THE WOOD BUFFALO.

THE following information has just come into my possession from the Inspector of Indian Agencies and Reserves, Mr. J. A. Macrae, who has recently returned from the far north. He writes: "At Fort Chipewyan, Fort Smith and Fort Resolution, I made close enquiries into the number of wood buffalo remaining, having an opportunity—owing to meeting so many Indians fresh from their grounds—such as I think no one else has enjoyed, to do this. Some of the Indians who were to meet me at each place had lately been near the Buffalo and had counted the different herds, which are generally speaking, three in number—one ranging from Salt River to Peace Point on Peace River; one from Salt River north to Great Slave Lake; and one from Salt River east and west. They number, I conclude, from 500 to 575. I understand that there has been an increase of perhaps a couple of hundred, and it would appear only to be necessary to continue vigorous protective measures in order to perpetuate the herd. It is noticeable that the fur of the wood Buffalo, owing no doubt to climatic conditions, is longer and thicker than was that of its brother of the plains, and it has that straightness and thickness which characterized the musk ox robe." OTTO J. KLOTZ.

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CURRENT NOTES ON METEOROLOGY.

THE 'BOOM' POPULATION OF KANSAS.

SOME interesting facts concerning the change in the number of inhabitants of Kansas as a result of the rise and collapse of the 'boom' of the latter part of the decade 1880–1890, are given by Gannett in an article on 'The Population of the United States' in the last number of the *Bull. Amer. Geog. Soc.* (No. 5, 1900). It will be remembered that a succession of unusually rainy seasons at that time was followed by a large increase in land values, the whole region witnessing a tremendous 'boom.' There was a rapid gain in population. A number of dry seasons following, the settlers were literally starved out, and the country was quickly depopulated again. In 1885, at the beginning of the 'boom,' Kansas had a population of 1,268,530; in 1888, near its crest, the population numbered 1,518,552; in 1890 the figures were 1,427,096, and in 1895 only 1,333,734. The State thus gained nearly 250,000 inhabitants in three years, and later lost nearly 200,000. Similar conditions obtained in Nebraska and the two Dakotas.

THE METEOROLOGY OF LOWER CALIFORNIA.

IN an article on 'Explorations in the Central Part of Baja California,' in the *Bull. Amer. Geog. Soc.* (No. 5, 1900, 397–429), Dr. Gustav Eisen gives a brief account of the rainfall and climatic conditions of the meteorologically practically unknown peninsula of Lower California. There are two sources and two seasons of rainfall. The summer rains extend from Todos Santos and Cabo San Lucas, in the south, as far up as the Sierra Nevada, in the northern part of Alta California. These summer rains are most frequent and heavy in the backbone of the Sierra which runs along the eastern coast of Baja California. The winter rains now and then extend from Alta California down to the Pacific Coast, even as far south as San José del Cabo. These winter rains never enter the Gulf of California, and diminish in quantity and regularity to the south. As far south as San Quentin they are fairly regular, but beyond that point they are uncertain. In spite of these two sources of supply, the peninsula of Lower California is but very scantily supplied with rain.

THE HARVARD METEOROLOGICAL STATIONS IN PERU.

THE 55th Annual Report of the Director of the Astronomical Observatory of Harvard College contains an announcement which will fill meteorologists the world over with regret. Speaking of the meteorological stations of the Harvard College Observatory in Peru, concerning which mention has frequently been made in the columns of SCIENCE, Professor Pickering says: "The observations at these different stations have now been continued in many cases for eight or ten years. At such stations, where, from the necessities of the case, the observers are generally men of limited education and experience, observations of the greatest accuracy cannot be expected, except by maintaining trained observers at greatly in-