

Professor Gabriel de Mortillet, in the *Revue Mensuelle* of the Paris School of Anthropology (January 15), succinctly explains these divisions and sets forth, with his usual clearness, the typical products and the fauna which characterize them. He has found no reason materially to modify the opinions he advanced in his earlier works, and still maintains that a careful study of the geological data bearing on the question of the antiquity of man does not allow us to assign it a more recent date than 230,000 years ago.

THE AFRICAN DWARFS.

In the *Mittheilungen* of the Vienna Anthropological Society, for December, Professor Paulitschke presents his views on the dwarfs of Africa. He referred to the present localities occupied by them, which are scattered from the Atlas chain in Morocco to the Kalehari desert in South Africa. For a variety of reasons, he believes these dwarfs to be the remnants of a distinct race, not degenerates, but a 'sport' (*Spielart*) of *Homo Sapiens*, which at some distant epoch occupied large areas of the continent and extended to Madagascar.

Referring to the Dume, the small people found by Dr. Donaldson Smith north of Lake Stephanie, he regretted that so little information was secured about them. But Dr. Smith did obtain a vocabulary of their language and photographs of two of the males, which are printed in his recent volume of explorations.

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SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

A BILL FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF SCIENCE, LITERATURE AND ART.

THE new tariff bill now before Congress imposes a tax of 45 per cent. *ad valorem* on scientific apparatus 'imported especially for colleges and other institutions;' it imposes a tax of 25 per cent. on books imported for public libraries,

on books 'printed in languages other than English,' on books 'printed more than twenty years,' and on books 'devoted to original scientific research,' and it imposes a tax of 25 per cent. on works of art. This simple statement is the most severe indictment that can be brought against these provisions of the bill. Argument in such a case seems almost useless.

Import duties are imposed in order to raise revenue and, according to one of our political parties, to protect home industries from foreign competition. Indirect taxes for purposes of revenue are by common consent imposed on those articles whose consumption is not necessary nor useful. Thus the British government collects an import duty only on stimulants, narcotics and silverware. The United States government collects internal revenue only on alcoholic drinks, tobacco, opium, oleomargarine and playing cards. Opposed to such commodities are scientific instruments and books, which contribute the most to the advance of civilization. A single scientific instrument or the book describing it may increase the wealth of the country by millions of dollars. It is inconceivable that any government should deliberately impose a special tax on such an instrument or book for purposes of revenue.

We must suppose that if anyone approve these new duties it is on the ground of protection to home industries—that, for example, they will benefit our instrument makers. But it seems evident that makers of apparatus will be injured by such taxes. If a college must pay 45 per cent. to the government for the apparatus that it imports it will have less to spend on domestic as well as on foreign instruments. If the best models cannot be imported from abroad, and if American men of science are prevented from improving instruments and inventing new ones, the makers of apparatus in the United States will suffer severely.

But a more important consideration remains. Those who believe in the protection by government of home industries undoubtedly must regard as most important the protection of the industry that contributes the most to the welfare and development of the nation. Agriculture, manufactures and commerce depend on sci-

entific work. It is only by keeping fully abreast of the scientific progress of the world and by contributing its share to this progress that the United States can maintain a position equal to that of Great Britain and Germany. We can afford to confine our considerations to material wealth, even though we may regard as far more important than this, health of body, intellectual development and moral balance. Even those who wish to limit the paternal functions of government believe that it should encourage education and science. It seems incredible that a bill intended to protect the industries of the United States, enacted by a party representing a large part of the intelligence of the nation, should contain provisions tending to suppress science, literature and art.

The President and faculties of Yale University have presented a petition against these duties, and this example should be followed by other institutions. Men of science should also write individually to their Representatives in Congress. When the character of such taxes is properly understood, the bill containing them can scarcely be passed by Congress and signed by the President.

GENERAL.

THE forcible arguments urged by Lord Lister and other members of the recent deputation to the British Prime Minister on the question of the establishment of a National Physical Laboratory apply equally to a similar institution at Washington. We may especially call attention to the able advocacy of this plan by Professor F. W. Clarke in this JOURNAL (January 22d). A department that will do for the manufactures and commerce of the nation what the Department of Agriculture now does for the agricultural interests might properly begin with an institution at Washington similar to the German *Reichsanstalt* and the National Physical Laboratory now urged by English men of science.

