

time when the first draft of this pioneer evolutionary treatise was completed is not known. Charles Darwin says, in the Introduction, that it was intended for posthumous publication as early as 1775; and, according to the remark in the present letter, it may have been fairly complete several years earlier. There is no evidence, however, that it antedated the evolutionary writings of Buffon (1765).

This second of these letters is addressed to 'Dr. Percival Physician Manchester,' and reads as follows:

Dear Sir,

I am much obliged to you for the kindness of your letter; & thank you for your inquiry into the merits of a poem, from which the Botanic Garden was supposed to have been stolen; an accusation which however I had not heard of, & am the more indebted to you for shewing the falsity of it.

The first part, which you are so obliging as to inquire after, is nearly printed; & I suppose will be out, if not delay'd by the engraver, in 3 or 4 weeks. It is longer than the other, & if you are at the trouble to read it, I shall be glad of any remarks, which may improve a second edition of it; if such should be called for.

I hope you will be amused, tho' not convinced, by the conjectures in the notes on coal ("upon geology," stricken out), on the winds of this climate, & on the use of the honey to the vegetable economy.

Was I sure of such candid readers, as yourself, I should be tempted to print another work, which has lain by me nearly 20 years. Adieu.

I am, dear Sir,

Your much obliged

& obed^t. serv^t.

E. DARWIN.

Derby

Jun. 18—91.

BASHFORD DEAN.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY.

STATISTICS OF MORTALITY.

THE Bureau of the Census has published a report presenting mortality statistics for the United States for the five calendar years 1900 to 1904. This report was prepared under the supervision of the late William A. King, chief statistician for vital statistics.

The number of deaths reported in the registration area in 1900 was 539,939, and the death

rate per 1,000 of population was 17.6. In 1901 the rate declined to 16.6 and in 1902 to 16. The rate increased in 1903 to 16.2 and in 1904 to 16.7. The average annual rate for the five years was 16.6 per 1,000. The corresponding rates in certain foreign countries are shown in the following table:

COUNTRY.	NUMBER OF DEATHS PER 1,000 OF POPULATION: 1900 TO 1903.				
	Annual Average.	1900	1901	1902	1903
Registration area of					
United States.....	16.6	17.6	16.6	16.0	16.2
England and Wales.....	16.7	18.2	16.9	16.2	15.4
Scotland	17.5	18.5	17.9	17.2	16.6
Ireland	18.1	19.6	17.8	17.5	17.5
Germany	20.7	22.1	20.7	19.4	(1)
Prussia	20.3	21.8	20.5	19.2	19.8
Norway	14.9	15.9	14.9	13.9	14.8
Sweden	15.8	16.8	16.1	15.4	15.1
Hungary.....	26.3	26.9	25.4	27.0	26.1
Netherlands.....	16.7	17.8	17.2	16.3	15.6
Belgium	17.6	19.3	17.2	17.3	17.0
Switzerland	18.0	19.3	18.0	17.2	17.6
Spain.....	26.9	28.9	27.7	26.1	25.0
Italy.....	22.5	23.8	22.0	22.1	22.2

The average annual death rate in the registration states was 17.8 per 1,000 in the cities of 8,000 or more population in 1900 and 14.3 per 1,000 in rural districts, which, as the term is here used, includes everything outside these cities. The average annual rates were lowest in St. Joseph, Mo. (7.6); Owosso, Mich. (10.1); Lincoln, Nebr. (10.4); and St. Paul, Minn. (10.5); and highest in Charleston, S. C. (31.3); Wilmington, N. C. (28.2); and Jacksonville, Fla. (28.1).

THE SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL CONGRESS.

THE sixth International Zoological Congress, which met at Berne in 1904, accepted the invitation of the American Society of Zoologists to hold the seventh congress in America in August or September, 1907, under the presidency of Mr. Alexander Agassiz.

The arrangements for the seventh congress are in charge of a committee of the American Society of Zoologists, consisting of Messrs. Alexander Agassiz, chairman; Samuel Hen-

shaw, secretary; W. K. Brooks, H. C. Bumpus, E. G. Conklin, C. B. Davenport, C. H. Eigenmann, L. O. Howard, D. S. Jordan, J. S. Kingsley, F. R. Lillie, E. L. Mark, C. S. Minot, T. H. Morgan, H. F. Osborn, G. H. Parker, R. Rathbun, J. Reighard, W. E. Ritter, W. T. Sedgwick, C. W. Stiles, A. E. Verrill, C. O. Whitman, E. B. Wilson and R. R. Wright.

The meetings will open in Boston, where the scientific sessions will be held, and from which excursions will be made to Harvard University and to other points of interest. At the close of the Boston meeting the congress will proceed to Woods Hole, Massachusetts, visiting the Station of the United States Bureau of Fisheries, the Marine Biological Laboratory and the collecting grounds of the adjacent seacoast. The journey to New York will be by sea through Long Island Sound. In New York the congress will be entertained by Columbia University, the American Museum of Natural History and the New York Zoological Society, and excursions will be made to Yale University, to Princeton University and to the Carnegie Station for Experimental Evolution. From New York the members will proceed to Philadelphia and Washington. Tours will be planned to Niagara Falls, to the Great Lakes, Chicago and to the West. It is hoped that arrangements can be made for reduced transportation for members of the congress on transatlantic lines and on the American routes.

The first formal circular announcing the preliminary program of the congress will be issued in October, 1906. All inquiries should be addressed to G. H. Parker, Seventh International Zoological Congress, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U. S. A.

*MINUTE OF THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE
OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY ON THE RE-
TIREMENT OF PROFESSOR BOWDITCH.*

IN parting with their colleague, Henry Pickering Bowditch, the members of the faculty of medicine of Harvard University wish formally to express to him their feelings of affection and respect.

They desire to record their recognition of the great value of his researches in physiology, the wide range and originality of his work, his public service as a courageous defender of the freedom of research, and the inspiration given to his pupils now teachers in other schools in this country.

They feel under especial obligation to him for his leadership in their councils, for his efficient aid in the reform of medical education, and for that good judgment and foresight which through many years have aided them in developing a school of medicine of a character deserving the position it holds in the science and civilization of their day.

It is a source of gratification that his life's work has been recognized by many great centers of learning; but by no body of men has it been more thoroughly appreciated than by his comrades of the medical faculty.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

THE American Association for the Advancement of Science opens its special summer meeting at Ithaca on June 29, under the presidency of Professor William H. Welch, of the Johns Hopkins University. Excellent programs are promised by the sections devoted to physics, chemistry, mechanical science and engineering, zoology and social and economic science. The sections devoted to geology and geography, and to botany will be concerned especially with field work. Reports of the meetings of the association and of the affiliated societies will be reported in subsequent numbers of SCIENCE.

THE announcement has been made of the resignation of Dr. William T. Harris, commissioner of education, and of the nomination of his successor, Professor Elmer E. Brown, of the University of California. Dr. Harris's retirement has been made possible by a retiring allowance from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. This action was taken by the trustees of the foundation under one of their rules which permits of such action in the case of extraordinary and unusual service to education. Dr. Harris has been the commissioner of education since