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*"To the solid ground
Of Nature trusts the mind which builds for aye."*—WORDSWORTH

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INDEX.

AUTHOR INDEX.

- Abbe (Prof. C.), Meteorology of the Future, 619
Abbot (C. G.), Report of Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, 42
Abbot (C. G.) and Prof. F. P. Brackett, Observations of Solar Radiation at Bassour, 674
Abbott (W. J. L.), Classification of Prehistoric British Stone Industries, 248
Abderhalden (Prof. E.) and others, Fortschritte der naturwissenschaftlichen Forschung, 373
Abel (O.), A. Brauer, and others, die Abstammungslehre, 4
Abney (Sir W. de W.), Extinction of Light by an Illuminated Retina, 363; Colour-blindness and the Trichromatic Theory, 494
Abt (G.), Salt Stains on Skins, 574
Ackermann (A. S. E.), the Shuman Sun-heat Absorber, 122
Ackermann (A. W.), Vortex Rings in Liquids, 15
Adamović (Prof. L.), die Pflanzenwelt Dalmatiens, 421
Adams (Prof.), Spectrograph for 60-in. Reflector at Mt. Wilson, 589
Adamson (D.), Durability of Wire Ropes for Lifting, 590
Adamson (R. S.), Ecology of Gamlingay, 328
Addenbrooke (G. L.), Surface Leakage Experiments with Alternating Currents, 416
Ainsworth-Davis (J. R.), Agricultural Education in the United States, Prof. B. M. Davis, 489
Aitken (Dr. John), the Sun as a Fog-producer, 131
Albe (E. E. Fournier d'), the Potential Effect in Selenium, 52
Albrecht (Prof.), Variation of Latitude, 512
Alcock (A., C.I.E., F.R.S.), Entomology for Medical Officers, 474
Alder (J.) and A. Hancock, British Tunicata, 523
Alexander (W. B.), Experiments on Cross-breeding of two Races of the Moth *Acidalia virgularia*, 23
Allan (Dr. G. E.) and J. Brown, Transformation of Ferric Oxide into Magnetic Oxide, 547
Allen (A. C. and Miss), Photographs of the Solar Eclipse, 355
Allen (C. Edgar), the Modern Locomotive, 111
Amaduzzi (Dr. L.), Report on Electrons in Metals, 458
Amagat (E. H.), Variations of the Pressure Coefficient with Temperature, 183
Ami (Dr. H.), Speech at British Science Guild, 296
Amoroso (Dr. L.), Mathematical Theory of Economic Dynamics, 92
Amouroux and Murat (MM.), Some Syntheses starting with Butyrene, 209
Amundsen (Captain Roald), Arrival at the South Pole, 43; awarded Gold Medal by R.S.G.S., 428; Arrival in Christiania, 585
Andersen (Knud), Catalogue of Chiroptera in the British Museum, 449
André (Prof. Charles), Death, 429
Anestin (V.), Calendar Reform in States of Greek Church, 46
Annandale (Dr. N.), Indian Winter: Correction, 353; Frogs and Snakes from the Abor Foot-hills, 365; Aged Sea Anemones, 607
Antipa (Dr. G.), Biology of the Danube Delta, 40
Appleyard (R.), Solution of Network Problems by Determinants, 286
Arber (E. A. Newell), *Psylmophyllum majus* Sp. nova from Newfoundland, 235
Aristotle, Dr. T. E. Lones, Researches in Natural Science, 653
Armstrong (Prof. H. E.) and J. V. Eyre, Enzyme Action, 312
Armstrong (H. E. and E. F.) and E. Horton, Studies on Enzyme Action, 311
Armstrong (Prof. H. E.) and E. H. Rodd, Morphological Studies of Benzene Derivatives, 493
Arndt (Prof. Kurt), die Bedeutung der Kolloide für die Technik, 28
Arnold (Prof. J. O., F.R.S.), Recent Researches on Cast Iron, 169; Constitution of Steel, 278; Practical and Scientific Metallurgy of Steel, F. W. Harbord and J. W. Hall, 315
Asch (Dr. W. and Dr. D.), die Silicate in chemischer und technischer Beziehung, 212
Ashworth (J. R.), Curie's Constant in the Ferromagnetic State, 503, 555; the Constant P of Fröhlich's Equation, 616
Aston (F. W.), Anode Dark Space in the Discharge in Oxygen, 218
Auld (Dr. S. J. M.), Introduction to Quantitative Analysis, 552
Austin (Gertrude), Heliotherapy for Tuberculous Children, 538
Avebury (Lord), Development of Pollen and Fertilisation, 466
Backhouse (T. W.), New Naked-eye Star Catalogue, 175
Bacon (Francis), Mr. Balfour on, 454
Bage (Miss Freda), Retina in Lateral Eyes of Sphenodon, 67
Bahr (P. H.), Filariasis and Elephantiasis in Fiji, 487
Baker (W. M.), the Calculus for Beginners, 602