IN view of the present advocacy of a department of health under our government, it may be worth noting that the *Lancet* commends a similar plan for Great Britain, proposing that there be a minister of health with a seat in the Cabinet having charge of the following depart-

ments: (1) The Registration Department; (2) the Local Government Department; (3) the Factory and Workshop Department; (4) the Analytical and Chemical Department; (5) the Veterinary Department; (6) the Public Works and Prisons Departments; and (7) the Lunacy Department.

MR. JOSEPH H. BRIGHAM has been appointed Assistant Secretary of Agriculture. According to the biographical notice in the *New York Evening Post* his qualifications for the office are as follows: "The new Assistant Secretary of Agriculture is a farmer living near Delta, O., in the western part of the State. He has an excellent war record as an officer in the Union army, and is well known in Ohio political circles, having been his party's nominee in several hot fights. Among the agriculturists he is widely known as Master of the Grange, which office he held for some time. He has lectured to granges in all parts of the country, and was warmly endorsed by granges for Secretary of Agriculture. He is six feet five inches tall. In the Harrison administration he was one of the commissioners to negotiate with the Shoshone and Arapahoe Indians for a cession of a part of the Wild River Reservation in Wyoming."

MR. ROBERT T. HILL, of the United States Geological Survey, has just returned from the fourth of a series of annual studies in the Tropical American regions, made under the auspices of Professor A. Agassiz. The present expedition was devoted to a further study of the geology, paleontology and geomorphology of the Antilles, Barbadoes and the Leeward Islands, and their relations to continental problems. Mr. Hill reports that much new and valuable information was obtained upon these subjects.

MR. S. F. EMMONS, also of the Survey, is in South America, under a month's furlough, working in mining geology.

HENRY L. MARINDIN, an assistant in the Coast and Geodetic Survey, has been appointed a member of the Mississippi River Commission.

It is proposed to erect a memorial to Galileo Ferreris, the eminent student of electrical science, in the Industrial Museum at Turin. A strong committee has been formed for the purpose, including a number of leading Italian

statesmen and men of science. It is intended to make the memorial international. Subscriptions should be sent to Sig. Cav. Zappata, the municipal Treasurer of Turin.

OXFORD University conferred the degree of D. C. L. on Dr. Nansen on March 18th.

DR. FELIX KLEIN, professor of mathematics at Göttingen, received the degree of D. Sc. from Cambridge University on March 11th.

PROFESSOR E. E. BARNARD, of the Yerkes Observatory, has returned to America. Owing to stormy weather the steamship arrived a day late for the annual meeting of the Royal Astronomical Society, but a special informal meeting of the Society was arranged on March 2d for the presentation of the gold medal awarded to Professor Barnard.

GENERAL SEBERT has been elected member of the section of mechanics of the Paris Academy in the room of M. Resal.

M. GAILLOT has been appointed successor of M. Loevy as sub-director of the Paris Observatory.

It is stated in *Nature* that Professor W. Ramsay has been elected a corresponding member of the Royal Academy of Bohemia and of the Academy of Sciences of Turin.

MR. HERBERT SPENCER, in accordance with his uniform practice of declining honors, will not accept the degree of D. Sc., which the Council of the Senate of the University of Cambridge proposed to confer on him.

A MEMORIAL to Professor Jaccard, who held the chair of geology at the Academy at Neuchâtel until 1895, has been unveiled at the Academy.

A PROFESSOR of natural science is wanted for the Thomason Engineering College, Rurki, in the northwest provinces of India. Applications should be addressed to the Secretary, Indian Office, London.

A SELECT committee of the British House of Commons has been appointed to inquire into and report upon the administration and cost of the museums of the Science and Art Department. Parliament will consider appropriations for a frontage of South Kensington Museum and the

use of the electric light in the Natural History Museum.

THE Lowell Observatory has not found the site in the vicinity of the City of Mexico as favorable as had been expected and will be moved back to Flagstaff, Arizona.

