

seems likely to be adopted is that by way of making it worth while for those in Europe to cross the water, and also of affording a certain latitude, the congress shall officially last three weeks. Only the middle week, however, is to be devoted to scientific meetings and discussions, it being proposed that the first week shall be given up by visitors to exploring some of the other great cities of the United States north of Washington, in which official arrangements will be made for their reception, and the third week to similar official visits to cities southwards. The idea is that there may be many who could reach Washington some little time before the scientific proceedings commence, but would have to leave immediately on their termination, while others could spare plenty of time afterwards, but none before, and that by placing the discussions in the middle week America will be able to show public hospitality to visitors of either class.—*The British Medical Journal*.

CURRENT NOTES ON METEOROLOGY.

CLIMATE AND ALTITUDE IN AFRICA.

THE tempering effect of altitude, even within the tropics, is well known. The vice-governor of the Congo Free State, in a recent description of a journey over the Uganda Railroad (*Mouvement Géographique*, No. 16, 1906), brings out this point in his notes on Nairobi, an important town on the line west of Mombasa, about half-way between the Indian Ocean and Victoria Nyanza, at an elevation of 5,450 feet. Here it is possible to raise several varieties of European fruits, vegetables and cereals; the European population is increasing, and many of the white settlers have brought their families. It is further stated that they have no desire to return to their native land. If this be true, it marks a radical departure from the usual rule for white settlers in the tropics, but it is doubtless an exaggerated statement, or has its origin in the fact that most of the Europeans have been at Nairobi but a short time and have not yet attempted to bring up their children there.

Concerning German East Africa, the government of that district has recently issued a

circular for the use of white colonists who intend to settle in the Kilimanjo province. The province consists chiefly of grassy steppe, and the industries must be general agriculture and stock-raising, in the main. The altitude mitigates the heat, although the region is only about 200 miles south of the equator.

Major Gibbons (*Geogr. Journ.*, March) has studied the western part of the high plateau region of British East Africa with a view to ascertaining its adaptability for European settlement. Most of the plateau is 6,000 feet above sea-level. Major Gibbons believes that this, as well as other higher altitudes in this part of Africa, will be classed as healthy countries, and that they will have considerable agricultural development.

MONTHLY WEATHER REVIEW.

RECENT numbers of the *Monthly Weather Review*, Vol. XXXIV., 1906, have contained the following notes and articles of general interest: 'The Relation between Storm Movement and Pressure Distribution,' by E. H. Bowie; 'Climatology of Haiti in the Eighteenth Century,' by C. F. Talman; 'Vertical Air Currents,' by F. W. Proctor, who notes that he has several times had toy kites lifted by vertical currents during summer anti-cyclonic weather, thus showing the presence of small irregular rising bodies of air. A case of 'Snow formed by Mixture of Warm and Cold Air' is described by R. W. Gray, observer at Atlantic City, N. J. On February 6 last snow fell during a part of the day when the sky was perfectly clear. At times the flurries were quite heavy. Condensation seemed to occur at not more than 75 to 100 feet above ground, and in a region of mixture of cold northwest land wind with a warmer, damp ocean wind. Consul-General Skinner, at Marseilles, describes the new method of frost protection in use in the vine-growing regions. A newly-invented preparation, known as the 'Fumigène Mortier,' packed in boxes containing about nine pounds of black powder, and costing 1.50 franc each, is much used in producing thick smoke, which has proved very effective in

checking radiation and thus decreasing the danger of frost. Professor Cleveland Abbe contributes some further notes on the life and work of Espy. In connection with a letter from a correspondent in Curaçao, who attributes to deforestation in that island certain electrical effects which now produce less rain than formerly, Professor Abbe ('Drought and Atmospheric Electricity') takes occasion to point out what is known regarding the connection between rain and electricity. In a series of observations on 'The Zodiacal Light,' Dr. Maxwell Hall reaches conclusions which would relegate this phenomenon to the department of astrophysics, the influence of the atmosphere being only to render obscure the fainter details. In a note on 'Cloud Banners,' reference is made to the report that heavy columns of smoke or steam were ascending from the peak of Mount Rainier on March 6 last. Public attention was attracted by the phenomenon, and it was eagerly watched. In reality, it was a cloud banner of the ordinary type, developed in a warm southerly wind. A similar appearance, in December, 1904, led to the sending of an expedition up the mountain by a Seattle newspaper. A review of a recent paper by Brückner on the influence of the oceans on precipitation over the continents brings out the fact that if the figures and underlying assumptions are taken as accurate, it appears that were the influence of the oceans eliminated, the continents would still receive four fifths of their present precipitation.

CENTRAL LOW PRESSURE IN A TORNADO.

A FEW years ago there was no barograph record from the center or from near the center of a tornado. Almost every year now some tornado in the United States passes near enough to a Weather Bureau station to leave some record of its existence on the curve traced by the self-recording barometer, yet the number of these records is not yet so large that new ones are uninteresting or not worth noting. The tornado at Meridian, Miss., March 2 last, whose passage caused a considerable loss of property and resulted in

the death of 23 persons, was within 250 yards of the local office of the Weather Bureau. The barograph pen dipped .16 inch, and recovered almost immediately, making a straight line down from the main part of its curve. This is the usual form of tornado pressure curve. A facsimile of the original tracing may be found in the *Monthly Weather Review*, 1906, p. 118.

NOTES.

'SOME Meteorological Results of the Scottish National Antarctic Expedition,' by R. C. Mossman, appear in the *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, Vol. 22, 1906, pp. 252-272. This is a more complete discussion than has hitherto been published, and is illustrated by means of curves and wind roses. The most important results of the *Scotia* expedition have already been noted in SCIENCE.

THE rainfall of a region little known meteorologically, German Southwest Africa, is discussed by T. Klengel in *Das Wetter*, 1906, beginning with the April number and extending through July.

THE optical effects resulting from the dust thrown out in the recent eruption of Vesuvius are briefly discussed in the July number of *Das Wetter*.

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BOTANICAL NOTES.

A NEW FLORA OF COLORADO.

ABOUT thirty years ago Professors Porter and Coulter prepared a very useful 'Synopsis of the Flora of Colorado,' and ten years later this was expanded by the junior author into his well-known and widely used 'Manual of the Botany of the Rocky Mountain Region.' In the two decades since the appearance of the latter so much has been done in the collection and closer study of the plants of the Rocky Mountain region that these old books no longer represent the present state of our knowledge of the species and their distribution. Dr. Rydberg's 'Catalogue of the Flora of Montana and the Yellowstone National Park' (1900) gave some idea of what additions and changes would have to be made in