

THE *Presse médicale* states that the four universities in Belgium have recently received 8 gm of radium from the radium deposits in the Congo.

THE assistance publique of Paris has recently been left a legacy of one and a half million francs, a large part of which is to be employed for the supply of radium to the principal Paris hospitals.

IN transmitting to SCIENCE a letter concerning the Colombian earthquake an error was made in the name of the writer. It should have been given as the Honorable Samuel H. Piles, the American minister at Bogota.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NOTES

MR. AND MRS. HENRY PHIPPS are announced as the anonymous donors of \$1,000,000 to Johns Hopkins University last year. The gift was conditional upon the university raising another \$1,000,000 to endow permanently the Phipps psychiatric clinic. Pledges to this amount have now been received. The General Education Board and Edward S. Harkness, of New York, were among the contributors.

THE General Education Board has appropriated \$400,000 to Washington University, St. Louis, for the endowment of a department of bacteriology and preventive medicine in the Medical School. This makes approximately \$4,400,000 that Mr. Rockefeller has given to the university.

THE Rockefeller Foundation has given a further \$250,000 to Hong-kong University for the chairs of surgery and medicine.

THE new science building at Tulane University, New Orleans, was formally opened on February 21. This building, the first constructed on the Tulane campus for years, contains experimental laboratories for the natural and medical sciences.

DR. PERCY E. RAYMOND, associate professor of paleontology at Harvard University and curator of the Agassiz Museum, will have charge of the Harvard Summer School of Geology this year, and will take the school to the Canadian Rockies.

DR. CHARLES SHATTUCK PALMER, who for the past two years has held a National Research Fellowship at Yale University, has been appointed assistant professor of organic chemistry at Northwestern University.

WITH the view to educating the Belgian public in matters not treated in the general university curricula, an institute of higher studies has been organized by private initiative under the chairmanship of M.

Guillaume De Greef, with the collaboration of Bordet, Brachet, Errera, Lameere, Massart, Zungz, Zwaerde-maker and others. There will be a section of natural science, in which instruction will be given in general biology, anatomy, embryology, physiology, pathology, anthropology, zoology, physical geography and paleontology.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

A PROPOSED NEW "CHALLENGER" EXPLORING EXPEDITION

THE Navy Department through its Hydrographic Office has sent to some forty of representative national scientific societies a request for their opinions as to the value of a scientific exploring expedition which it is proposed to carry out within the Pacific region. Such an expedition would be a modernized "Challenger" expedition to extend over at least a number of years and to have for its primary purpose the preparation of a map of the bottom of the ocean. This can now be accomplished with use of the new sonic depth finder, which in 1921 was perfected within the Navy Department itself. To quote the circular letter of Commander Guy Davis, Acting Hydrographer, "it is now possible to survey the sea-bottom with an accuracy, speed and economy of effort and expense that has heretofore been considered impossible."

Accessory to these sounding operations, which would necessitate extended cruises throughout the Pacific and Caribbean regions, the opportunity would be afforded for taking scientists on board to make studies of oceanography, geology, zoology, botany and anthropology, either at sea or upon the oceanic coasts and islands. Moreover, it would now be a relatively simple matter to take on board a core drill and expert operator, so that with the aid of the enlisted men of the vessel it would be practicable to make deep borings in reefs and on atolls at such positions as to supply an answer for some of the most vexed questions of the day.

The Navy Department, it is assumed, would supply the vessel or vessels together with their navigating and operating personnel, as also the instruments and the staff necessary for the sounding operations. The remaining scientific personnel could, it is suggested, be secured from the educational and research institutions of the country, probably for the most part upon the plan of "leave of absence" with the pay either in whole or in part supplied by these institutions. If the scientific societies included in the questionnaire give their endorsement to the expedition, it is proposed by the Navy Department to invite a committee of scientists named by the National Research Council

to meet in conference with one from the Navy Department and together to consider the whole question, especially the equipment of the expedition, the financing of it, etc.

