drifting fainter, as one would hear the bells themselves in a shifting breeze.

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A HISTORIC FOSSIL

BOTANISTS and paleobotanists will be interested to hear that I have just received through an extraordinary courtesy of the custodians of the Zwinger Museum of Dresden a wedge cut from the historic cycadeoid *Raumeria Reichenbachiana*. This great petrifaction was first observed near Lednice, about three miles from Wieliczki in the salt region to the southeast of Cracow, in the year 1753. It was sent to Dresden by an engineer named Borlach in 1755, and thus has a longer museum history than any other cycadeoid. It is also the finest of all European trunks, and in fineness of structure is not surpassed by any American species. The true horizon is not yet known; but the trunk, along with the Silesian Raumeria Schulziana, must pertain to some horizon in the Galician Carpathians about equivalent to the Como or to the Lakota of the Black Hills.

The wedge was cut under the supervision of Dr. R. Kraeusel at Frankfurt am Main. It is ample for all study and comparison with the American and European forms. It carries nine complete floral axes, including the world-famous flower-bud illustrated by Goeppert in 1853, but, as so often happened with the cycadeoids, never studied. Paleobotanists will appreciate the fine discrimination shown by Dr. Kraeusel in taking his own initiative in cutting the wedge surface exactly to plate size for quarto illustration, while Americans may generally feel a deep satisfaction that an American laboratory has been entrusted with the investigation of this unique and famous fossil, certainly one of the three most celebrated fossils ever to reach this country from Europe.

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A PHILIPPINE RORQUAL

A LIVING specimen of the small sharp-nosed rorqual, *Balaenoptera rostrata* Gray, 32 feet long, was captured in Manila Bay, having stranded near Bacoor, Cavite Province, January 3, 1925. The animal died that afternoon and was hauled out on shore. Some speculative Filipinos paid 400 pesos for it, thinking to make a fortune by having it mounted for exhibition purposes. When seen by me about the middle of the forenoon of January 5th it was in an advanced state of decomposition, and the outer layer of skin was peeling off badly. The whale was shiny black above and much darker than given by Beddard in "A Book of Whales." The black faded to grayish black and dirty gray on the sides and posteriorly; the plaited folds of the throat and belly were yellowish white. The long shaggy bristles of the baleen were gray. The animal was a male and the pressure of the gases of decomposition forced out of the body the rigid penis. This organ was slender, rather pointed and small for so large an animal, being about 14 inches long. No parasites were found on the skin or in the mouth; it is probable that the brackish water in which the whale was kept at first had killed any parasites present and they had dropped off. This is the first record of this mammal from the Philippines.

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LEGISLATION ON THE TEACHING OF EVOLUTION

THERE appears in the recent translation of Kammerer's "Inheritance of Acquired Characteristics," by A. Paul Maerker-Branden, the following statement:

> Unfortunately, the so-called "fundamentalists," led by William Jennings Bryan and clergymen of different denominations—it seems unbelievable, but it is the sad truth—have succeeded in excluding evolution of man from the curriculum of the schools of North Carolina and Kentucky.

This statement is in part, at least, erroneous. Both of these states have recently had bills presented in the legislature to prohibit paying the salary, from state funds, of teachers presenting the theory of evolution as a fact. In each case the bills were defeated; in North Carolina by a vote as reported by newspapers of 64–46. Furthermore, the matter was voted on in North Carolina after the publication of this book. The vote in Kentucky was taken a couple of years ago and was closer.

This statement is made in order to "keep history straight."

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SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

Genetics and Eugenics. By W. E. CASTLE. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1924, viii + 434 pp.

A THIRD edition of Castle's "Genetics and Eugenics" is an event worthy of more than passing notice, especially since the new edition contains so much new matter. A new part has been added, devoted to the biological basis of genetics, which helps orient the reader concerning such fundamental matters as the cell, cell-division, reproduction (asexual and sexual), chromosome reduction and gametogenesis, variation in chromosome number, the chromosomes and