-102, an account of the investigation of the cause of a steam boiler explosion by the National Railway Board, in the course of which a detailed report was submitted by independent experts appointed by the Courts. It would seem that Argentina has progressed further in this direction than the United States.

PROFESSOR H. H. TURNER, of Oxford University, makes the breaking of windows at the Observatory by small boys the occasion of a renewed appeal for a house for the director in the park near the Observatory. He says: "It was in the last few months of my chief assistantship at Greenwich that the anarchist Bourdin made his attempt to blow up the Royal Observatory; and the attempt, unsuccessful as it fortunately was, could not fail to impress those immediately concerned as to the necessity for carefully protecting an observatory isolated in the middle of a park. I do not wish to compare the mischievous boyish freak of yesterday with this grave and dastardly outrage; but there is this common to the two—that the opportunity was selected with reference to the absence of people from the spot. Bourdin selected a time when the Astronomer Royal was away and the staff would ordinarily have left the Observatory (though, as a matter of fact, one or two were on the spot, having stayed beyond the usual closing hour to finish some work); the boys with catapults found Sunday afternoon a good time to use them."

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS.

THERE seem to be difficulties in arranging for the accommodation of the University of London, in the buildings of the Imperial Institute. In the meanwhile the Council of University College have notified the Statutory Commission that they are prepared to consider placing the land, buildings and endowments of the College at the complete disposal of the Commission.