Balfour (Dr. Andrew), Fourth Report of the Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories: Spirochaetes in Fowls, 11
Balfour (Right Hon. A.), on Francis Bacon, 454
Ball (Dr. John), the El Nakhla el Baharia Meteorite, 147
Ball (W. C.), Changes in Absorption Spectra of "Didymium Salts," 363
Ball (W. W. Rouse), Mersenne's Numbers, 86
Balloire (F. de M. de), Periods of Brückner and Earthquakes, 625
Ballou (W. A.), Sir D. Morris, Entomological Problems in the West Indies, 610
Balls (W. Lawrence), the Stomatograph, 24; Photosynthesis and Stomatal Aperture, 555
Baly (Prof. E. C. C., F.R.S.), Chemical Spectroscopy, Prof. G. Urbain, 211
Bancroft (H.), Ore Deposits in Arizona, 617
Banerjee (H. Nath), the Ayurvedic Method of Purifying Mercury by Garlic Juice, 495

- Bannister (C. O.), Theory of Blast-roasting of Galena, 52
 Banta (A. M.), the Distastefulness of *Anosia plexippus*, 243
 Barker (T. V.), Optical Properties of Mercuric Iodide, 78;
 Isomorphism of the Acid Tartrates and Tartar-Emetics
 of Potassium, Rubidium, and Cæsium, 443
 Barlow (Dr. Guy), the Torque produced by a Beam of
 Light in Oblique Refraction through a Glass Plate, 233
 Barnard (Prof. E. E.), Nova Cygni; Nova Lacertæ, 207;
 the Changeable Red Star WX Cygni, 432; Observations
 of Jupiter on May 7, 589; Comet 1911c (Brooks), 616
 Barnard (J. E.), Disintegrating Bacteria and other Organic
 Cells, 21
 Barnard (K. H.), Are Eyes Autophanous? 138
 Barnes (Prof. Howard T., F.R.S.), Icebergs and their
 Location in Navigation, 411
 Barrett-Hamilton (G. E. H.), Mammalia: Clare Island, 521
 Barton (Prof. E. H.), Analytical Mechanics, 655
 Bartram (Miss H.), Correlation of Geometry and
 Geography, 44
 Bartrum (C. O.), Solar Halos on May 17, 348
 Bary (Paul), Molecular Weight of India-rubber, 261
 Baschin (Otto), Drift Ice of the Great Newfoundland Bank
 and its Danger to Navigation, 428
 Bassot (M.), Compensation of the New Meridian of Quito,
 260; Map of W. Morocco, 599
 Bate (Miss D. M. A.), Remains of large Mouse in Crete, 14
 Bates (Edw. L.) and F. Charlesworth, Practical Mathe-
 matics and Geometry, 240
 Bathar (Dr. F. A.), Guide to Fossil Invertebrates in the
 British Museum (Natural History), 345; Caradocian
 Cystidea from Girvan, 364; Open-air Folk Museum of
 Bunge, 457
 Bauer (E.), Reduction of the β -Diketones, 235
 Bauer (Dr. G.), O. Lasche, and others, Marine Steam
 Turbines, 159
 Baume (G.), Fusibility Curves of Volatile Systems, 652
 Baume (G.) and N. Georgitses, Fusibility Curves of Vol-
 atile Binary Systems at Low Temperatures, 79
 Baume (G.) and F. L. Perrot, Atomic Weight of Chlorine,
 677
 Bausch and Lomb Optical Co., Microscope Models, 69
 Baxandall (F. E.), Spectrum of Nova Geminorum, 200
 Bealby (J. T.), How to Make an Orchard in British
 Columbia, 497
 Beattie (R.), Pinhole Images, 295
 Beccari (Dr. Odoardo), Annals of the Royal Botanic
 Gardens, Calcutta: Asiatic Palms—Lepidocarpaceæ; the
 Species of *Dæmonorops*, 167
 Beck (Conrad) and H. Andrews, Photographic Lenses, 5
 Beckenhaupt (C.), Witterung, Erdoberfläche, und Leben,
 405
 Becquerel (A. H.), Memorial Lecture on, to be given at
 Chemical Society by Sir O. Lodge, 455
 Becquerel (Jean), Inversion of Hall's Phenomenon in
 Bismuth, 469
 Beddard (Dr. F. E.), Species of Tapeworms of the Genus
Inermicapsifer from the Hyrax, with Notes on the Genera
Zschokkeella and *Thysanotania*, 207; New Genus of
Cestoidea found on Tapeworms in a Tasmanian Devil,
 312; Asexual Tapeworm, 416
 Bedell (Prof. F.), Dr. C. A. Pierce, Direct and Alternating-
 current Manual, 472
 Bell (Dr. J. Mackintosh), New Zealand Volcanoes, 38
 Bell (Dr. Louis), Effect of Ultra-violet Light from Electric
 Lamps on the Eye, 511
 Belopolsky (Prof.), Nova Geminorum No. 2, 384
 Beltzer (Prof. F. J. G.) and J. Persoz, les Matières
 Cellulosiques, 84
 Bent (A. C.), Birds in the Aleutian Islands, 675
 Berger (A.), Hortus Mortolensis, 510
 Berget (A.), a Total Immersion Areometer without
 Capillary Correction, 339
 Bergson (Prof.) and the Eye of Pecten, Dr. W. J. Dakin, 86
 Berry (E. W.), Early Cretaceous Flora of Maryland, 330
