

thropic, demand the most careful examination. All these researches should go forward in an atmosphere of repose and leisure, very different from that of business and professional engagements."

GENERAL.

THE *Ithaca Daily Journal* states that there are 179 students enrolled in the Cornell University summer school, exclusive of 40 students in the school of law. A large part of the students—58 per cent.—come from states other than New York.

DURING the last ten years the department of entomology of Cornell University has deferred the regular winter term's work until summer. These summer terms have been largely attended, and by many who are now holding professorships in other colleges or at experiment stations. The present summer term is attended by 18 students, 6 of whom are graduates, and a part of the graduates are professors of entomology in other colleges. Certainly, if insect life and the economic side of entomology are to receive due consideration, this plan of a summer instead of a winter term commends itself. There is also the advantage of not being disturbed by the demands of other subjects. It also makes more advanced work possible.

DR. THADDEUS L. BOLTON, of the faculty of the State Normal School at Worcester, has resigned to accept a position in the State Normal School at San José, Cal., at the head of the department of psychology, pedagogy and training of teachers.

DR. VAUGHAN HARLEY has been appointed to a newly established professorship of pathological chemistry in University College, London.

PROF. PAUL JACOBSON has been called to Berlin to fill the position of General Secretary of the German Chemical Society.

DRS. JOSSE and Kämmerer have been appointed full professors of engineering in the Technical High School of Berlin, and Prof. Schmidt, of Stuttgart, has been made director of the Weather Bureau at Würtemberg in the place of Prof. Mack, who has retired.

Garden and Forest states that the first horticultural school for women in Germany was

opened at Friedenau, near Berlin, in the autumn of 1894, and it will graduate its first class of seven members next fall. One of the graduates will then assume the position of teacher in a similar school recently established at Riga, in Livonia. On the first of October next still another institution of the kind will be opened on the estate of Baroness Barth-Harmating, near Plauen, in Saxony. The courses of study extend over two or three years, and include not only the various branches of horticulture, but also fundamental scientific instruction and such knowledge of business methods as is needed for the successful prosecution of commercial gardening. Emphasis is laid upon the fact that the new work thus made possible for women is suitable for those of the cultivated classes, and not for uneducated or semi-educated rustics.

THE Duke of Devonshire has introduced in the House of Lords a bill, somewhat similar to that introduced by Lord Playfair in the last Parliament, consolidating the educational institutions of London with a view to the establishment of a great university. The report of the Cowper Commission has thus the support of the two English parties, but it is not likely that any progress will be made during the present session of Parliament.

THE issue of *Nature* for July 9th contains an extended article discussing the position of science at Oxford, which takes a somewhat discouraged view of the place of science in the University. It attributes the comparatively small number of students in the school of natural science in part to the lack of scientific instruction in the public schools, which is in turn due to the nature of the examinations required for entrance to the University, and in part to the fact that there are only three science tutors in all the colleges, while the course chosen by the student depends largely on the advice of his tutor.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

THE TEACHING OF ANATOMY.

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: It seems to me proper to take some exception to Prof. Mall's paper on this subject, which you quote from in

the issue of July 10th, for there are many points connected with this question of great practical interest. I assume that Prof. Mall is speaking of teaching anatomy to medical students. If I am mistaken as to this, I have nothing but praise for his methods; but if he is speaking of medical education it seems to me that he puts himself out of court at once. He says: "The object of the laboratory is to teach students, to train investigators and to investigate. Although the first mentioned requires the greater portion of the instructor's time; its importance is by no means as great as the second and third." I submit that the first and most important duty of a professor in a medical school is to teach the students his branch in the manner best fitted to their future needs as practitioners of medicine. He must find time for scientific research when he can, and it must be subordinate to his teaching, and to his teaching for a practical purpose. Prof. Mall is very severe on the lecture system. He mentions that several professors, 'even' of anatomy, declare that they learned nothing that way. I wish my name to be added to the list; but I conceive the reason to be that I had no lectures worth listening to. It seems to me that there is a fallacy in calling the method stupid because none of us would choose it for himself were he a student. Of course, we would choose to be the private students of some distinguished anatomist; but this is impossible for all the members of a large class. Moreover, as implied above, we professors of anatomy are hardly fair representatives of the rank and file of medical students, who are studying anatomy as a means and not as an end. Again, I am not sure precisely what is meant by 'lectures,' as Prof. Mall admits that 'lectures with demonstrations are certainly valuable—more valuable than the lectures with text-books alone.' But who does lecture with a text-book? It is true that I have heard of a professor of anatomy who gave his class a certain number of pages of Gray learned by heart; but what competent man does not illustrate his lectures to the best of his ability? It is his duty to emphasize certain parts of his subject and to go lightly over others, to point out the practical deductions, to show what facts are for, what against, prevail-

ing theories. If lectures are to be abolished the professor might be abolished too were it not necessary for him to lay out the course and to see it carried out. In a large school the teaching or guiding of small groups must of necessity be left to assistants of varying learning and of varying power of imparting it, and were there no lectures the professor's influence would be lost. There must be students of all grades, and to my mind those who learn the most from the lectures are the best ones. The worst are hopeless anyway; probably a little more so in the laboratory course that they neither understand nor appreciate.

But, though I firmly believe in the anatomical lecture, I believe in personal study, in demonstration to small classes, and in close supervision. I am developing these at Harvard as fast as I can. Prof. Mall's plan strikes me as most admirable for the training of scientists; I do not believe in it even for good medical students; certainly I do not want to have it implied that those who differ are behind the times in matters of medical education.

THOMAS DWIGHT.

HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL.

IS NOT THIS COUNTRY RIPE ENOUGH TO ADOPT THE METRIC SYSTEM?

ON reading in your issue of July 17, Prof. Slosson's clear and cogent exhibition of the present condition of Decimal Numeration in the United States, I am impressed by the rapidity with which a great change in the habits of thought of our people has been brought about. The paramount influence of the custom of reckoning in dollars and cents is palpable; it first became universal on the disappearance from circulation of the Spanish fractional coins which were common during the first half of this century. But beside that it is evident that the change of usage from 'common' fractions to decimals has been due in some measure to the improved general character of the school arithmetics, faulty enough though many of these books may still be. The change bears emphatic witness to the efficacy of scientific methods of teaching and to the good results which must necessarily follow from the action and reaction