Its diameter was 80 miles as it approached Barbados, and 170 miles after leaving St. Vincent. The actual storm center, in which the force of the wind greatly increased, was only 35 miles in diameter until St. Vincent was passed, but after that the strength of the wind extended to 170 miles from the center. The diameter of the calm vortex was not less than four miles. The storm was accompanied by very heavy rainfall, the amount at St. Vincent being about 14 inches in 24 hours. In Barbados 11,400 houses were swept away or blown down and 115 lives were lost, and in St. Vincent 6,000 houses were blown down or damaged beyond repair, and 200 lives were lost.

PROBABLE STATE OF SKY ALONG THE PATH OF THE ECLIPSE, MAY 28, 1900.

PROFESSOR F. H. BIGELOW, in the *Monthly Weather Review* for September, considers the probable state of the sky along the path of the total eclipse of the sun, May 28, 1900. His conclusion is as follows: "It would be much safer for the eclipse expeditions to locate their stations in the northern portions of Georgia and Alabama, upon the southern end of the Appalachian Mountains, where the track crosses elevated areas, than nearer the coast line in either direction northeastward toward the Atlantic coast, or southwestward toward the Gulf coast; on the coast itself the weather is more unfavorable than in any other portion of the track." Professor Bigelow's paper is illustrated by means of a chart.

NOTES.

THE November number of *Climate and Crops, Illinois Section*, in commenting upon the statistics of losses by lightning in Illinois during 1898, says: "A survey of the reports shows a very marked increase in the loss of stock due to the wire fence, and the urgent need of frequent ground wires in those in use." (See note in this connection in SCIENCE, Dec. 2, 1898, p. 785.)

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CURRENT NOTES ON ANTHROPOLOGY.

THE OLDEST SKULL-FORM IN EUROPE.

IN the *Centralblatt für Anthropologie* (Heft. 4, 1898) are some abstracts touching the skull-form which is believed to be the oldest in Europe. It is represented most perfectly by the remains found at Spy. The characteristics are: uncommon length, moderate width, very limited height, retreating forehead, prominent but depressed supra-orbital ridges and narrowed post-orbital diameter. Dr. Fraipont argues sharply for the genuine ancient character of the Neanderthall skull, and Dr. Schwalbe does not regard that found at Egisheim as a good type. As for modern examples simulating the Neanderthal skull the latter asserts that, while they may resemble it in one or another point, they never present the group of inferior criteria which characterize its measurements.

THE SUPPOSED 'OTTER TRAP.'

DR. ROBERT MUNRO in his excellent work, *Prehistoric Problems*, has a chapter on a curious object found in the peat bogs of Europe, from Italy to Scotland and North Germany. He has recently supplemented that chapter by an article describing further examples. (*Jour. Roy. Soc. Antiquaries of Ireland*, September, 1898.)

The object is a thick board or plank, two to three feet long, in the center of which is an oblong aperture four to six inches wide, closed by one or two valvular doors. The purpose of this arrangement is obscure Dr. Munro argues that it is an otter or beaver trap, while others have explained it as a boat-model, a sluice-box, a float for lines, etc.

The suggestion which I would offer for its use differs from any I have seen. It is doubtful that the valves could hold firmly an otter or any such animal. The purpose for which it would be entirely suited would be that of the inlet to a fish-weir. The valves, opening inward, would allow the fish to enter and would prevent their exit. Similar, though not identical, devices are in common use.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY OF FEEBLE-MINDED CHILDREN.

IN a supplement of the 48th annual report of the managers of the Syracuse State Institution for feeble-minded Children, Dr. Alex. Hrdlicka presents an anthropological study of a long series of these unfortunates. It includes their family conditions, the supposed etiolog-

ical factors of the deficiency, and the physical examination of the subjects.

While the report is very instructive on many individual features, it admits of few general conclusions other than that we need much more extended investigations than have heretofore been prosecuted, in order to reach positive opinions as to the causation and the status of the feeble-minded; and this is Dr. Hrdlicka's own decision (p. 95).

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SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

M. Van Tieghem, the eminent botanist, succeeds M. Wolf as President of the Paris Academy of Science, while M. Lévy has been elected Vice-President.

At its meeting on January 11th the American Academy of Arts and Sciences elected Charles Doolittle Walcott, of Washington, an Associate Fellow in place of the late Professor James Hall, and Oliver Heaviside, of Newton Abbot, England, a Foreign Honorary Member.

It is proposed to erect a monument in memory of Fèlix Tisserand, Member of the Institute of France, and of the Bureau of Longitude, and Director of the Observatory of Paris, at Nuits Saint-Georges (Côte-d'Or), his native place. Subscriptions will be received at Nuits-Saint-Georges, by M. Desmazures, Receveur Municipal; at the Observatory of Paris, by M. Fraissinet, and at Dijon, by M. Ragot (rue Colson).

Surgeon-General Sternberg is at present in Cuba inspecting the hospitals and arranging for a new yellow fever hospital and a depot for medical supplies in Havana.

The Permanent Secretary of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Dr. L. O. Howard, would be glad to learn of the address of José de Riviera, who was elected a life member of the Association at the Boston meeting of 1880.

The Chemical Society of Washington, at the annual meeting held on Thursday, January 12, 1899, elected the following officers for the ensuing year: President, Dr. H. N. Stokes; Vice-Presidents, Dr. P. Fireman, Dr. H. C. Bolton; Secretary, Mr. William H. Krug; Treasurer, Mr. W. P. Cutter; Executive Committee, the above officers and Dr. C. E. Munroe, Dr. E. A. de Schweinitz, Mr. Wirt Tassin and Dr. F. W. Hillebrand, *ex-officio*.

Professors von Kupfer, of Munich; F. Klein, of Göttingen, and E. Fischer, of Berlin, have been made members of the Bavarian Maximilian Order of Science and Art.

Professor M. E. Cooley, of the engineering department of the University of Michigan, who has been Chief Engineer on the United States auxiliary steamer Yosemite since the outbreak of the Spanish-American war, will return to the University in time to begin work with the second semester. He was detached from the Yosemite December 23d, since which date he has been doing temporary work at the League Island Navy Yard. He expects to be relieved from duty by the first of next month.

Mr. Wm. T. Hornaday, Director of the New York Zoological Park, has been elected a corresponding member of the London Zoological Society.

Nature states that Mr. Frederick G. Jackson, the leader of the Jackson-Harmsworth expedition, has been presented with a first class of the Royal Order of St. Olaf by King Oscar of Sweden and Norway.

The Paris Academy of Sciences has nominated for the chair of chemistry in the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers as first choice M. Florent, and as second choice M. Joannis.

Mr. John Barrow, F.R.S., the author of works on travel and physiography, has died at the advanced age of 91 years.

Professor Joseph Baldwin, who held the chair of pedagogy in the University of Texas, died on January 14th, aged 70 years.

At the annual meeting of the Indiana Academy of Science held at Indianapolis during Christmas week, Mr. W. W. Woollen announced that he had set aside forty-four acres of land situated nine miles from the center of Indianapolis, for a garden of birds and botany. He proposes to develop the garden and present it to the city of Indianapolis, to be placed under the control of the Superintendent of Schools, the President of Butler College, and the President