

deaths recorded as belonging to London during the year 1905 numbered 70,442, and were equal to a rate of 15.1 per 1,000 of the estimated population; this is the lowest death rate in London since civil registration was established. It was 1.0 per 1,000 below the corresponding rate in 1904, and no less than 2.7 per 1,000 below the corresponding average rate in the ten years 1895-1904.

THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

May 11.—Mr. Smith, of California, introduced a bill (H. R. 19,234) for the protection of animals, birds and fish in the forest reserves of California. Referred to the House Committee on Public Lands.

Mr. Campbell, of Kansas, from the Committee on the District of Columbia, to which was referred the Bill of the House (H. R. 13,193) to prohibit the killing of wild birds and other wild animals in the District of Columbia, reported the same with amendment, accompanied by a report (No. 4,207); which were referred to the House Calendar.

THE CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES.

THE most serious loss sustained by science in many years is the destruction of the California Academy of Sciences by the recent earthquake and fire in San Francisco. Two letters recently received from officers of the institution giving interesting details regarding the destruction of the academy are worthy of record as a part of the history of scientific work on the Pacific Coast. In addition to their general interest, they will appeal particularly to those who have enjoyed the hospitality of the academy which for years has been the gathering place and headquarters of scientific men visiting the west coast.

The first is from Mr. Leverett Mills Loomis, director of the academy, to whose initiative, energy and devotion were largely due its increasing growth and activity during the last few years, and upon whom now largely devolves the important duty of reorganizing and placing it on a sound working basis. Mr. Loomis was living within the burned area not far from the academy and in addition to his

efforts for that institution was obliged to rescue from the advancing flames a helpless invalid father. He writes:

I got down to the academy about 7 A.M. and found the bridge connecting the two buildings gone and the museum stairs badly wrecked. I managed to climb up to the top floor and got all the records together, and began to get them down when Miss Hyde [the librarian] came to my aid. Together we saved all the records. Miss Hyde also saved the MS. of Mr. Hittell's history of the academy. Later Dr. Van Denburg [curator of reptiles] came and got out most of the reptile types. Then Miss Eastwood came with a friend and saved the greater part of the plant types. Miss Hyde also saved most of the insect types. Meanwhile the fires started by the earthquake were closing in on the academy. The pioneer building and the Emporium [both buildings joined the academy] were burning when I paid my visit to the Department of Ornithology. As a starter for the bird collection, I secured the type of *Oceanodroma macrodactyla*, and as the beginning of the bird library I took Des Murs' *Iconographie*. As I wanted to be the first donor to the academy's ornithological library, I put Brown's illustrations under my arm as I passed the store room where my books were kept. So you see we had made a beginning before the end had come. The work accomplished by the Galapagos expedition has exceeded our most sanguine expectations. Among the treasures are a series of Darwin's rail and tortoises from islands where they were supposed to be extinct. The Galapagos collections will form a foundation of our new museum of the greater academy. Our plan of action is fully worked out. *The library is the hardest thing to replace*; the books will come slowly, but they will come. Have found good quarters and am now pushing the reorganization.

The other letter is dated Berkeley, California, May 7, 1906, and is from Miss Alice Eastwood, curator of botany of the academy. Miss Eastwood has been in charge of the academy herbarium for the last twelve years. Her devotion to the work has been shown in many ways, even to the extent of using a large part of her salary as curator in the employment of assistants. The collection contained a considerable number of plant types and during the past year Miss Eastwood had been segregating them from the general collection