

ceptionally warm spring or summer following an abnormally cold winter is found to be the exception rather than, as is generally believed, the rule. The conditions with respect to precipitation are much more variable than those connected with the temperature. Notably dry or wet seasons are more likely to be followed by nearly normal ones, than by seasons having compensating, or opposite, characteristics.

In *Nature* for January 25th, MacDowall contributes a further note to this discussion. The subject of this inquiry is the sort of relation subsisting between the cold of a given winter and that of the 30 winters preceding. The cold of the winter seasons is measured by the number of frost days from September to May. The results of the study are as follows: (1) The six mildest winters (since 1871) were each preceded by a 30-year group having more than the average of frost days. (2) The six coldest winters were each preceded by a 30-year group having less than the average of frost days. (3) Of fifteen 30-year groups with excessive cold (*i. e.*, over the average), as many as 12 were followed by mild winters, and only 3 by severe winters.

Studies of the sort here referred to are always interesting, but it must be remembered that the results, so far as they go, relate only to a limited area in each case, and that no definite general conclusions can be reached in this matter without much longer and much more accurate series of observations than we now have.

MONTHLY CLIMATE AND CROP BULLETIN.

THE *Climate and Crop Bulletin* of the Weather Bureau for January contains a new feature. This is the addition of a diagram indicating the average daily departure from normal temperature for each day during the month at certain selected Weather Bureau stations east of the Rocky Mountains. These stations are St. Paul, Galveston, Boston, Jacksonville, and Cincinnati. These five cities are believed to represent the general temperature conditions prevailing east of the Rocky Mountains as well as any other like number of stations. Simple graphic representations are always welcome additions in discussions of meteorological phenomena, and this new diagram is certain to meet with

approval on the part of all who make use of the *Climate and Crop Bulletin*.

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THEODORE POESCHE.

ON December 27, 1899, died in Washington, D. C., Theodore Poesche, one of that coterie of scholars of whom Professor Henry said, no one has ever asked me a question that some of them could not answer correctly. Poesche was born at Zoeschen, near Merseburg, graduated at the University of Halle, and was driven to England for participating in the revolution of 1848.

Coming shortly after to America, he published with the coöperation of Carl Copp, a little book entitled 'The New Rome,' in which a comparison is drawn between the hereditary enmity between Rome and Carthage on the one hand and between England and America. In 1857 Poesche came to Washington, where during forty years he served as statistician in the Treasury. In this capacity he was sent in 1872 to advise Bismarck about the working of our internal revenue system. In 1878 appeared his masterpiece, 'Die Arier,' in which the origin of the blonde Aryans, of whom Poesche was a splendid example, is found in the Rokitno marshes of White Russia. The book is a protest against the Asiatic origin of the blondes and contributed no little at the time to change the prevailing opinion. In all his work Mrs. Poesche was the amanuensis of her husband and occupied a prominent place in the Washington literary circle.

O. T. M.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

AT the meeting of the Royal Geological Society on February 16th, Mr. Henry White, Secretary of the United States Embassy, received on behalf of Mr. G. K. Gilbert, the Wollaston Medal.

LORD RAYLEIGH, Professor Ramsay, Dr. W. Hittorf and M. Moissan have been elected honorary members of the German Chemical Society.

THE polling for the election of a member to represent the University of London in Parlia-