 Berthelot (A.) and D. M. Bertrand, Toxic Properties of
 β -Imidoazoethylamine, 625
 Berthelot (D.) and H. Gaudechon, Photolytic Decomposition
 of Smokeless Powder, &c., by Ultra-violet Rays, 25;
 Radiations producing the Photosynthesis of Complex
 Compounds, &c., 573; Photolysis of Sugars Ketonic by
 Sunlight and by Ultra-violet Light, 625
 Bertrand (G.), Manganese in Animal Organs, 365
 Bertrand (G.) and H. Agulhon, Boron as a Normal Con-
 stituent of Animal Tissues, 574
 Bertrand (G.) and F. Medigreceanu, the Normal Man-
 ganese in the Blood, 183; Manganese in the Animal
 Kingdom, 495
 Besant (Dr. W. H., F.R.S.) and A. S. Ramsey, a Treatise
 on Hydromechanics, 655
 Bews (Prof. J. W.), Vegetation of Natal, 405
 Bielecki (J.) and V. Henri, Quantitative Study of Absorp-
 tion of Ultra-violet Rays, 677
 Bigelow (Prof., M.A., and Anna N.), Applied Biology, 190
 Bigourdan (G.), the Reflecting Meridian Circle and Minor
 Planets, 390
 Biles (Prof. J. H.), the Geared Turbine Channel Steamers
Normannia and *Hautonia*, 124
 Bingham (Prof. H.), Yale Peruvian Expedition, 68
 Bingham (Prof. H.), I. Bowman, and G. F. Eaton, Dis-
 covery of Human Remains at Cuzco, Peru, 584
 Blaise (E. E.), Syntheses by means of Mixed Organo-
 metallic Derivatives of Zinc, 235, 495
 Blakesley (T. H.), Specific Gravity Balls for determining
 very small Differences of Density, 466
 Blanc (L.), Effect of Sudden Variations of Temperature on
 the Respiration of Plants, 495
 Bleeker (Pieter), Index to Ichthyological Papers by, Dr.
 Weber and Dr. de Beaufort, 225
 Bloch (Dr. L.), G. Roy, Principes de la Technique de
 l'Éclairage, 3
 Blondel (A.), an Electro-chronograph with Synchronised
 Sparks, 209
 Boas (Franz), the Mind of Primitive Man, 161
 Bohlin (Prof. K.), Cometary Phenomena, 17
 Bolivar (Dr. I.), Saltatorial Orthoptera, 467
 Boll (M.) and Paul Job, Photochemical Kinetics of the
 Chloroplatinic Acids in very Dilute Solutions, 157
 Bolton (H.), Insect Remains from the Midland and S.E.
 Coalfields, 286
 Borchardt (W. G.) and Rev. A. D. Perrott, Geometry for
 Schools, 602, 655
 Bosler (J.) and P. Idrac, the Spectrum of Nova Geminorum,
 209
 Bosworth (G. F.), East London, 346
 Boulenger (G. A.), Fishes collected by Mr. A. B. Percival
 in British E. Africa, 312; Varieties of the Wall-lizard,
 364
 Boulger (G. S.), Botany, 654
 Bourion (F.), Separation of Iron and Titanium, 313
 Bourquelot (Ed.) and M. Bridel, Action of Emulsion upon
 Salicin in Alcoholic Solution, 183
 Bourquelot (Em.) and Mlle. A. Fichtenholz, Identification
 of Glucoside from the Leaves of *Kalmia latifolia*, 25
 Boutroux (Prof. E.), J. Nield, the Beyond that is Within,
 and other Addresses, 630
 Bouvier (E. L.), Classification of the Genus *Caridina* and
 extraordinary Variations of a Species of this Genus,
Caridina brevivirostris, 183
 Bowden (Prof. Joseph), Russian Peasant Method of Multi-
 plication, 431
 Bower (Prof. F. O., F.R.S.), the late Sir Joseph Hooker,
 456
 Boys (Prof. C. V., F.R.S.), Vortex Rings in Liquids, 15;
 Rotating Films, 493
 Bradley (Dr. O. C.), Guide to the Dissection of the Dog,
 630
 Brearley (Harry), the Heat Treatment of Tool Steel, 501
 Brender (Dr. W.), Mineralien-Sammlungen: ein Hand-
 und Hilfsbuch, 446
 Briggs (H.), Effects of Errors in Surveying, 605
 Brindley (H. H.), Proportions of the Sexes in *Forficula*
auricularia, 467
 Brisley (Dr. F. J.), an Introduction to the Study of Fuel,
 549
 Brittan (Dr. W. E.), the House-fly Pest, 616
 Brooks (A. H.) and others, Mineral Resources of Alaska,
 617
 Brooks (Prof.) and Mr. Turner, Inductance of Compact
 Coils of Wire without Iron Cores, 120
 Brotherus (Dr. V. F.) and Rev. W. W. Watts, Mosses of
 the Yarrangobilly Caves District, N.S. Wales, 626
 Brown (M. W.), Northamptonshire, iii

- Brown (Dr. T. Graham), Alleged Specific Instance of Transmission of Acquired Characters, 23; Factors in Rhythmic Functions of the Nervous System, 312
- Browne (Edith A.), Peeps at Industries: Sugar, 5; Rubber, 554
- Browning (Dr. Carl H.) and Ivy Mackenzie, Recent Methods in the Diagnosis and Treatment of Syphilis, 575
