dangerous it is to deviate from this rule is made evident by the fact that no less a classical scholar than Regan himself has mistaken the neuter adjective *Cyclopium* for the genitive plural of *Cyclops*. If, as Regan thinks, *Cyclopium* is not generically distinguishable from *Arges*, all the species should go by the older name *Cyclopium*.

The reason for shifting the name *Ancistrus* from *cirrhosus* as the type are not apparent and should have been distinctly stated. The name *Ancistrus* was proposed by Kner (Hypostomiden 272, 1853) for the following described species and one of them must be considered the type:

(*a*) Brachypteri: (1) *cirrhosus*, (2) *dolichopteri*, (3) *gymnorhynchus*, (4) *mystacinus*, (5) *pictus*, (6) *brachyurus*, (7) *scaphirhynchus*. To these described species Kner adds *medians* and *itacua*. Of *mystacinus* he says: "Diese Art scheint dem *Hyp. guacharote* Val. sehr nahe zu stehen, doch lässt sich bei der Ungenauigkeit der Beschreibung des letzten über die etwaige Gleichartigkeit beider nich sicher entscheiden."

(*b*) Macropteri: (1) *duodecimalis*, (2) *longimanus*, (3) *gibbiceps*, (4) *litturatus*.

It is to be emphasized that *guacharote* was known to him only from a description, considered too general for specific distinctions.

Gill ('Synopsis of the Freshwater Fishes of the Island of Trinidad,' 47) amended the genus *Ancistrus* by separating the species of group (*b*) under the new name *Pterygoplichthys*, saying: "The genus *Ancistrus* seems to have been framed with especial regard to those fishes to which the name is here restricted, and is by Dr. Kner divided into two sections, which correspond to *Ancistrus* and *Pterygoplichthys*, his section '*a*' answering to the former genus, and '*b*' to the latter." A more definite restriction to the species described by Kner could not be desired. The *Ancistrus* of Gill is identical with section '*a*' of the *Ancistrus* of Kner. Gill described some specimens from Trinidad as *Ancistrus guacharote* Val. This is the first formal introduction of *guacharote* to the genus *Ancistrus*. But Günther later maintained that the *guacharote* of Gill is not that of Valenciennes and named the former *trinitatis*. Regan has been unable to decide whether *trinitatis* is distinct from *guacharote* or not; nevertheless, it appears that on the fact that Gill described *guacharote* Regan has selected the latter as the type of the genus *Ancistrus*. Gill did not formally select *guacharote* as type, and if any inference is permitted it must certainly be that the first species described by Kner, *cirrhosus*, is the type—certainly not the *guacharote* or *trinitatis*, which was unknown to Kner. However, neither Kner nor Gill specifically indicated a type. Bleeker* formally selected *cirrhosus* as the type, and there seems to be no reason why *cirrhosus* should be placed anywhere than in the genus *Ancistrus*. Nevertheless, this species is placed in a new genus, *Xenocara*. *Guacharote*, on the other hand, is placed in the genus *Ancistrus*, and strange enough in a new subgenus, *Lasiancistrus*. There may be reasons for the ruling in these premises but they are not evident from a perusal of the paper. Regan's name *Xenocara* may be retained for those of the Ancistroids without tentacles.

Regan's monograph is so welcome a contribution and so enthusiastically conceived and executed that it is ungracious to differ with the author in the minor points indicated.

C. H. EIGENMANN.

## *CURRENT NOTES ON METEOROLOGY.*

### KITE-FLYING AT SEA: RECENT RESULTS.

THE results obtained by means of kite-flights from the Prince of Monaco's yacht during the summer of 1904 are discussed by Professor Hergesell in the *Comptes rendus*, Vol. CXL., p. 331. Twenty-five ascents were made, eight in the Mediterranean, one in the Baltic and sixteen in the Atlantic. In the region of the trades the adiabatic gradient, of 1° in 100 meters, is always found in the lowest strata, and is even exceeded, the thickness of this stratum being between 100 and 600 meters. The relative humidity rises from 70 per cent. or 80 per cent. at sea level to 95 per cent. or 100 per cent. Above this stratum the temperature rises quickly several degrees, and the humidity

* *Nederl. Tijdschr.*, I., 1863, 77.

diminishes suddenly to below 50 per cent. The temperature continues to rise through a stratum sometimes 1,000 meters in thickness, and the humidity decreases to 10 per cent. or 20 per cent. Above this stratum the adiabatic rate is again met with, but the humidity is low. The northeast trade, with a velocity of about sixteen miles an hour, prevails at sea level. At greater altitudes the wind shifted gradually through north to northwest, and in two instances through east to southeast and south. No southwest current (anti-trades) was shown by the kites. The northwest or southeast winds in the highest strata had a velocity not over seven or nine miles an hour. In the intermediate strata the velocity was generally even lower (*Nature,* March 16, 1905, 467; *Ciel et Terre,* March 16, 1905, pp. 47–49).

MOUNTAIN SICKNESS.

In an account of 'Five Ascents to the Observatories of Mont Blanc' (*Appalachia,* Vol. X., No. 4), Mr. A. L. Rotch describes his different experiences, and pays special attention to the physiological effects of the high altitudes. On the first ascent, at a height of 14,320 feet, where the night was spent, the author suffered with this most distressing malady, but was afforded some relief by breathing oxygen. In the morning he was well enough to aid in setting up the barometers and to undertake preliminary spectroscopic observations. Another night, spent at the Vallot cabin, 1,460 feet below the summit, was also made unpleasant by a repetition of the discomforts of mountain sickness. On a second expedition oxygen failed to give any relief, but some alleviation was obtained by the use of phenacetine. The third ascent was marked by suffocation and dizziness during the night spent at the Grands Mulets shelter, the pulse rising to 100, the altitude being comparatively low. Mr. Rotch attributes these symptoms to a large quantity of quinine which he had taken before starting. On the further climb, great difficulty was experienced in walking, and there was hardly strength enough, at the Vallot Observatory, to gather up the sheets of the recording instruments. A fourth ascent was accomplished without difficulty, the author being 'in prime condition' on the summit.

