partment of Forecasts in Buenos Aires; Mr. L. G. Schultz, chief of the magnetic section until 1915 and others. Mr. George O. Wiggin, the present director of the Argentine Meteorological Office, is also a native of the United States.

The high quality of Mr. Davis's work was fully appreciated by his meteorological colleagues everywhere. His reputation as a meteorologist and as the successful administrative head of a large and remarkably efficient organization won for him a position on the International Meteorological Committee, the highest international authority on meteorology. This was a well-deserved recognition of the importance of his contributions to meteorology, and of his sound judgment on scientific matters.

The many publications of the Argentine Meteorological Service which were issued under Mr. Davis's direction constitute an inspiring record of splendid work, well planned, thoroughly organized, and ably carried out. For comparatively few countries are there available such excellent meteorological and climatological publications, some of them in English, as the Argentine Meteorological Service has sent out.

By the death of Walter Gould Davis the world has lost one of its most eminent meteorologists, and those of his colleagues who had the privilege of knowing him have lost a warm-hearted, sympathetic and helpful friend.

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HARVARD UNIVERSITY,
May 31, 1919

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE VOLCANIC ERUPTION IN JAVA

OFFICIAL advices received by the State Department report that the recent eruption of the Klot (or Kalut) volcano in Java cost 40,000 native lives, destroyed 20,000 acres of crops, principally rice, by its flow of hot mud, and did millions of dollars' damage by the falling ashes in regions outside the devastated districts. The National Geographic Society has issued from its Washington headquarters the following bulletin:

Volcano-made in the first place, and constantly being remade by them, Java has more volcanoes than any area of its size in the world. Estimates of the active and extinct craters range from 100 to 150. Everywhere in Java, in the huge crater lakes, in fissures that now are river beds, even in ancient temples, half-finished when interrupted by some fiery convulsion, are evidences of cataclysmic forces—such turbulent forces as now are in continuous hysteria in the Valley of the Ten Thousand Smokes in Alaska and break their crusted surface cage intermittently in Java.

The "treacherous Klot," as the natives call it, all but wiped out the town of Britar, but even its devastation, as reported to the State Department, was mild compared to the violent upheaval of Krakatoa in 1883. Then mother nature turned anarchist and planted a Gargantuan infernal machine on the doorstep of Java. Krakatoa is a little island in the Sunda Strait, between Sumatra and Java. Australians, as far from the explosions as New York is from El Paso, heard the terrific detonation, more than half the island was blotted out, parts of it were flung aloft four times as high as the world's highest mountain, and to touch bottom below the water's surface, where most of the island has been, henceforth required a plumb line twice as long as the height of the Washington Monument. Skyscraper waves flooded adjacent islands and rolled half way around the earth. Every human ear drum heard, though it may not have registered, the air waves as they vibrated three or four times around the earth.

Krakatoa levied a smaller toll in human life than Klot because of its isolation, and many of the 35,000 deaths from Krakatoa's eruption were at far distant points by drowning.

An eruption anywhere on the island means disaster. For Java, about equal in area to New York state, supports a population greater than the combined populations of the empire state and the four other most populous states in the Union—Pennsylvania, Illinois, Ohio and Texas.

EXPEDITION FROM THE CALIFORNIA MUSEUM OF VERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY TO ALASKA

THE museum of vertebrate zoology of the University of California has again undertaken field work in Alaska, and a party to work in that region left the Museum on May 14, to be gone until October 1. The route for the present season is to lie in southeastern Alaska in the vicinity of Wrangell. It will

follow up the Stikine River from the sea eastwardly into the interior to the vicinity of Telegraph Creek, British Columbia. The purpose of the work will be to gather specimens and all sorts of natural history information concerning the mammals and birds of the section traversed, particularly in order to learn how the fauna of the relatively arid interior differs from that of the humid coast belt, as also what happens where the two faunas meet.

Several seasons of work in the same general region have brought together large collections from adjacent sections and these have already been reported upon fully in a series of papers published from the University of California Press; so that the new material will be gathered and interpreted upon a more advantageous basis than would otherwise be possible.

The present year's field work is in charge of Mr. H. S. Swarth, curator of birds in the museum, and he will be assisted by Mr. Joseph Dixon, economic mammalogist, as also by a local trapper and hunter.

This opportunity of the museum of vertebrate zoology to resume its field work in southeastern Alaska is due to the special interest of Miss Annie M. Alexander, who is providing the means whereby the work can be carried on there. This is in accordance with the general plan adopted by Miss Alexander some years ago, namely, to contribute to a more complete knowledge of the vertebrate fauna of the Pacific coast of North America.

As heretofore, all of the field notes, photographs and specimens, which latter include study skins, skeletons and skulls of mammals and birds, become at once the property of the University of California.

INTERNATIONAL ENGINEERING STANDARDIZATION

The Electrical World states that Professor Comfort A. Adams, of Harvard University, president of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers, has returned from the trip which he made to England and France with H. M. Hobart, of the General Electric Company in the interest of standardization. Mr. Hobart remained abroad and is doing work of the same character as that in which he and Professor Adams were engaged. Mr. Hobart will probably return about the middle of July.

Professor Adams and Mr. Hobart crossed the Atlantic to adjust certain differences between the American and French rules with regard to the rating of electrical machinery which had arisen during the war, when a meeting of the International Electrotechnical Commission was not possible. As a result of the conferences held abroad an arrangement was made satisfactory to all concerned, and certain changes from the previous International Electrochemical Commission rules will therefore be recommended at the next regular meeting of that commission. This meeting will probably be held in London during the latter part of October in this year.

Another commission of Professor Adams and Mr. Hobart was on behalf of the American Engineering Standards Committee in order to establish relations with corresponding committees in other countries. In France the corresponding organization is called a Permanent Commission on Standardization and is appointed by the Minister of Commerce. In Holland the organization is known as the Normalization Bureau. In England it is the Engineering Standards Association and was organized originally by the five national engineering societies. It has government affiliations and regularly does the standardization work of the government in certain important fields. In Switzerland a similar organization is contemplated, but it has not yet been perfected. The organizations of Holland and France are of comparatively recent origin, as is the American Engineering Standards Committee. The British association has been in operation about eighteen years and is doing an enormous amount of very important work, having secured the confidence of the government and many organizations (including those in the railway and shipbuilding fields) not directly represented on the main committee. For example, the aircraft section alone of the Engineering Standards Association has about fifty subcommittees.

As a result of the conference held by the