- Brownlee (Dr.), Inheritance of Hair and Eye Colour, 468
- Bruce (the late Dr. A.) and Dr. J. W. Lawson, Multiple Neuroma of the Central Nervous System, 547
- Bruce (Sir David, C.B., F.R.S.), Promotion of, 301
- Bruce (E. S.), Automatic Release of Self-recording Instruments from *Ballons-sondes*, 338
- Bruce (Dr. Wm. S.), the Antarctic Campaign, 17; Invertebrates taken by the *Scotia*, 521
- Bruno (A.), and P. T. d'Auzay, the Estimation of Sulphates in Solution by a Physico-chemical Volumetric Method, 209
- Bruschi (Dr. Diana), Toxic Action of Fungi Parasitic on Fruits, 92
- Bryant (W. W.), Adoption of a Climatological Day, 466
- Bryce (Dr. Alexander), Modern Theories of Diet and their Bearing upon Practical Dietetics, 422
- Bryce (James), Address at Sydney University, 651
- Buchanan (J. Y., F.R.S.), the Solar Eclipse of April 17, 241
- Buckmaster (G. A.) and J. A. Gardner, Composition of Blood Gases during Respiration of Oxygen, 24
- Bugge (Dr. G.), Prof. Dr. S. Günther, *Bücher der Naturwissenschaft*, 398
- Buisson (H.), and C. Fabry, Temperature of Sources of Light, 339
- Bull (C. L.), Under the Roof of the Jungle: Animal Life in the Guiana Wilds, 396
- Bullen (G. E.), Alleged Fall of an Aërolite near St. Albans, 34; Feeding Habits of Mackerel, 641
- Burch (Dr. G. J., F.R.S.), Confusion Test for Colour Blindness, 130
- Burdon-Sanderson (the late Lady), Sir John Burdon-Sanderson: a Memoir, 55
- Burland (T. H.), First Book of Zoology, 264
- Burnet (A.), Occultation of a Star by Jupiter, 632
- Burrard (Col. S. G.), Indian Survey, 328
- Burt (C.), Inheritance of Mental Characters, 614
- Burton (W.), Ancient Egyptian Ceramics, 641
- Bury (G. Wyman), the Land of Uz, by "Abdullah Mansur," 35
- Busquet (H.) and M. Tiffeneau, Rôle of Caffeine, 625
- Buss (A. A.), Solar Eclipse of April 17: Prominences, 251
- Büss and Djukow (Herren), Simultaneous Meteor Observations, 459
- Butterworth (S.), Method of Measuring small Inductances, 337
- Byrne (Dr. J.), Physiology of the Semicircular Canals and their Relation to Sea-Sickness, 575
- Callendar (Prof. H. L.), Bakerian Lecture on Variation of Specific Heat of Water Investigated by the Continuous Mixture Method, 24; Expansion of Vitreous Silica, 286
- Calman (W. T.), Lobsters in the *Ægean*, 529
- Calvet (M.), Alcools: *Dénaturants*, 84
- Campbell (Prof. D. H.), Plant Life and Evolution, 213
- Campbell (Dr. Robert), Upper Cambrian Rocks at Stonehaven, &c., 468
- Campbell (Prof. W. W.), Radial Velocity of Stars, 335
- Camus (M.) and others, Observations of Mercury, 644
- Cannizzaro (Prof. S.), Memorial Lecture by Sir W. Tilden, F.R.S., 455
- Canziani (Estella), Costumes, Traditions, and Songs of Savoy, 289
- Carnegie Institution of Washington: Year Book, 126
- Carothers (S. D.), Portland Experiments on Flow of Oil, 415
- Carpenter (Prof. G. H.), Injurious Insects in Ireland, 494
- Carr (A. S. Comyns), W. H. S. Garnett, and J. H. Taylor, National Insurance, 133
- Carrière (E.), the Acyclic Acid Aldehydes, 261
- Carlslaw (Prof. H. S.), the Teaching of Mathematics, 6
- Cary (Merritt), Report on a Biological Survey of Colorado, 615
- Case (Prof. E. C.), Permian Vertebrate Fauna of North America, 173
- Cave (Charles J. P.), Clouds and Shadows, 268; Thunderstorm of March 11, 338
- Cavers (Dr. F.), Practical Botany, 5; Botany and Gardening, J. E. Peabody and A. E. Hunt, Prof. H. H. Rusby, Prof. M. Möbius, Dr. G. Worgitzky, Dr. G. Tobler-Wolf and Prof. F. Tobler, H. E. Corke, R. T. Günther Mrs. C. W. Earle and Ethel Case, C. H. Curtis, W. R. Dykes, J. T. Bealby, *all* 497
- Chaillon (A.) and L. MacAuliffe, *Morphologie Médicale: -tude des quatre types humains*, 237
- Chalkley (A. P.), Dr. R. Diesel, Diesel Engines for Land and Marine Work, 549
- Chandon (Mlle. E.), appointed to Paris Observatory, 38
- Chapman (J. C.), Fluorescent Röntgen Radiation from Elements of High Atomic Weight, 104; Attempt to Refract Röntgen Radiation, 313
- Chappell (C.), Corrodibility of Iron, 278
- Charcot (Dr.), awarded Gold Medal of Paris Geographical Society, 65