MONTHLY WEATHER REVIEW.

The November number of the *Monthly Weather Review* (dated January 31, 1905) contains the following articles of general scientific interest: 'Airy's Theory of the Rainbow,' by Rev. D. Hammer, S.J.; 'Radiation in the Solar System,' being an address delivered before the British Association by Professor J. H. Poynting; 'A Simple, Effective and Inexpensive Lightning Recorder,' by H. F. Alciatore; 'An Honest Long-range Forecaster,' 'Meteorological Course at Williams College,' 'Meteorology in New South Wales,' 'Deflection of Thunderstorms with the Tides,' 'A Proposed International Contest of Weather Forecasters.'

FLOODS IN THE SAHARA.

Occasional sudden downpours of rain, somewhat similar in character to our western cloudbursts, occur in the mountains of the Saharan region, causing floods, and even loss of life. On the evening of April 12, 1899, near Berrian, 300 miles south of the city of Algiers, a flood of this character swept down the usually dry bed of a wady, and caused the death, by drowning, of some French soldiers who were encamped in the bed. A recent case of the same kind is reported in the *Bulletin* of the *Comité de l'Afrique,* No. 11, 1904. On October 21 the village of Aïn Sefra, in southern Algeria, on the edge of the Sahara, was overwhelmed by floods which suddenly rushed down two wadys. The floods were due to very heavy rains which had fallen on a neighboring mountain range. Ten Europeans and fifteen natives were drowned. The flood is reported to have subsided about fifteen minutes after reaching the town.

THE GUINEA CURRENT.

In 1895 there was published by the Meteorological Institute of the Netherlands a report entitled 'De Guinea en Equatoriaal Stroomen,' dealing with the currents, temperature, winds, specific gravity of ocean water, pressure, frequency of rainy days, etc., of the re-

gion between the equator and lat. 25° N., and between the meridian of Greenwich and long. 40° W. A new edition of these charts has now been issued ('Observations océanographiques et météorologiques dans la Région du Courant de Guinée,' 1855–1900. (1) Texte et Tableaux, pp. iv + 116, (2) Planches, VIII. Utrecht, 1904). R. DEC. WARD.

## SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

SIR PATRICK MANSON has been invited to give the Lane lectures at the Cooper Medical College, California, this year. He will lecture on some aspect of tropical diseases.

PROFESSOR J. N. LANGLEY, of Cambridge, will give one of the general lectures at the meeting of the Association of German Scientific Men and Physicians, which opens at Meran on September 24. His subject will be 'Recent Researches on the Nervous System.'

LORD RAYLEIGH is about to retire from the professorship of natural philosophy at the Royal Institution, which he has held for eighteen years. He will be made honorary professor. Lord Rayleigh has given twenty-three Friday evening discourses and twenty-one courses of afternoon lectures at the institution.

LORD LISTER celebrated his seventy-eighth birthday on April 5.

PROFESSOR EUGENE W. HILGARD, of the department of agriculture of the University of California, has been granted leave of absence for next year. Professor Hilgard, who is seventy-two years of age and has held his chair in California for thirty-one years, is privileged to retire with two thirds salary, according to the statutes of the university.

A MARBLE portrait bust is to be installed at Brussels in honor of Dr. Beco, secretary-general of the Belgian Department of Public Health.

A GOLD medal in honor of Professor Pozzi, the eminent French surgeon, by the sculptor Chaplain, is to be presented to him by his colleagues and pupils.

THE students of Jefferson Medical College will at the approaching commencement present to Dr. Forbes a life-size portrait of himself. Dr. Forbes has taught anatomy in Philadelphia for forty-nine years.

THE health of Lord Kelvin is much improved and he was expecting to be able to leave London shortly for a change of air.

PROFESSOR H. E. GREGORY, who has been ill with inflammatory rheumatism, has much improved, and expects to resume his university duties in the course of several weeks.

SIR RICHARD DOUGLAS POWELL has been elected president of the Royal College of Physicians in succession to Sir William Church.

MR. JOHN GAVEY, C.B., engineer-in-chief to the Post Office, has been nominated for election as president of the British Institution of Electrical Engineers for 1905–6. Dr. R. T. Glazebrook, F.R.S., director of the National Physical Laboratory, and Mr. J. E. Kingsbury, of the Western Electric Company, have been nominated for the office of vice-president.

PROFESSOR THOMAS M. GARDNER has resigned his chair in the faculty of mechanical engineering at Cornell University.

MR. E. T. NEWTON, F.R.S., paleontologist to the British Geological Survey, retired on May 4, after forty years of service. He is succeeded by Dr. F. L. Kitchin.

WE learn from *Nature* that the Baly medal, given every alternate year on the recommendation of the president and council of the Royal College of Physicians of London for distinguished work in the science of physiology, especially during the two years immediately preceding the award, has been awarded to Professor Pavlov, of St. Petersburg. The Bisset Hawkins gold medal for 1905, given triennially for work deserving special recognition as advancing sanitary science or promoting public health, has been awarded to Sir Patrick Manson, K.C.M.G.

THE Jacksonian prize of the Royal College of Surgeons has been awarded to Mr. H. J. Patterson for his essay on 'The Diagnosis and Treatment of such Affections of the Stomach as are Amenable to Direct Surgical Interference.'