

old. In August, September and October, 1898, he made the highest record for a traveling collector, having sent in to the United States National Museum 900 well-prepared specimens of small mammals in the three months' journey from London through Sweden, Germany, Switzerland and Belgium.

Major Edgar A. Mearns, a retired officer of the medical corps of the army, about fifty-three years of age, will be the physician of the trip and have charge of the Smithsonian portion of the party. He has had twenty-five years' experience as an army doctor, and is also well known as a naturalist and collector of natural history specimens.

The party will reach Mombasa in April, 1909. No detailed itinerary has been decided upon; but the general route will be up the Uganda Railway to Nairobi and Lake Victoria Nyanza, a distance of about 650 miles by rail, thence crossing into Uganda, and, finally, passing down the Nile to Cairo. Much of the hunting will be done in British East Africa, where the Uganda Railroad can be used as a base of supplies and means of ready transportation. At least one great mountain, possibly Mount Kenia, will be visited.

Khartum will be reached, if all goes well, about April, 1910. The expedition may be expected to spend about one year on African soil.

FRENCH VITAL STATISTICS

THE *Journal Officiel* has recently published the vital statistics of France for the year 1907, and these are summarized in the *British Medical Journal*. The excess of deaths over births during the year reached the unprecedented number of 19,920. There were 32,878 fewer births and 13,693 more deaths than in 1906. In 1907, 773,969 births were registered of infants alive at the time of the declaration; there were also 36,760 stillbirths or infants who died before the declaration of the birth—a total of 810,729 births. The proportion, calculated on the census of 1906, is 207 per 10,000 inhabitants; lower than 1906, when it was 215; in 1905 it was 216; in 1904 it was 219; in 1903 it was 221; in 1902 it was 226; in 1901 it was 230 per 10,000 inhabitants.

This diminution of the natality is general throughout the country, for in comparison with 1906 the number of living births fell in 82 departments, and only showed an increase in 5 departments. The following departments show the largest diminution in the absolute number of births: Dordogne, 1,434 fewer births; Finistère, 1,067; Côtes-de-Nord, 978; Ardèche, 972; Hérault, 928; Aveyron, 893; Isère, 773; Rhône, 732; Loire, 701. The departments which showed in 1907 the largest number of living birth per 10,000 inhabitants were: Finistère, 287; Pas-de-Calais, 285; Seine Inférieure, 258; Morbihan, 253; Côtes-du-Nord, 242; Nord, 239; Meurthe-et-Moselle, 238; Vosges, 230; Lozère, Territory of Belfort, 226; Doubs, 221. The smallest proportion was in the departments of Gers, 131; Lot-et-Garonne, 132; Yonne, 142; Lot, 143; Tarn-et-Garonne, 145; Haute-Garonne, 151; Nièvre, 155; Gironde, 156; all of which show a progressive decrease as compared with previous years.

During the year 1907 793,889 deaths were registered. This gives 13,693 more deaths than in 1906, and 10,510 more than the annual mean for the decennial period 1896–1905. The increase in the number of deaths as compared with 1906 includes 55 departments: Seine, 3,316 more than in 1906; Morbihan, 1,084; Manche, 1,070; Isère, 996; Gard, 721; Indre-et-Loire, 719; Nord, 695, etc. In 32 departments the number of deaths in 1907 was less than in 1906. Of these, the following show the largest decrease: Seine-Inférieure, 777; Pas-de-Calais, 619; Doubs, 579; Vosges, 558; Rhône, 498; Haute-Saône, 453; Somme, 294; Meuse, 291; Finistère, 682. The departments giving the largest number of deaths per 100,000 of the population are: Lot, 244; Tarn-et-Garonne, 240; Bouches-du-Rhône, 238; Manche, 237; Orne, 236; Ardèche, 234; Vaucluse, 233; Calvados, Gard, 232; Aveyron, 224. The following show the lowest mortality: Cher, 161 per 10,000 inhabitants; Creuse, 163; Indre, 165; Landes, 167; Allier, 169.