- Charlier (Prof.), Constitution of the Milky Way, 407
- Charpy (G.) and S. Bonnerot, Permeability of Iron for Hydrogen, 53
- Chatley (Herbert), Centre of Pressure on Triangular Plane Gliders at Small Angles of Incidence, 138
- Chauveau (A.), Stereoscopic Inversions due to Association of Two Systems of Retinal Impressions in Opposition and of Unequal Power, 235
- Chavanne (G.), Isolation of unknown Chlorine Derivatives, 120
- Chilton (Prof. C.), Amphipoda of the Scottish Antarctic Expedition, 468
- Chree (Dr. C., F.R.S.), Short Index to Kew Observatory Observations, 24; Phenomena of Sun-spots and Terrestrial Magnetism at Kew, 285; Studies in Terrestrial Magnetism, 445
- Ciamician and Silber (Profs.), Photochemical Action, 69
- Clark (J. E.) and R. H. Hooker, Report on Phenological Observations for 1911, 208
- Clarke (Dr. F. W.), Geochemical Statistics, 334
- Clarke (J. Jackson), the Cause of Cancer, 601
- Cligny (A.), Migration of the Common Eel, 105
- Cockayne (Dr.), Flora of the Higher Southern Alps, New Zealand, 644
- Cohen (Prof. J. B.), the Smoke Problem, 217
- Cohen (Prof. J. B., F.R.S.) and Arthur G. Ruston, Smoke: a Study of Town Air, 139
- Cohendy (M.), Experiments on Life without Micro-organisms, 25; Life with Pure Cultures following on Aseptic Life, 79
- Cole (G. A. J.), the Liffey Valley, 521
- Coleman (Prof. A. P., F.R.S.), the Canadian Rockies, 35
- Colson (A.), the van't Hoff Theory of Solution: Reply to M. Langevin, 183
- Colwell (H. A.) and Dr. S. Russ, Conversion of Starch into Dextrin by X-rays, 337
- Combes (R.), Method for the Culture of the Higher Plants in Sterile Media, 157
- Conran (J.), the Riemann Integral and Measurable Sets, 260
- Conwentz (H.) and others, *Beiträge zur Naturdenkmalpflege: das Plagefenn bei Chorin*, 665
- Cooke (W. E.), the Astrographic Catalogue, 487
- Coplans (Dr. Myer), Method for Detection of Proximity of Ice at Sea, 295; (i.) Ohmmeter for Testing Public Water Supplies, (ii.) Purification of Water, 590
- Corke (H. Essenhigh), G. Clarke Nuttall, Wild Flowers as they Grow: Photographed in Colours Direct from Nature, 213, 497
- Correns (Prof. C.), die neuen Vererbungsgesetze, 327
- Coste (J. H.), Calorific Power of Gas, 449
- Cotton (A.) and H. Mouton, New Substances showing Magnetic Double Refraction, 183
- Cotton (A. D.), Marine Algæ: Clare Island, 521
- Coulter, Barnes, and Cowles (Drs.), Text-book of Botany for Colleges and Universities, 654
- Coulter (Prof. J. M.), Morphological Nature of the Endosperm of Angiospermic Plants, 145; Plant-breeding; Palæobotany and Botany, 510
- Cousin (H.) and H. Hérissé, Oxidation of Parathymol, 574
- Coward (T. A.), Smelt in Rostherne Mere, 338

- Craig (E. H. C.), Oil-finding, 580
 Crawford (O. G. S.), Distribution of Early Bronze Settlements in Britain, 40
 Crawford (Dr. W. J.), Elementary Graphic Statics, 655
 Crawley (A. E.), Andrew Lang, 532; Inferior Races, Franz Boas, 161; Science and Reservations, H. Conwentz and others, 665
 Crispin (E. S.), Prevention and Treatment of Disease in the Tropics, 575
 Croft (W. B.), Contrast Colours in the Use of Zone-plates, 600
 Crookes (Sir W.), Devitrification of Silica Glass, 51
 Crosley (C. G.), the Feeble-minded, 40
 Cross (M. I.) and M. J. Cole, Modern Microscopy, 525
 Crossland (Cyril), Clouds and Shadows, 322; Red Water, 348
 Crowther (Dr.), Scientific Principles of Animal Feeding, 618
 Crowther (J. A.), Distribution of the Scattered Röntgen Radiation, 104
 Cuffe (Charlotte I. W.), Autophanous Eyes, 87
 Cumming (Dr. A. C.), Practical Chemistry for Medical Students, 291
 Cuninghame (R. J.), the "Water-elephant" and a New Bear-like Animal, 615
 Curie (Madame), International Radium Standard, 115
 Currlé (Miss L.), Namaqualand Bushmen, 677
 Curtis (C. H.), Annuals, Hardy and Half-hardy, 497
 Custance (Admiral Sir R.), Military Principles bearing on Warship Design, 124
- Dahl (Knut), Ian Baillie, Age and Growth of Salmon and Trout in Norway, 523
 Dakin (Dr. W. J.), Prof. H. Bergson and the Eye of Pecten, 86; Life in the Ocean, Prof. Hensen, H. Lohmann, Prof. Steuer, 94
