

Phase Rule,' by J. E. Trevor. 'Limitations of the Mass Law,' by Wilder D. Bancroft.

April. 'Molecular Attraction,' by J. E. Mills. The presentation of evidence to prove that molecular attraction, like gravitation, varies inversely as the square of the distance apart of the molecules, that it is only slightly affected by changes in temperature, and that it depends primarily upon the chemical constitution of the molecule and not upon its mass. 'Studies in Vapor Composition, II,' by H. R. Carveth. 'On the Stability of the Equilibrium of Univariant Systems,' by Paul Saurel. 'On the Fundamental Equations of the Multiple Point,' by Paul Saurel.

SOCIETIES AND ACADEMIES.

THE AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.

As announced in *SCIENCE* for June 27, and as briefly noted in the report of the Secretary of Section H of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (this volume, p. 201), an American Anthropological Association was formally established on June 30. The founding meeting was held in Oakland Church, Pittsburgh, under the Chairmanship of Stewart Culin, Vice-president of Section H of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. After the adoption of a constitution the following executive officers were elected:

President, W J McGee; *Vice-President* for four years, F. W. Putnam; *Vice-President* for three years, Franz Boas; *Vice-President* for two years, W. H. Holmes; *Vice-President* for one year, J. W. Powell; *Secretary*, George A. Dorsey; *Treasurer*, Roland B. Dixon; *Editor*, F. W. Hodge.

The plan of the organization providing for a Council large enough to include the leading workers in American anthropology, the following persons, all of whom except two (who chanced to be abroad) had indorsed the objects of the Association, were elected Councilors: Frank Baker, Henry P. Bowditch, A. F. Chamberlain, Stewart Culin, Livingston Farrand, J. Walter Fewkes, Alice C. Fletcher, J. N. B. Hewitt, Walter Hough, Alés Hrdlicka, A. L. Kroeber, George Grant MacCurdy, O. T. Mason, Washington Matthews, J. D. McGuire, James Mooney, W. W. Newell, Frank Russell,

M. H. Saville, Harlan I. Smith, Frederick Starr, John R. Swanton, Cyrus Thomas, and E. S. Wood.

The Association arranged to hold the next regular meeting at Washington, in connection with the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science during Convocation Week, 1902-03.

A session for the representation of scientific papers was held jointly with Section H, as already reported in *SCIENCE*.

The following preamble and resolutions were adopted:

"WHEREAS, The Second International American Conference, commonly known as the Pan American Congress, in session duly assembled in the City of Mexico, January 29, 1902, adopted a recommendation to the several American nations participating in the Conference, that an 'American International Archaeological Commission' be created, to promote archeological research, to aid in the preservation of antiquities, and to endeavor to establish an American International Museum; and

WHEREAS, The recommendation is in full accord with the spirit and objects of American science; therefore

"*Resolved*, That the American Anthropological Association heartily concurs in the recommendation of the Second International American Conference.

"*Resolved further*, That the Secretary of the Association send a copy of these Resolutions to the Director of the Bureau of American Republics as an expression of the judgment of the Association."

Undoubtedly the founding of the new association will meet a need long felt by the anthropologists of the United States; it was indeed the consummation of a movement started in 1896 when the Anthropological Section of the American Association for the Advancement of Science began holding winter meetings. The action at Pittsburgh was especially notable for the unanimity shown by the representatives of all sections of the country. Most of the leading anthropologists of America were present in person; and it may be said that all were in some way represented.

It rarely happens that a scientific organization of national character is instituted with so general support and so complete harmony as was displayed at the founding of the American Anthropological Association.

W J M.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

BLUE FOXES ON THE PRIBYLOF ISLANDS.

THE account of the 'Blue Fox Trapping on the Pribylof Island,' by Lembkey and Lucas in *SCIENCE*, Vol. XVI., pp. 216-218, is highly interesting in many respects, but while the authors seem to regard the experiment of sparing the females as of doubtful success, I am of the opinion that the result has amply justified it.

It is quite true that the table of foxes trapped on St. George Island, 1897-1901 (p. 216),* apparently indicates a surprisingly small increase in the females caught, but several causes have probably conspired towards this result. In the first place, the experience on the Commander Islands seems to indicate that the females are more cautious than the males and are not so easily caught. Thus in 1896 there were taken in steel traps on Copper Island 515 males and 452 females or 63 males more than females. If this represents the normal ratio between the sexes caught then it will be seen that on St. George Island in 1900-1901 there should have been taken only 539 females to 614 males under normal circumstances. As 690 females were really taken it would seem that the normal excess of females was 151 instead of 76.

It will be observed that during the previous three years a large number of females have been trapped on St. George Island, which were released after having been 'marked' or 'branded.' Is it quite probable that all these females have allowed themselves to be caught over and over again? The blue fox is a stupid creature compared with his red brother, and I know that the same animal has repeatedly been trapped. But from this to conclude that all the females are thus caught and that none of them have learned by experience to keep out of the

* 1902 in the table quoted is probably a misprint for 1901.

traps seems little probable, especially if it is true that the females are more cautious than the males. It appears to me even highly probable that a large number of the females avoided being taken again, and that we have here a valid explanation of the comparatively low number of females in the table on p. 216.

The writers of the article in question think it probable 'that there has been some slight gain in the number of foxes.' Apart from the above considerations I think it can be shown that the gain has been great and almost unexampled.

Statistics covering a long period of years (1847-1891)* show that on the Commander Island,† as a rule the successful fox hunt of one season is followed by a tremendous drop in the yield during the next year. Thus on Bering Island the number of foxes killed in 1852 was 1,900; in 1853 the number dropped to 547, or more than two thirds. In 1859 the harvest was 1,233 foxes, while in 1860 only 584 were caught. In 1871 870 blue foxes were killed, in 1872 only 580. In 1875, 1,087, in 1876 only 573. In 1881-2 the number was 1,477, in 1882-83 only 872. A series of figures such as we have them from St. George for three consecutive years, viz., 867, 955, 1,304, is therefore highly encouraging.

It is therefore greatly to be hoped that the authorities on the Pribylof Islands may not lose heart even if the actual returns may not come up to the figures of the table which is intended to show what the increase ought to be theoretically. It is evident that we do not

* See my 'Asiatic Fur Seal Islands,' 1898, p. 43.

† A corresponding table relating to the Pribylof foxes during part of the same period ('Fur Seals and Fur Seal Islands N. Pacif,' III., 1899, p. 340) taken from I. Petroff's census report does not show similar conditions on the Pribylof Islands. Without knowing the source of these statistics this difference is not easy to explain, but I would suggest that the list in question may only be a record of the number of skins *shipped* during the respective years but not showing the number of foxes actually killed in the year to which they are credited. The company probably required a certain number of skins shipped each year to satisfy the demand of the market, hence the remarkable uniformity.