

University of California, are from 24 to 48 per cent. Oak and chestnut, the woods principally used in this country, yield from eight to thirteen per cent. of tannin. Acacia timber is beautiful in grain and durable in contact with the ground. Even the smaller species have a value for tool handles, furniture and various other useful and ornamental objects. Some of the best species yield a hard, heavy, close-grain, tough timber comparable to walnut and rosewood. In addition to tannin and timber, many of the acacias produce valuable by-products. The widely known gum arabic is derived principally from the Arabic acacia, though also from a number of Asiatic and African desert species. Cutch, an astringent gum in constant demand, is another acacia product. Many other kinds of gums are yielded by different acacia species. The flowers of still another species, known as cassie, yield a perfume, the manufacture of which at Grasse, France, the center of the perfume industry, is very profitable.

WE learn from the London *Times* that the plans of the Austrian Antarctic expedition, which it is hoped will sail from Trieste in the early summer, were set forth at a meeting held at Vienna on January 15. The principal supporter of the project is Count Hans Wilczek, to whose energies the success of the Austrian expedition which discovered Franz Josef's Land 40 years ago was largely due. Financial help is also being provided by the Academy of Sciences and the Geographical Society, but so far only about half of the required sum of over 600,000 kronen (\$125,000) has been obtained. The leader of the expedition is Dr. Felix König, of Graz, who took part in the German Antarctic expedition. The ship which has been acquired is likewise that which was used in that expedition; her name, however, will be changed from *Deutschland* to *Oesterreich*. Dr. König, who is being assisted by the advice of Captain Amundsen, intends to sail from Trieste to Buenos Aires, and thence to South Georgia Island, where an intermediate station fitted with wireless telegraphic apparatus will be installed. By this means it is hoped to keep up communication

between the ship, which will also be fitted with wireless, and civilization. The base is to be made close to a bay found by the German expedition in the newly discovered barrier, where it is hoped that the ship will be able to winter. The principal work will be carried out by sledge journeys, which will be made in three directions, one to the south with the object of reaching Queen Maud Mountains, the second towards Grahamland in order to try to discover its continuation southwards, and the third in the direction of the Enderby quadrant. The expedition is expected to cover two years, but provisions are being taken for three. From remarks made at the meeting by Professor Nordenskiöld the object of the expedition appears to be to discover the relations of the eastern and western section of the Antarctic regions with one another.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS

MRS. RUSSELL SAGE has extended her offer to give \$100,000 for a new dining hall at Princeton University provided that the university raise \$400,000 for the purpose.

UNDER the will of Dr. Cumberland George Herndon, two scholarships, named after the testator's father the William A. Herndon scholarships, have been founded in the department of medicine of the University of Virginia. Candidates must be unable to defray the expense of their medical education and must signify their intention of entering the medical service of the army or navy. The scholarships provide for the necessary expenses of the student during the four years of his course and will yield approximately \$425-\$450 per annum.

By an agreement between the universities of St. Andrews and Bordeaux, Dr. T. Pettigrew Young, lecturer in French at St. Andrews, will proceed to Bordeaux to act as exchange professor for the month of May, while during the same period Professor Charles Cestre, of Bordeaux, will join the staff of St. Andrews University. Professor Cestre has also been commissioned by the French ministry of instruction to deliver a number of lectures on the French literature and language in various parts of Scotland and England.

A NUMBER of Herefordshire teachers came out on strike on January 31 owing to the refusal of the local education authority to establish a scale of salaries, whereby if a teacher's record is satisfactory his pay shall increase automatically until a maximum is reached. We learn from the London *Times* that the strikers include the head teachers of about 80 out of some 176 schools. In addition, there are schools where assistants and not the headmasters or mistresses are ceasing work. More resignations will fall due as the weeks pass, until at the end of March 117 head teachers out of 189 employed will be idle, and, including assistants, a total of 223. Before the teachers' threat to strike the average salary of headmasters was £111, against an average for all the British counties of £146 6s., and the average salary of head mistresses was £88 16s., against £100 8s. for the English counties. There were similar disproportions in the salaries of class teachers. The local education authority, admitting that the salaries paid in Herefordshire were low, increased the salaries of certain teachers in December last by amounts totalling £1,300 a year.

DR. ETHELBERT D. WARFIELD has resigned the presidency of Lafayette College.

DR. GEORGE E. BREWER has been appointed to the chair of surgery at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University. Dr. Walter B. James has asked to be relieved from membership in the medical faculty. He will retain his professorship and continue to direct research students from time to time.

J. F. McCLENDON, of Cornell Medical College, New York City, has accepted a position in the department of physiology, University of Minnesota Medical School.

DR. WATSON MARSHALL has been appointed demonstrator in laryngology in the School of Medicine of the University of Pittsburgh.

DR. MARIENNE PLEHN, assistant in the biological laboratory at Munich, has been made professor. She is said to be the fifth woman to receive this title in German universities.

DR. AUGUST BRAUER, director of the zoological museum of the University of Berlin, has

been called to a professorship at Bonn, but it is expected that he will remain at Berlin.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

THE CYTOLOGICAL TIME OF MUTATION IN TOBACCO

IN the issue of *SCIENCE* for January 2, 1914, there is described a mutation that occurred in a variety of the common tobacco which gives promise to become of great economic value. In the article referred to it was assumed that the germinal change must have occurred after fertilization because the aberrant plant bred true. Professor Castle has asked if parthenogenesis may not be as reasonable an interpretation of the phenomenon since parthenogenesis is known to occur in *Nicotiana tabacum*.

The possibility had naturally occurred to us. And since it is impossible to prove a negative the same alternative may be presented in discussing any Angiosperm variation. Mrs. Rose Haig Thomas has reported parthenogenesis in *Nicotiana* and her work has been confirmed by Bateson on *one* variety.

One may not deny their conclusions, but the theorem of logic used above holds here as well. While admitting the possibility that Mrs. Thomas has found strains of parthenogenetic *Nicotiana*, it is possible that her results were incorrectly interpreted. We have made numerous attempts to secure parthenogenetic seeds from various species of *Nicotiana* without success. Dr. E. M. East and Mr. R. Wellington made nearly one thousand such attempts with over 50 species and varieties of the genus, also without success. We think it reasonable to assume, therefore, that parthenogenesis in *our* strain of *Nicotiana* is extremely improbable. H. K. HAYES,

E. G. BEINHART

CONNECTICUT EXPERIMENT STATION,
NEW HAVEN

WINTER COLORATION OF WEASELS

TO THE EDITOR OF *SCIENCE*: It is well known that throughout Canada, and in the northern parts of the United States, the weasels become white in winter, whereas in the southern, warmer parts of the country they do not do