 Dalby (Prof. W. E.), an Optical Load-extension Indicator, 52
 Dalton (J. P.), Forced Vibrations, 528
 Danes (Dr. J. V.), Physiography of North-eastern Australia, 567
 Daniel and Schlesinger (Drs.), Spectrum and Orbit of β Scorpii, 121
 Danne (J.), Distance of Laboratory: Correction, 93
 Danyz (J.), Deceleration of β -rays when traversing Matter, 390
 Darling (Chas. R.), Pyrometry: a Practical Treatise, 29; Movements of Semi-oily Liquids on a Water Surface, 416
 Darwin (Sir George H., K.C.B., F.R.S.), Sir William Herschel: Royal Institution Discourse, 620, 645
 Darwin (Major Leonard), Presidential Address at the Eugenics Congress, 558
 Darzens (G.), New Compound of Carbon and Nitrogen, 303
 Dautzenberg (Ph.) and H. Fischer, Mollusques et Brachiopodes Arctiques, 107
 Davenport (C. B.), Transplantation of Hens' Ovaries, 67; Heredity in Relation to Eugenics, 263
 Davies (Dr. A. Morley), Buckinghamshire, iii
 Davis (Prof. B. M.), Agricultural Education in the U.S. Schools, 489
 Davis (W. A.), S. S. Sadtler, and others, Allen's Commercial Organic Analysis, vii
 Davis (Sir W. G.), Meteorological Service of the Argentine, 226
 Davison (C.), Eruptions of the Asama-Yama, Prof. F. Omori, 487
 Dawkins (Prof. W. Boyd), Further Evidence of Borings as to the Range of the S.E. Coalfield and of the Palæozoic Floor, and as to the Thickness of the Overlying Strata, 442
 Dawson (Miss Jean), Ecology of Pond-snails of genus *Physa*, 14
 Day (Dr. A. L.), Temperature Constants up to 1750° C., 335
 Day and Sosman (Messrs.), Standard Melting and Boiling Points on the Constant Volume Nitrogen Thermometer, 227
 De (Ranjanikanta), an Intermediate Course of Practical Physics, 343
 Dean (Dr. Bashford), Living Specimens of the Australian Ling-fish (*Ceratodus forsteri*) in the Society's Collection, 207
- Deegener (Prof. P.), Lebensweise und Organisation: eine Einführung in die Biologie der wirbellosen Tiere, 393
 Deeley (R. M.), Concentric Joints in Ice, 34
 Delage (Y.), a Self-recording Bathyrheometer, 209
 Delahaye (H.), Huiles Minérales, 84
 Delille (P. A.) and others, Culture of the Koch Bacillus in a definite Chemical Medium, 25
 Dell (J. A.), the Gateways of Knowledge, 476
 Demetresco (G.), a New Variable Star, 364
 Demolon (A.), the Fertilising Action of Sulphur, 25
 Dendy (Prof. A., F.R.S.), Outlines of Evolutionary Biology, 393
 Desch (Dr. C. H.), the Constitution of the Silicates, 212; Crystallisation of Metals, 359
 Desgrez and Dorléans (MM.), the Hypotensive Action of Guanine, 235
 Deslandres (H.), Relations between Temporary Stars and the Sun, 339
 Dewar (J. M.), Evolutions of Wading Birds, 439
 Diercks (Dr. H.), Brightness of the Sky, 354
 Diesel (Dr. Rudolph), Diesel Engine, 70
 Divers (Dr. Edward, F.R.S.), Death, 142; Obituary, 170
 Dixon (Prof. Henry H.) and W. R. G. Atkins, (a) Changes in Osmotic Pressure of the Sap of the Developing Leaves of *Syringa vulgaris*; (b) Variations in the Osmotic Pressures of some Evergreens, 156
 Dobell (Clifford), Systematic Position of the Spirochaets, 130
 Doberck (Dr.), Masses of Double Stars, 511
 Doflein (Prof.), Lehrbuch der Protozoenkunde, 372
 Domin (Dr. Karel), Additions to Flora of W. and N.W. Australia, 286
 Donaldson (Harold), Death, 585
 Dorno (Dr. C.), Dr. F. M. Exner, Solar Radiation at Davos, 440
 Doumer (E.), Treatment of Tubercular Osteitis by the High-frequency Discharge, 157
 Dow (Mr.), Luminous Efficiency of Illuminants, 354
 Dowling (J. J.), Steady and Turbulent Motion in Gases, 494
 Drake (N. F.), Chinese Earthquakes, 405
 Draper (Dr. C. H.), Heat and the Principles of Thermodynamics, 603
 Dreyer (Dr. J. L. E.), William Herschel and his "Desertion," 660
 Drugman (Dr. J.), Quartz Twins, 77
 Druitt (Col.), Charlestown Curve Derailment, 643
 Dubois (R.), Clasmotosis of the Shell and Pearl, 79
 Duckworth (Dr.), Ashantee Skull with Defective Dentition, 430
 Dümmer (R.), Revision of the Genus *Alepidea*, 469
 Duffour (A.), Isomorphism of Irido-chlorides of Alkali Metals, &c., 574
