which brought forth a long discussion, participated in by prominent teachers of chemistry and industrial chemists. There seemed to be some weight of opinion in favor of the view that time may be spent in attempts to teach the details of such industries as dyeing, brewing, acid manufacture, etc., that might better be devoted to acquiring the broad general principles of chemistry, mechanics and engineering, leaving the technical training to be acquired in the factory or works.

Dr. H. W. Wiley, of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, gave a paper upon 'The Government Laboratories of Great Britain.' This was profusely illustrated by lantern photographs taken by Dr. Wiley. The director of this laboratory is Professor T. E. Thorpe, C.B., LL.D., F.R.S., past president of the Chemical Society. In regard to the equipment of this laboratory Dr. Wiley thinks we might do well to imitate its ideal system of ventilation and excellent apparatus. Solid silver flasks are used for saponification tests under pressure. On the other hand, British chemists in general will do well to imitate the American Society of Official Agricultural Chemists in regard to the adoption of standard analytical methods. In Professor Thorpe's laboratories some of the American 'official methods' have been adopted.

JOHN ALEXANDER MATHEWS,
Secretary.

THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE OF ST. LOUIS.

AT the meeting of the Academy of Science, of St. Louis, on the evening of October 21, 1901, forty-five persons present, Professor F. E. Nipher, of Washington University, delivered an address on 'Progress made in Physics during the Nineteenth Century.'

WILLIAM TRELEASE,
Recording Secretary.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

PATAGONIAN PERSONALITIES.

A RECENT article in SCIENCE was none too soon in drawing attention to the puerilities and solecisms perpetrated by some botanists in their endeavor to grapple with the mysteries of the Latin language. We scarcely like to arouse the anger of zoologists by suggesting that they are just as bad, but at any rate some of them are not far behind. It is therefore satisfactory to hear that the International Congress of Zoologists has decided that errors of etymology, orthography and grammar are not to remain perpetual disfigurements of scientific writings simply because some would-be systematist never went to school. But there is a class of names against which there is no rule, appalling though they often are to the mind of the scholar. We allude to the monstrosities pieced up out of modern proper names, or even barbarous dialect words, often in unnatural union with a Greek or Latin suffix, *e. g.*, *Leedsichthys*, *Koninckocidaris*, *Lapworthura* (a polite way of showing respect truly!), *Etheridgaster* (which does *not* mean airy stomach), *Urobenus* (not, as some ingenious German supposes, derived from *ὄνρα* and *βαινω*, but an anagram of *Bournerus* by which a Mr. Bourne has been immortalized.

But all previous efforts—if one can dignify with such a term the results of pure laziness or incompetence—are left far behind by the latest fantasies of Florentino Ameghino in 'Notices préliminaires sur des Ongulés nouveaux des terrains crétacés de Patagonie,' published in the *Boletin de la Academia Nacional de Ciencias de Córdoba* (July, 1901). Zoologists may retort that this gentleman is only a paleontologist; well, then he should have more sympathy with the dead languages than to burden them with such abortions as the following: *Henricosbornia*, *Guilielmoscottia*, *Oldfieldthomasia*, *Ernestokokenia*, *Josepholeidya*, *Ricardolydekkeria*, *Guilielmofloweria*, *Henricofilholia*, *Thomashuxleya*, *Edwardocopeia*, and others too many to quote. Space, however, must be found for two gems, further enriched by footnotes: *Maxschlosseria* 'J'ai employé le prénom sous la forme germanique plus en usage, car c'est la racine du nom latin, qui est trop long,' and *Asmithwoodwardia* 'Je n'ai utilisé que l'initiale du prénom, car autrement il aurait résulté un nom excessivement long. D'ailleurs, cet auteur signe d'habitude A. Smith Woodward.' That 'd'ailleurs' is delicious; the man would actually find excuses for not giving us *Arturosmithivoodvardia*. Will the Zoological Congress

not insist on the completed form? Why should pure latinity dread an excessive length?

Seriously, is not this a little too much—not too long, but too childish? It is only 45 years since a satirical rogue in the *Annals and Magazine of Natural History* suggested that incipient paleontologists might ease their brains by adopting such combinations as *Grayoconcha* and *Gouldornis*, for they would certainly never have been anticipated by any zoologist. Such sarcasm would not carry far to-day; we have by this time rivaled the imaginary *Unclesambocrinus* of the same critic.

Ridicule will never check people with no sense of the ridiculous. Are rules any better? Needless to say the original Strickland code never contemplated the possibility of such aberrations; it was opposed to all personal generic names in zoology. The British Association Committee of 1864 wished to reject *Cookilaria* and *Morrhua tomcodus*, and considered that 'specific names from persons have already been sufficiently prostituted, and personal generic names have increased to a large and undeserving extent'; both are classed as '*objectionable*.' The rules adopted by the International Zoological Congress of 1899 say that generic names must consist of a single word (art. 5); that they may be derived from either forenames used in antiquity, or from modern surnames (art. 6 *g*, *h*); that such names should not enter into the formation of compound words (art. 9); that when a surname is compound, only one of its components is to be used, *e. g.*, *Edwardsia* not *Milne-Edwardsia* (art. 7) and certainly never *Milnedwardsia* (art 11). But *Amilnedwardsia*—!

It is perfectly obvious that the whole spirit of these rules is totally opposed to the action of Ameghino, and if their letter is not so too it is only because there are some things so ridiculous that nobody has ever dreamed of legislating against them. It remains to be seen whether the dignity, the common sense, and the fellow-feeling of zoologists are strong enough to ignore these Florentinameghinisms, which we should expect to see in some penny-a-liner's pseudo-scientific paragraph for a Sunday paper, rather than in the publications of a National Academy. F. A. B.

SOME REMARKS ON PRESIDENT D. S. JORDAN'S ARTICLE ON THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF FISHES.

Professor D. S. Jordan has called attention to a number of highly interesting points in the geographical distribution of fishes,* and I should like to add a few remarks relating to some of the questions discussed.

1. *Similarity of Japanese and European (Mediterranean) forms.*

Although, according to Professor Jordan, this similarity does not seem to be so very much pronounced among fishes, we have other groups of marine animals in which the same striking fact has been noticed. The present writer has lately called attention to this with reference to the Decapod Crustaceans,† and has expressed the opinion that the connection of Japan and Europe by a continuous shore line was along the northern shores of Siberia, in a geological past when the climate of the circumpolar regions was a warmer one, so that at least subtropical animals could exist there. The continuous circumpolar distribution of the ancestors of the respective forms was broken up by the cooling of the pole, the species retreated southward, and found only in the Mediterranean and Japanese seas a congenial climate, where they continue to exist as *relics* of a former circumpolar distribution. Professor Jordan has apparently not taken into consideration this explanation, which might possibly also be advanced for some of the fishes of Japan and Europe.

2. *The submersion of the Isthmus of Suez.*

That there was no important connection between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean after the middle of the Tertiary is a well-known view. Hull‡ has demonstrated that the faunas of both seas were disconnected since Miocene time, but that in the Pliocene there was again an incomplete connection across the Isthmus of Suez by very shallow water. This agrees well with Professor Jordan's conclusions. Before Miocene, however, there must have been a wide

* 'The Fish Fauna of Japan, with Observations on the Geographical Distribution of Fishes,' Science, No. 354, October 11, 1901.

† Bronn's 'Klassen und Ordnungen des Thierreichs.' Arthropoda. Bd. 5, Abt. 2, p. 1,267. 1900.

‡ *Nature*, Vol. 31, 1885, p. 599.