DR. MARSHALL WARD, professor of botany at Cambridge, reports that a collection of Pyrenean and Alpine plants, made by the late Mr. Charles Packe, M. A., Christ Church, Oxford, has been presented to the Herbarium, by his widow, Mrs. Charles Packe, Stretton-park, Leicestershire. The specimens, on about 3,700 sheets, are mounted and named, and were for the most part collected by Mr. Packe himself between 1858 and 1893.

PROFESSOR H. C. BUMPUS has arranged for the students of comparative anatomy of Brown University, according to the *New York Evening Post*, an excursion on Narragansett Bay during the spring recess. A steamer has been chartered for the purpose and seventy students are taking part in the work.

THE final sitting of the International Sanitary Conference at Venice took place on March 19th, when the protocol was signed. It will be sent for signature to those governments whose representatives had already left Venice. Turkey signed it with reserves. Besides the ambassadors and ministers of the Powers, the following-named technical delegates have signed the protocol as plenipotentiaries: Dr. Thorne, for England; Professors Brouardel and Proust, for France; Professor Emergen, for Belgium, and Dr. Ruisch, for Holland.

DR. E. H. WILSON, Chief of the Bureau of Bacteriology in the Brooklyn Health Department, secured, some time ago, bacilli of the Bubonic plague and has made experiments with them. He finds that sunlight and desiccation cannot be relied upon to limit the viability of this bacillus under commercial circumstances. The bacilli survived for forty-three days when desiccated. Dr. Wilson consequently holds that rags, mails, ballast and general merchandise coming from infected ports should be subjected at either the port of departure or the port of entry to a thorough system of disinfection.

STATISTICS of the French population for 1895 show a decrease of 17,000. There was a decrease in 1890, 1891 and 1892, but this was at the time attributed to the prevalence of influenza. The birthrate in France, which at the beginning of the century was 33 per thousand, has now decreased to 22.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *London Times*, in reviewing the consumption of intoxicating liquors in Great Britain and Ireland during the year 1896, shows that, as compared with 1895, there has been an increase, costing over six and a half million pounds, the total expenditure being £148,972,230. This is the largest amount ever spent in the United Kingdom for alcoholic liquors, though the annual expenditure per head for the years 1871-78 was greater. The cause of the present backsliding after a temporary improvement is not evident, for it is probable that the number of total abstainers is increasing.

ONE of the English anti-vivisection societies wrote to the Prince of Wales requesting that none of the money subscribed in honor of the Queen's Jubilee should be given to hospitals maintaining laboratories in which experiments are made on living animals. The Prince of Wales replied through his secretary that it would not be advisable for him to enter into any collateral consideration regarding the disposition of the fund. In his original appeal the Prince of Wales had emphasized hospitals as being not only institutions for the relief of suffering, but also places affording a means of medical education and the advancement of medical science.

THE President of the British Board of Trade stated, at the meeting of the Association of Chambers of Commerce on March 10th, that the bill introduced last session by the government legalizing the metric system of weights and measures would be brought forward, but that a compulsory measure could not be carried in the present state of public opinion. It was proposed before the Association, "That, whilst approving of the bill introduced into the House of Commons last session proposing to legalize the use of metric weights and measures, this Association is at the same time of opinion that the

bill should be amended in the following respects:

(1) That the decimal system as defined in the bill shall be a compulsory subject of instruction in all the elementary schools in the kingdom; (2) that the use of the decimal weights and measures so proposed shall be optional for only two years after the passing of the bill, and shall then be compulsory." This resolution was, however, not carried. A compulsory introduction of the metric system seems to have been regarded as desirable, by the Association, but not as feasible. It was stated by Sir Samuel Montagu, M. P., President of the Decimal Association, that the passing of a permissive bill would encourage the United States to take a further step in the matter and pass a compulsory bill. If that were done Great Britain would have to follow, as a matter of course.

PROFESSOR JASTROW's letter to this JOURNAL (p. 26) entitled 'a test on diversity of opinion' was republished in the *London Academy*, but under a misleading title. A number of correspondents sent solutions to the *Academy*. But Professor Jastrow would prefer to have answers sent directly to him, as it is his wish not to secure answers to the problem, but data for the study of diversity of opinion, and for this purpose the answers should be independent.

