

The rate of increase, 6.9 per cent., is half that for twenty years back. It was 7.9 per cent., 1875 to 1880; and 8.9 per cent., 1880 to 1885; but this is the only time it has ever been as low; and of the earlier decade, the first five years, 1875 to 1880, were years of great financial depression.

The past five years have been years of overflowing prosperity. Yet the increase in population in Massachusetts drops to one half the earlier rate. The addition to population in the latest five years is no larger than it was thirty years ago, when the inhabitants of the states numbered only half as many as now.

"This same arrest of population," says the *Philadelphia Press*, "is in progress all over the country. No state is likely to show in this decade the increase of the past. Our national increase, which has been jogging along at about 25 per cent., in ten years, is about to make a drop to 12 or 15 per cent. in ten years, a little above the average of thriving European countries like Germany and England."

JOHN FRANKLIN CROWELL.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA.

AN informal meeting of a few of the administrative heads of some of the greater museums of America was held at the United States National Museum in Washington on December 21. There were present Dr. Richard Rathbun, the director of the National Museum, Dr. H. C. Bumpus, director of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, Dr. N. L. Britton, the director of the New York Botanical Garden, Dr. F. A. Lucas, the curator-in-chief of the Brooklyn Institute, Dr. W. J. McGee, the director of the St. Louis Public Museum, Dr. W. P. Wilson, the director of the Philadelphia Museums, and Dr. W. J. Holland, the director of the Carnegie Museum. Dr. Samuel Henshaw, the curator of the Cambridge Museum of Comparative Zoology, and Dr. F. J. V. Skiff, of the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, were not present, but were represented by letter.

The meeting had been called for the purpose of considering whether it might be advisable to take preliminary steps looking toward the

organization in America of a Museums Association somewhat analogous to that which exists in Great Britain. It was finally unanimously decided that the gentlemen represented in this informal gathering should over their names issue a call to the representatives of a number of the larger and more important museums of the United States to convene for the purpose of organizing The Museums Association of America.

In the informal discussion which took place it was decided that the movement should not be restricted to natural history museums, but that museums representing art, as well as the sciences, should be included in the call, and that the invitations should be made to cover the institutions of America, using the word in its widest sense, so as to include all of North America and South America and the various insular possessions of the United States and Great Britain in the western hemisphere.

In accordance with a resolution adopted invitations to attend a preliminary gathering for the purpose of organizing The Museums Association of America will shortly be issued to a number of institutions and individuals who are thought to be likely to be interested in such a movement. This conference will be held at the American Museum of Natural History in New York on May 15, 1906.

PITTSBURGH, PA.,

December 23, 1905.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

THE New Orleans meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the societies affiliated with it begins to-day. This evening Professor W. G. Farlow, of Harvard University, will give the presidential address, his subject being 'The Popular Conception of the Scientific Man at the Present Day.' We hope to publish this address next week.

THE Paris Academy of Sciences has awarded the Lalande prize to Professor William Henry Pickering, of Harvard University, for his discovery of the ninth and tenth satellites of Saturn.