 Duggar (Prof. B. M.), Plant Physiology: with special reference to Plant Production, 265
 Duhem (Prof. Pierre), Thermodynamique et Chimie, 447
 Duke (Dr. H. L.), Transmission of *Trypanosoma nanum*, 51
 Duncan (Prof. R. K.), Some Chemical Problems of To-day, iv
 Dunk (J. L.), Forced Vibrations, 477
 Dunn (E. T.) and W. J. Tutcher, Chinese Flora: Kwangtung, 275
 Dunn (James), Obituary, 532
 Dunn (Stanley C.), Mineral Deposits of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 323
 Dunoyer (L.), Fluorescence of Sodium Vapour, 131; Apparatus for Rapid Distillation of Mercury, 339
 Dunstan (Dr. A. E.) and F. B. Thole, Text-book of Practical Chemistry for Technical Institutes, 291
 Dunstan (Dr. W. R., F.R.S.), Papers and Reports on Cotton Cultivation, 427
 Dupont (G.), the Oxyhydrofuranes, 53
 Durand (Sir E. Bart.), Sporting Reminiscences, 35
 Dykes (W. Rickatson), Irises, 497
 Dyson (Dr. F. W., F.R.S.) and E. W. Maunder, Position of the Sun's Axis from Photographs, 312; Radium and the Solar Chromosphere, 541
- Earle (Mrs. C. W.) and Ethel Case, Gardening for the Ignorant, 497
 Earle (Prof. S. C.), Theory and Practice of Technical Writing, x

- Eaton (Dr. G. F.), Flying Reptiles of the Chalk Period, 123
 Ebert (Prof. H.), Lehrbuch der Physik, 343
 Eccles (Dr. W. H.), Propagation of Long Electric Waves during the Solar Eclipse, 191; Applications of Heaviside's Resistance Operators to the Theory of the Air-core Transformer and Coupled Circuits in general, 416; Diurnal Variations of Electric Waves in Nature, and their Propagation round the Earth, 494
 Eccles (Prof. C. H.), Dairy Cattle and Milk Production, 163
 Eder (Prof. J. M.) and Prof. E. Valenta, Atlas typischer Spectren, 554
 Edmunds (E. W.) and J. B. Hoblyn, the Story of the Five Elements, 60
 Edridge-Green (Prof. F. W.), Colour-vision and Colour-blindness: Hunterian Lectures, 476
 Edser (Edwin), a Peculiarity in the Shadows Observed during a Partial Eclipse of the Sun, 216
 Egerton (Alfred C.), the Ammonia Flame, 270
 Eggar (W. D.), Teaching of Elementary Mathematics, 44
 Eggeling (Prof. H. von), der Aufbau der Skeletteile in den freien Gliedmassen der Wirbeltiere, 59
 Eisemann (Dr. K.), Distribution of Potential in Kathode Dark Space of Vacuum Tube, 355
 Elliott (Mr.), Soil Experiments at Clifton-on-Bowmont, 67
 Elphinstone (G. K. B.), the Gyrostatic Compass and Practical Applications of Gyrostats: Royal Institution Discourse, 74
 Enebo (Herr), Discovery of a New Star in Gemini, 42
 Engler (A.), das Pflanzenreich, 31
 Eriksson (J.), der Malvenrost (*Puccinia malvacearum*), 397
 Erskine-Murray (Dr. J.), Progress of Radiotelegraphy, Prof. J. Zenneck, 400
 Escard (J.), Formation of Lunar Craters, 625
 Evans (Ernest), an Intermediate Text-book of Botany, 213
 Evans (H. A.), Monmouthshire, 346
 Evans (Dr. H. Muir), Poison Organs and Venoms of Poisonous Fishes, 259
 Everett (Alice), Clouds and Shadows, 426, 459
 Evermann (B. W.) and H. W. Clark, Mammals of the Lake Maxinkuckee Region, 178
 Evershed (J.), Butterfly Migration in Relation to Mimicry, 659
 Ewart (Prof. A. J.), Ascent of Water in Trees, 469; Bitter Pit in Apples, 511

 Faber (Oscar) and P. G. Bowie, Reinforced Concrete Design, 501
 Fabre (J. H.), B. Miall, Social Life in the Insect World, 401
 Fabre-Domergue (M.), Purification of Oysters in Filtered Water, 314
 Fabry (C.) and H. Buisson, Width of the Spectrum Lines and Production of Interference with Large Differences of Path, 313; Mass of Particles emitting the Two Spectra of Hydrogen, 390
 Fairgrieve (J.), the Thunderstorms of May 31, 1911, 24
 Fantham (Dr. H. B.) and Miss Annie Porter, Structure and Homology of the Microsporidian Spore as seen in *Nosema apis*, 467
 Farran (G. P.), Clare Island Survey: Decapoda, 260
 Farrington (O. C.), Analysis of Stone Meteorites, 94
 Fassig (Dr. O. L.), Tropical Cyclones, 489
 Faucon (A.), Rotatory Power of Dissolved Camphor as a Function of Concentration, 79
 Fayet (G.), the Solar Eclipse of April 17, 147
 Fedorow (Prof. E. von), Crystallo-chemical Analysis, 503; Universal Microscope Stage, 674
 Feiss (Dr. H. O.), Fusion of Nerves, 429