PROFESSOR KARL PEARSON has collected his scientific essays dealing with problems of chance and variation, several of which are of special interest to students of anthropometry and evolution, which will shortly be published in two volumes by Edward Arnold.

THE Clarendon press will publish a series of five books on musical history, under the editorship of Mr. W. H. Hadow, fellow of Worcester College.

THE New York State Library has just issued its seventh annual comparative summary and index of State legislation, covering the laws passed in 1896. Each act is briefly described or summarized and classified under its proper subject-head, with a full alphabetic index to the entries. It is proposed that the eighth bulletin shall consolidate into a single series, with the legislation of 1897, the summaries for the preceding seven years. This material will be closely classified and so presented as to give a

clear view of the general progress of legislation for the eight years ending in 1897.

A SECOND edition of Professor Bailey's 'Survival of the Unlike' having been called for, he has prepared a new preface, in the course of which he thus summarizes his views on heredity and variation: "I conceive the organic creation to have started out with no definite tendencies so far as the corporeal forms of organisms are concerned, but these tendencies have all been developed—heredity amongst the rest—by the environmental necessities of later time; whilst variation or plasticity was a normal and necessary feature of the original form of life, this constitutional elasticity has been constantly bred out by the pressure of circumstances, and the subsequent variation has come to be more and more the result of definite environments. In some groups, in which the decline towards extinction has now well progressed, or when environments are very stable, organisms reproduce themselves with considerable rigidity, so that it may be said that like produces like. In some of the variable groups, which, presumably, have not yet reached the height of their development, it might with equal truth be said that unlike produces unlike. But, in any event, the normal or original fact is conceived to be that unlike produces unlike. At the present time it would be truer to say that similar produces similar." We are glad to learn that Professor Bailey is contemplating a work on the philosophy of the evolution of plants.

THE Cairo correspondent of the London *Times* writes that the second annual horticultural exhibition was opened by the Khedive on January 22d. This year an agricultural department was added, comprising exhibits of food, forage, textile and dyeing products from all parts of Egypt. A novelty was specimens of bagging and fine canvas made from the fibre of the sisal agave, the cultivation of which has lately been introduced by Mr. E. A. Floyer, who has established 30,000 plants in various places, and anticipates that after two years their produce will attain important dimensions. The plant requires very little care or irrigation, and can be grown in places unsuited for other crops. The

fibre exhibited was decorticated in a hand machine invented by M. Faure, Messrs. J. Planta and Co., Swiss merchants, of Alexandria, who have established a scientific experimental cotton plantation near Zagazig, on which 60 different cultivations are being made, exhibited some of the results of their enterprise in an artistic kiosque, where every detail connected with the plant could be studied. The display of vegetables, chiefly by natives and the youths of the Agricultural College, contained some fine specimens, grown to a considerable extent from imported English seeds, for which a good demand has sprung up. The Finance Ministry's nursery garden at Ghezireh is an active agent in cultivating and distributing economic plants. Immediately after the exhibition it received applications for 5,000 young trees from native cultivators. The show of butter, vying with the best descriptions produced in Europe, was remarkable as representing an industry dating from only three or four years back.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS.

THE late Sir Thomas Elder has bequeathed £155,000 for public objects in Adelaide, including £65,000 for the University.

MR. W. H. CORBETT, the new United States Senator from Oregon, has given the Pacific University, Forest Grove, Ore., \$10,000.

THE report that the University of Wisconsin had overdrawn its account on the State Fund is incorrect. We are informed on the best authority that the balance to the credit of the University is \$40,000.

WELLESLEY COLLEGE will receive \$3,000 for a scholarship through the will of the late Sarah S. Holbrook.

FUNDS are being collected for a Joseph Mosenthal fellowship of music in Columbia University, \$6,000 having already been given.

PROFESSOR H. WILSON HARDING, who for 25 years has held the chair of physics and electrical engineering at Lehigh University, will be made professor emeritus at the end of the present year.