The relative increase in the population per 10,000 inhabitants reached the mean of 18 in 1901 to 1905; it fell to 7 in 1906, and in 1907 fell to *minus* 5 per 10,000.

In 1907 there was an excess of births in only 29 departments, as compared with 42 in 1906 and 43 in 1905, the departments showing this excess most markedly being: Pas-de-Calais, 103 per 10,000 inhabitants; Finistère, 89; Nord, 57; Morbihan, 51; Territorie de Belfort, 49; Haute-Vienne, 44; Seine-Inferieure, 37; Vosges, 36; Meurthe-et-Moselle, 35; Lozère, 34; Vendée, 33; Doubs, 26; Côtes du Nord and Corsica, 23. It will thus be seen that the regions which show an excess of births are the North, Brittany, the Eastern frontiers, Limousin, and Corsica, the departments inhabited by the Celtic, Flemish, and Basque races. In the basins of the Garonne and the Rhone each year the proportion of deaths over births increases, and thus Gascony and Provence are rapidly losing their characteristic population.

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ANIMAL NUTRITION

In connection with the International Live Stock Exposition at Chicago, there was held on November 28, 1908, a meeting of those college and experiment station workers more especially interested in investigation in stock feeding. About thirty were present, representing experiment stations from Massachusetts to California and from Minnesota to Alabama. The meeting grew out of a conference of investigators in this subject, held at Cornell University last summer during the graduate summer school of agriculture, and resulted in the formation of The American Society of Animal Nutrition.

The objects of the society, as stated in the constitution which was adopted, are "To improve the quality of investigation in animal nutrition, to promote more systematic and better correlated study of feeding problems, and to facilitate personal intercourse between investigators in this field." In addition to holding an annual meeting, the society proposes to take up actively the consideration of methods of investigation and later to enter upon cooperative study of important problems of stock feeding. To this end, a standing committee on experiments and two special committees on methods were provided for and

the committee appointed at the Cornell conference presented a full report outlining the work to be undertaken.

The officers of the new society are: *President*, H. P. Armsby, of Pennsylvania; *Vice-president*, C. F. Curtiss, of Iowa; *Secretary-treasurer*, D. H. Otis, of Wisconsin; *Registrar*, J. T. Willard, of Kansas. *Committee on Experiments*: H. J. Waters, of Missouri; H. W. Mumford, of Illinois; T. L. Haecker, of Minnesota; E. B. Forbes, of Ohio; W. H. Jordan, of New York.

SYMPOSIUM ON CORRELATION

SECTION E, AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE, AND GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

THE program for a Symposium on the Principles and Criteria of Correlation is now completed, the following scientists having stated their readiness to discuss the several subjects opposite their names. The symposium will begin on Monday, December 28, under the auspices of Section E, and be carried as far as the time at the disposal of that section on Monday permits. On Tuesday and the following days, until completed, it will form a part of the program of the Geological Society of America, under a special subsection on correlation. The presentation and discussion of papers will be conducted strictly according to a definite time schedule, which will be stated in the program of the meeting.

C. R. Van Hise or C. K. Leith: "Principles of pre-Cambrian Correlation."

F. D. Adams: "The Basis of pre-Cambrian Correlation."

C. D. Walcott: "Evolution of Early Paleozoic Faunas in Relation to their Environment."

A. W. Grabau: "Physical and Faunal Evolution of North America in the Late Ordovician, Silurian and Early Devonian Time."

Stuart Weller: "Correlation of Middle and Upper Devonian and Mississippian Faunas of North America."

G. H. Girty: "Physical and Faunal Changes of Pennsylvanian and Permian in North America."

David White: "The Upper Paleozoic Floras, their Succession and Range."

S. W. Williston: "Environmental Relations of the Early Vertebrates."