French will be translated into Italian. The committee of management is made up of G. Bruni, A. Dionisi, F. Enriques, A. Giardina and E. Rignano. Among those who have already undertaken to contribute articles are: Bredig, Ciamician, Ostwald and Wegschneider in chemistry; Borel, Larmor and Thomson in physics; Boutroux, Fano, Picard and Severi in mathematics; Delage, Giard, Grassi, Hartog, Raffaele, Roux (W.) and Sedgwick in zoology and anatomy; Abegg, Burian and Dastre in physiology; Darwin, Haberlandt and Wiesner in botany; Benini, Bortkiewicz, Carver, Mosca, Pareto, Sombart and Supino in sociology and political economy; Brugi, Groppali and Scialoia in law; DeMarchi, Love and Wallerant in geology; Binet, Janet and Lugaro in psychology; Cunningham and Salvemini in history, and Credaro and Tannery in pedagogy.

SOCIETIES AND ACADEMIES

AMERICAN MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY

AT the regular meeting of the society, held at Columbia University on Saturday, April 27, an especially attractive feature of the program was Professor W. F. Osgood's presidential address on 'The Calculus in our Colleges and Technical Schools.' The address will appear in the June number of the *Bulletin* of the society. The attendance at the April meeting, always ranking next to that of the annual and summer meetings, exceeded on this occasion all previous records, amounting to about seventy, including sixty-one members.

President H. S. White occupied the chair at the two sessions. The council announced the election of the following new members: Dr. Alfred Ackermann-Teubner, Leipzig, Germany; Dr. J. W. Bradshaw, University of Michigan; Professor H. E. Cobb, Lewis Institute, Chicago, Ill.; Mr. S. A. Corey, Hiteman, Ia.; Professor Floyd Field, Georgia School of Technology; Mr. G. W. Hartwell, Columbia University; Chancellor C. C. Jones, University of New Brunswick; Mr. Joseph Lipke, Columbia University; Professor Francis Regis, Christian Brothers College, St. Louis, Mo.; Mr. H. P. Stillwagen, Yeatman High School, St. Louis, Mo. Seven applications for admission were received. The total membership of the society on May 1 was 560.

Following the plan recently adopted, abstracts of the papers so far as available had been printed and issued to the members in advance of the meeting. In this way it is hoped to secure a more intelligent interest in the papers and to promote criticism and discussion.

The date of the summer meeting, to be held at Cornell University, was fixed for Thursday and Friday, September 5 and 6.

By no means the least enjoyable feature of the meeting was the usual dinner in the evening, attended on this occasion by over twenty of the members.

The following papers were read at this meeting:

G. A. BLISS: 'A new form of the simplest problem of the calculus of variations.'

R. D. CARMICHAEL: 'Multiply perfect even numbers of five different primes' (preliminary communication).

L. P. EISENHART: 'Transformations of surfaces whose lines of curvature are represented on the sphere by an isothermal system.'

F. L. GRIFFIN: 'The variation of the apsidal angle in certain families of central orbits.'

F. L. GRIFFIN: 'The solutions of central force problems as functions of the constant of areas.'

F. L. GRIFFIN: 'Note on a simple example of a central orbit with more than two apsidal distances.'

G. A. MILLER: 'Note on the commutator of two operators.'

J. E. WRIGHT: 'Arrangement of ovals of a plane sextic curve.'

W. F. OSGOOD: Presidential address—'The calculus in colleges and technical schools.'

IDA M. SCHOTTENFELS: 'Group matrices.'

C. E. STROMQUIST: 'An inverse problem of the calculus of variations.'

R. G. D. RICHARDSON: 'On the integration of a series term by term.'

A. L. UNDERHILL: 'Invariants of the function $F(x, y, x', y')$ under point and parameter transformations connected with the calculus of variations.'

EDWARD KASNER: 'The motion of particles under conservative forces.'

Edward Kasner: 'Isogonal and dynamical trajectories.'

P. L. Saurel: 'On the distance from a point to a surface.'

T. E. McKinney: 'On concylic quantics.'

T. E. McKinney: 'On continued fractions representing quadratic irrationalities.'

G. A. Miller: 'Groups generated by n operators each of which is the product of the $n-1$ remaining ones.'

F. N. Cole,
Secretary

THE AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY. NORTH-EASTERN SECTION

A Correction.—In the report of the proceedings of the seventy-fifth regular meeting of this section (this journal, p. 669), through a mistake of the undersigned, the following statement appeared: "For three semesters, the speaker was Wöhler's assistant and took part in the researches on aluminium, silicon, boron, etc." * * * Dr. Remsen was not Wöhler's assistant and did not take part in the researches on these elements, but did later make them under Wöhler's personal direction, by methods which had already been worked out. The speaker left Göttingen in 1870 and became assistant to Fittig at Tübingen. With a view to correcting the false impression given by the above-mentioned report, these few lines are put forth with the hope that they may fall under the eyes of most of the readers of the original report.

Frank H. Thorp,
Secretary

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

THE FIRST REVISER OF SPECIES

I have followed with much interest the recent discussion in Science by Messrs. Stiles, Stone, Jordan and Allen on the proposed new rules in zoological nomenclature. The subject is one of especial concern to me at the present time as involving the propriety of numerous generic names in a work now publishing. I wholly agree with Dr. Allen in his views regarding elimination, and concur quite with his statement that elimination is practically the only rule in use by systematists, at least so far as that especial group of insects with which I am best acquainted is concerned. I believe that, upon the whole, it is the safest and most expedient rule, and one which meets the approbation of most taxonomists. Next to this I would accept the rule of the 'first species,' one that has often been used by entomologists, especially where there has been no doubt as to the meaning of the original describers.

But the first species rule would be unjust when applied to certain writers. It is well known that Meigen, the 'father of dipterology' did not consider the first species as the most typical of his genera, but rather, with the last species, as the most aberrant, and these were the ones he usually figured. Wiedemann, a very prolific describer of exotic diptera on the other hand, arranged his species in his genera usually in the order of their size, and the first here would not in the least represent his most typical species.

As to the rule of the 'first reviser,' when applied to work done in the past, I consider it vicious; so utterly unjust and revolutionary that it is to be hoped it will be stifled in its birth. I, for one, shall never recognize it. Its chief use would be to give unlimited license to the library naturalist, now that 'new genera' are not so common as they were. I will mention a single instance of the effect it would have in a case that has recently been brought to my attention. There is perhaps no genus of flies better known, save *Musca,* than the genus *Syrphus.* Fabricius named the genus in 1775, giving a list of numerous species belonging to it, a composite genus of course, as all of Fabricius's genera were. In 1839, one Curtis, knowing little, critically, of diptera, in a general work on British insects, capriciously designated the nineteenth of Fabricius's species as the 'type' of *Syrphus.* In 1860, Schiner, perhaps the ablest student of diptera, and one of the most conscientious that we have ever had, subtracted one of these original species, which happened to be this 'type' of Curtis, as the type of a new genus *Leucozona.* The genus *Syrphus,* the type of the family Syrphidæ, with all its eliminations, now comprises a hundred or two species distributed in nearly all parts of the