

MESSRS. JOHN WILEY AND SONS, INCORPORATED, write that they supply filing-card announcements of their new books covering scientific and technical subjects, in accordance with the plan recommended by Mr. Wilhelm Segerblom in the issue of SCIENCE for January 5. They will send copies of these cards to those who may be interested.

### UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS

THE Billings family of Chicago, headed by Mr. C. K. G. Billings, has given one million dollars to the University of Chicago toward the endowment of the medical school. The money is to be used to provide a hospital in connection with the school.

THE late Mr. John D. Archbold has bequeathed the sum of \$500,000 to Syracuse University.

MR. JACOB H. SCHIFF has given the sum of \$50,000 to New York University toward the fund of \$300,000 for the division of public affairs in the school of commerce.

THE alumni of Harvard University plan to collect a fund of ten million dollars for the permanent endowment fund of the university.

PROFESSOR A. A. NOYES, director of the research laboratory of physical chemistry at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, will spend the next five months at Throop College, Pasadena, Cal., where the new chemistry building will be occupied about February 1.

DR. ROSWELL ANGIER, assistant professor of psychology at Yale University, will during the second half year give at Yale University one of the courses given by the late Hugo Münsterberg. The other courses will be given by Assistant Professor H. S. Langfeld and Dr. L. T. Troland.

THE *Journal* of the American Medical Association states that the senate of Queen's University, Kingston, Ont., has issued a memorandum covering its objections to the action of the University of Toronto in deciding to establish in 1918 a six-year academic course in medicine. A conference had been held between representatives of the two universities

but no other universities interested in Canada had been asked to participate in that conference. Queen's University says that the proposals come at a time when there is an unusual demand for the services of medical men from the British and Canadian governments, and that the great need for medical men will not immediately cease when the war is over.

### DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE THE INFLUENCE OF DISEASE IN THE EXTINCTION OF RACES

OSBORN<sup>1</sup> has called our attention to the part disease may have played in the extinction of certain mammalian groups especially. He based his suggestion on the prevalence of certain diseases among modern mammals, such as Texas fever, "rinderpest," biliary fever and the disease transmitted by the tse-tse fly. He says:

Thus in these diseases we have all the conditions favorable for the wide distribution of insect-borne diseases which in past times may have attacked various types of quadrupeds and resulted in extermination before natural immunity was acquired.

He did not, however, cite any instances in which disease is known to have played a part among the fossil vertebrates, and it is not likely that epidemic diseases of which he spoke should leave an impress on the skeleton.

The writer<sup>2</sup> has already indicated how a study of pathological lesions on fossil bones may show something of the widespread nature of disease in geological time. During the past few months there have been accumulated evidences of at least a score of diseases which are suggested by the lesions found on the petrified skeletal remains. Since the detailed description of these will appear elsewhere, it will only be necessary to say here that disease, as indicated by the above-mentioned lesions, was widespread quite early in the history of the early vertebrates. Pathological bones have so far not been noted in the early or

<sup>1</sup> H. F. Osborn, *American Naturalist*, Vol. XL, p. 836, 1906.

<sup>2</sup> SCIENCE, N. S., Vol. XLIII., No. 1108, pp. 425-426, 1916. *American Journal of Science*, Vol. XLI., pp. 530-531, 1916.