

SCIENCE:

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF ALL THE ARTS AND SCIENCES

PUBLISHED BY

N. D. C. HODGES.

47 LAFAYETTE PLACE, NEW YORK.

SUBSCRIPTIONS.—United States and Canada.....\$3.50 a year.
Great Britain and Europe..... 4.50 a year.

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Attention is called to the "Wants" column. All are invited to use it in soliciting information or seeking new positions. The name and address of applicants should be given in full, so that answers will go direct to them. The "Exchange" column is likewise open.

THE QUESTION OF A TABLE AT THE NAPLES STATION.

At present, as we learn from a statement recently made by Professor Sc Slater in *Nature*, the zoological station at Naples rents continuously about twenty tables, each at \$500 a year. These tables are rented to different States and universities of Europe, as follows: Prussia, 4; Baden, 1; Bavaria, 1; Saxony, 1; Hesse, 1; Wurtemberg, 1; Italy, 7; Switzerland, 1; Hungary, 1; Holland, 1; University of Cambridge (England), 1; British Association, 1. Besides these twenty-one regular rents, a number of others, varying from eight to sixteen, are made every year to some or all of the following governments: Russia, Belgium, Austria, Spain, and some Italian provincial governments. The average number disposed of in this way is estimated at ten, making the total number thirty-one. The annual income from tables would thus amount to about \$15,000 a year. The revenue from the sale of preserved specimens amounts to about \$3,500, while the receipts from the admission of visitors to the aquarium amounts to about \$5,000. The whole income is thus approximately \$24,000. But the annual expenditure of the station has now reached \$32,000, so that there is a deficit of from \$8,000 to \$10,000 to meet. This heavy deficit is met every year by a subsidy from the German government. "This is a good example," says Professor Slater, "of the liberal way in which science is encouraged and supported in the 'Fatherland,' and is the more noteworthy because the object of its well-bestowed bounty in this instance is localized on foreign soil."

Indeed, this is a splendid example of the high appreciation in which pure scientific research is held by an enlightened government — an example which we should be glad to see followed in this country.

But what interest has America taken in the Naples station? With the single exception of Williams College, which

rented a table for one year, our colleges and universities have contributed nothing towards maintaining this magnificent establishment. A considerable number of American zoologists have been permitted to occupy tables at the station, free of charge, through the generous courtesy of its director and founder, Dr. Dohrn. While we have been the recipients of such exceptional favors for some ten or fifteen years, we have thus far, for some reason or no reason, failed to take any decided action towards securing a permanent table. During the past year a table has been supported through the liberality of Maj. Alex. Henry Davis of Syracuse, and the hope has been entertained that the praiseworthy initiative of Maj. Davis would lead, in one way or other, to the continued maintenance of an American table. The matter was brought before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, at its recent session in Washington, by Dr. Stiles, and the association responded to the appeal by offering to contribute \$100 towards the subscription. This leaves \$400 to be obtained elsewhere. It is a pity that the American Association could not, as the British Association does, take a whole table instead of one-fifth of a table. Possibly at the next session the association may be able to increase its offer to the full subscription, and thus one table be secured, so that the American student who goes to Naples for biological study will not have to feel the long-standing reproach that his country has done nothing to support the only international biological station in existence. Meanwhile the question arises, shall we not try to raise at once the amount required for a table this year? As one of our morphologists desires to spend the winter in embryological research at Naples, and as we have already placed ourselves under repeated obligation to the station, it seems that immediate action ought to be taken, and I most heartily approve of the effort of Dr. Stiles to procure by subscription the needed sum.

The only objection — if such it is worthy to be called — likely to arise is that we have pressing home needs that might be said to claim first attention. But great and urgent as these needs unquestionably are, I see no reason to suppose that we should reach them sooner by neglecting a plain duty to the Naples station. On the contrary, I believe that the national interest which some of us have most at heart is so intimately related to the international interest, that what we accomplish for the one will redound to the good of the other.

Perhaps a movement in behalf of the Naples station may encounter a little national prejudice, or possibly a narrower feeling that is still more foreign to the catholicity of a scientific brotherhood.

The sentiment to which Dr. Dohrn gave expression in a recent number of *Nature* deserves to be repeated here. "I think," says Dr. Dohrn, "the time has come when one must raise one's voice most distinctly against the narrowing limits of national prejudice, which nowadays has grown to almost overwhelming and even pernicious importance in many provinces of material, and — I am sorry to say — also moral and intellectual existence. Science at any rate ought to be exempt from that morbid exclusiveness which refuses to act in rational community regardless of political or ethnographical boundaries."

C. O. WHITMAN.

"THE Century Dictionary" is at last completed; the sixth and concluding volume will soon be brought out, the final pages being now on the press. The work contains about 500 more pages and 2,000 more illustrations than were originally promised.