

valley of Mexico may correspond with the large skull in the National Museum. Of great interest is the skull of a very large true cat, puma-like, found in the excavations of the Grand Canal.

From the Pleistocene near Zumbango, state of Mexico, remains of a large undescribed bear have been found. Here also is the type of *Glyptodon mexicanus*. A complete shield of the same animal is reported to be in the collection of the school of mines. In the same collection is found a fine specimen of *Bison latifrons* and remains of fossil horses.

The gravigrade sloths are represented by teeth from Tequixquiac.

From the state of Chihuahua, northern Mexico, are remains of Upper Pliocene or Pleistocene horses and llamas. Fossils are, however, most abundant in the Lower Pleistocene of Puebla near the city of Puebla in the village of Totemehuacan. A fine collection from this locality was lost by fire while on its way to the United States for study. An older horizon is also represented here. The mastodons were very widely distributed, teeth coming from Hidalgo, from the valley of Toluca, from Teul in the state of Zacatecas. Abundant elephant teeth are also reported by Mr. C. W. Beebe from the Lower Pleistocene, near Guadalupe.

In 1903 the Mexican government made provision for the increase of the staff of the Geological Institute which had been created by congress in 1888. The staff now includes the director, Dr. José G. Aguilera, an assistant director, six geologists, three assistant geologists, one chemist and assistant, three topographers. The director is now giving his most active attention not only to the actual field work of the survey, but to the extension of the library and to the arrangement of the collections, in preparation for the visit of the International Geological Congress.

H. F. O.

MUSEUM PUBLICATIONS.

The Annual Report of the Director of the Field Columbian Museum for 1903-1904 chronicles the steady growth of this great museum and emphasizes the necessity for

having its collections transferred to permanent quarters as soon as possible.

This museum probably has the largest and best display of botanical material of any institution in the United States, and judging from the plates the specimens are very well exhibited. The collections illustrating mineralogy and economic geology are also large, well displayed and well labeled. But when it is stated that 500 labels were needed to *complete* the labeling of the gold and silver ores alone, it leads one to ask if there may not be such a thing as displaying too many specimens. We have all heard of the man who could not see the forest for the trees, and there is danger that the museum visitor may fail to grasp a few general and important facts on account of the number of details. The modern tendency of museums is to lessen the amount of material on exhibition and to increase its educational value, and there is no doubt that a small number of specimens well displayed and well labeled are more effective than a multitude of objects.

The list of Museum Publications is a strong one and the two volumes of Elliot's 'Land and Sea Mammals of Middle America and the West Indies' were most acceptable. Zoologists may not agree with Mr. Elliot in all his conclusions, but it remains to be said that no one but he has had the courage to attempt the task of bringing together and systematizing the present knowledge of the mammalian fauna of North America.

The Prize Essay Contest, published by the Carnegie Museum, forms a pamphlet of 68 pages, containing the addresses delivered on the occasion of awarding the prizes, with lists of the prize winners and contestants; although the essays themselves are not printed as has heretofore been the case.

Undoubtedly these contests do much to bring children to the museum, but it is a little questionable if they do not think more of the possibility of winning a prize than of the objects in the collections, and it would be interesting to know how many go again.

It is surely a good thing to induce the public to visit a museum, but might not the machinery of the Prize Essay Contest have

achieved even more permanent results if used in some other way?

In looking over the reports of various museums it becomes evident that too much stress must not be laid on mere number of visitors. Three great institutions show a drop in 1903 or 1904 of from 70,000 to 50,000, while the United States National Museum exhibits a large increase, following a large decrease. None of the museums in which the attendance has declined has fallen off in the quantity or quality of their displays; on the contrary, they have made very great progress, and yet the public for some unexplained reason seems temporarily to have lost interest. How much the frequent expositions of the last ten years may have had to do with this it is impossible to say, but it probably has had its effect in decreasing attendance.

F. A. L.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

PROFESSOR L. HERMANN, Königsberg, Professor H. A. Lorentz, Leyden; Professor Henri Moissan, Paris, and Professor Hugo de Vries, Amsterdam, have been elected foreign members of the Royal Society.

DR. FRIEDRICH KOHLRAUSCH, who recently resigned the directorship of the Reichsanstalt, and has changed his residence, has been made an honorary member of the Berlin Academy of Sciences instead of a resident member as hitherto.

M. LOUIS HENRY has been elected a corresponding member of the Paris Academy of Sciences, in the section of chemistry.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY has conferred the honorary degree of Sc.D. upon Commander R. F. Scott and Sir Francis E. Younghusband, K.C.I.E., LL.D.

THE Broca prize of the Paris Anthropological Society has been awarded to MM. Lanois and Roy for their biological study of gigantism.

PROFESSOR GEORGE T. LADD, who has resigned from the chair of philosophy at Yale University, has arranged to pass the latter half of next year as professor of philosophy at Western Reserve University. At the close

of the war in the east he expects to go to Japan to lecture on educational methods under the auspices of the Japanese Imperial Education Society.

DR. B. F. CLARKE, professor of mechanical engineering at Brown University, retires at the end of this year, in accordance with the pension regulations recently adopted by the corporation.

DR. G. F. HULL, Appleton professor of physics at Dartmouth College, will spend next year abroad, working in the laboratory of Professor J. J. Thomson, at Cambridge.

PROFESSOR OLIN F. TOWER, of Western Reserve University, has a six months' leave of absence, which he is spending at the University of Berlin.

DR. W. J. HUMPHREYS, Ph.D. (Johns Hopkins, '97) has been appointed chief physicist of the United States Weather Bureau, in charge of the new physical laboratory in the mountains of West Virginia, near Gap Mills. Before assuming his new duties, Dr. Humphreys will go abroad to study foreign laboratories.

MR. I. B. POLE EVANS, B.Sc. (Wales), has been appointed assistant for plant diseases under Mr. J. Burt-Davy, government agrostologist and botanist of the Transvaal Department of Agriculture. Since October, 1903, Mr. Pole Evans has been working for his research degree at Cambridge under Professor Marshall Ward, being engaged principally in an investigation of the rusts of cereals. During this time he has been acting as demonstrator in elementary biology for Mr. Seward, and last term had charge of the practical work of Professor Marshall Ward's advanced course on fungi. The cereals of the Transvaal are greatly affected by parasitic fungi, and its flora presents a new and practically untouched field for the mycologist.

PROFESSOR BERNHARD PROSKAUER has been appointed head of the chemical department of the Institute for Infectious Diseases at Berlin.

THE courses that Professor Wilhelm Ostwald, of the University of Leipzig, will offer at Harvard University during the first half