It is highly probable if the expedition should be carried out and should prove its value, such research work would almost of necessity become a permanent feature of the Department's activities; since recently acquired knowledge of the sea-bottom within the Pacific and Caribbean regions indicates that there exist a number of extended narrow zones close to the island groups within which there is an altogether exceptional instability, and that within these zones *vi-gias*, or before unknown perils to navigation, make their appearance. It will be necessary for this reason to repeat soundings within such regions at intervals of a decade or so, and in any case after sea-quakes have been registered in their neighborhood. It is certain that science will be vastly extended through the making of such a map of the sea-floor as is here proposed.

Inasmuch as general meetings of the scientific bodies will generally not be held before the next Christmas holidays, it might be well for those scientific bodies whose advice has been requested to act either through their councils or through their instructed presidents in making their reply to the inquiries received.

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UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

PHOSPHORESCENCE OF AMERICAN ICE- LAND SPAR AFTER RADIUM RADIATION¹

SUBSEQUENT to some experiments in the radiation of calcites by radium, made at the request of Professor Wm. P. Headden, the results of which have been recently reported by him,² the writer had occasion to observe the phosphorescence and especially the remarkable thermophosphorescence of American Iceland spars.

Specimens from Greycliff, Montana, Cedarville, California, and one from Nevada³ were radiated. As far as the preliminary observation showed, all behaved identically.

The phosphorescence is reddish-orange, of deeper hue than that of kunzite, is of about the same brilliancy at ordinary temperature, but becomes more brilliant than kunzite on raising the temperature of both. Professor R. E. Nyswander, of the Univer-

¹ Published by permission of the Director, U. S. Bureau of Mines.

² Headden, Wm. P., *American Journal of Science*, Vol. VI, Sept., 1923, pp. 247-261.

³ The exact locality was not disclosed by the owner.

sity of Denver, with the cooperation of the writer, will make a study of the thermophosphorescence of Iceland spar from Montana by the new method reported at the recent meeting of the American Physical Society in Cincinnati.

Professor Headden further states⁴ that the phosphorescent phenomena of the Montana Iceland spar under X-radiation are the most brilliant that he has observed for any mineral.

S. C. LIND

COLUMNAR HOLES

IN an article in *SCIENCE* for June 22, Mr. J. W. Harshberger explains the cause of the columnar holes in the wandering sand dunes of New Jersey. His explanation entirely confirms my own observation and conclusion as to the origin of like holes which I have found all around the shores of Bermuda in the solid rock bordering the sea. As is well known, the whole of the visible portion of those islands, and down to a depth of seven or eight hundred feet, has been built up by dunes—not of sand, but of the minute fragments of the calcareous skeletons of plants and animals which inhabit these waters. This substance, which is much lighter than sand, has been blown from the beaches upon the land and of course around the trunks of the trees. The rain brought down carbon-dioxide from the air. This dissolved some of the lime, which evaporating made a solid crust of rock about the body of the tree. Subsequently the tree died and decayed and left a cylindrical hole in the rock. They are found all along the shore and vary in diameter from a few inches to two feet or more.

In one of these holes I once found the top of the old stump, which had resisted the waves and the weather for one knows not how many centuries and was still solid wood and very hard. I contrived to chip off some pieces and put a thin section under the microscope, comparing it with a like section of a living juniper tree, a species which makes up, I suppose, 95 per cent. of our native forest, and found the structure the same. I afterwards submitted the specimen to an expert in wood structure and he positively confirmed my conclusion.

A. B. HERVEY

BATH, MAINE

THE TERM "ARROSTIC"

BASING his criticism apparently only on a few lines of an abstract of a lecture that I gave before the Palaeontographische Gesellschaft in 1923, R. Moodie objects in *SCIENCE* (Vol. LVIII, Nov. 2, 1923) to the use of the term *arrostic*.

He is evidently unacquainted with my paper on this.

⁴ Private communication.