 Ferguson (Prof. O. J.), Elements of Electrical Transmission, 472
 Fernbach (A.) and M. Schoen, Biochemical Production of Levulose, 495
 Féry (Ch.), New Thermo-electric Combustion Calorimeter, 104
 Festing (Major General E. R., C.B., F.R.S.), Obituary, 299
 Ficker (Dr. H. von), Heat-waves in Asia, 151
 Filon (Dr. L. N. G.), Relations of Mathematics and Physics, 44
 Fischer (E.), Chemical Structure of Tannin, 303
 Flajolet (M.), Application of Wireless Telegraphy to Prediction of Storms, 105; Reception of Wireless Signals during Solar Eclipse, 390
 Flammarion (C.), Solar Eclipse of April 17, 304
 Flower (Capt. Stanley), Menagerie at Giza and Aquarium at Gezira, 67
 Fonvielle (W. de), Les Éclipses d'Hiver et les Éclipses d'Été, 269
 Forcrand (M. de), Physical Properties of Cyclohexanol, 339; Physical Constants of Cyclohexanol, 469
 Forel (Prof. F. A.), Obituary, 638
 Forsyth (Dr. A. R., F.R.S.), Lectures on the Differential Geometry of Curves and Surfaces, 579
 Fortrat (R.), the Telluric Bands due to Oxygen, 157
 Fosse (R.), Direct Production of Urea at expense of Albuminoids, 261
 Foster (N. H.), Clare Island Survey: Land and Fresh-water Isopoda, 260
 Fotheringham (Dr. J. K.), an Astronomical Poet, H. W. Garrod, 239
 Fowle (F. E.), Spectroscopic Determination of Aqueous Vapour in the Atmosphere, 566
 Fowler (Prof. A.), Cometary Spectra, 227
 Fowler (J. S.) and Wm. Marriott, Our Weather, 267
 Fowler (Dr. W. W.), Fauna of British India: Coleoptera, 267
 Frankland (Prof.), Frequent Accompaniment of Rupture of a "Double-bond" by "Trans-Substitution," 276
 Franklin-Adams (John), Death, 639
 Franz (Prof.), Orbit of Minor Planet 1911 MT, 384
 Fraser (Capt. A. D.) and Dr. H. L. Duke, Relation of Wild Animals to Trypanosomiasis, 51
 Fredenhagen (Dr. K.), Currents produced by Electrons emitted by Metals at High Temperatures, 276
 Frederici (Dr. Georg), Comparative Studies in Melanesia, 439
 Frick (Childs), Natural History Expedition to East Africa, 674
 Friedenthal (Dr. Hans), Tierhaaratlas, 419
 Friend (Rev. Hilderic), Earthworms and Sheep-rot, 8
 Friend (Dr. J. N.), J. L. Bentley, and W. West, Mechanism of Corrosion and Corrosion of Nickel and other Steels, 278
 Friese (Dr. H.), Prof. J. J. Kieffer, and Dr. J. E. W. Ihle, das Tierreich, 627
 Froggatt (W. W.), Study of Insects from an Economic Point of View, 391
 Frost (Prof.), Spectrum of P Cygni, 384
 Frühling (Prof.), Death, 273
 Fry (Right Hon. Sir Ed., G.C.B., F.R.S.), a Flower Sanctuary, 661
 Fürth (Prof. Dr. Otto von), Probleme der physiologischen und pathologischen Chemie, 422
 Furuhielm (R.), Spectrum of Nova Geminorum No. 2, 589

 Gadou (Dr. Hans), the One-sided Reduction of Ovaries and Oviducts in the Amniota, 416
 Gardner (Prof. W. M.), Artificial Daylight, 631
 Garrad (G. H.), Tobacco Growing in England, 568
 Garratt (H. A.), Heat Engines, 628
 Garrett (A. E.), the Advance of Photography: its History and Modern Applications, 187
 Garrod (H. W.), Manili Astronomicum Liber II, 239
 Garstang (Prof.), Excavations in N. Syria and in the Sudan, 451
 Gaskell (Dr. J. F.), Method of embedding Tissues in Gelatin, 467
 Gates (R. R.), Parallel Mutations in *Oenothera biennis*, 659
 Gault (M. H.), Perfumes, 146
 Gaumont (M.), Speaking Kinematograph Films, 333
 Gaupp (Prof. E.), die äusseren Formen des menschlichen Körpers in ihrem allgemeinen Zustandekommen, 37
 Gautier (A.) and P. Clausmann, Detection and Estimation of very small quantities of Fluorine, 390, 443; Control of New Method of Estimating Fluorine, 468
 Geikie (Sir Archibald, P.R.S.), Speech at Royal Society Anniversary Celebration, 507
 Gemmill (J. F.), Locomotor Function of the Lantern in *Echinus*, 51; Rearing *Asterias rubens*, L.—Larvæ with Double Hydrocoele, 425

- Gerber (C.), Ferment in Latex of *Calotropis procera*, 626
 Gerlache (Capt. A. de), Log of the Duc d'Orléans' Arctic Cruise, 107
 Gerland (G.), der Mythus von der Sintflut, 605
 Ghosh (Prof. L. K.), Plane Trigonometry, 655
 Gibbons (F. J.), a Daylight Meteor, 147
 Gibson (J. Y.), the Story of the Zulus, 35
 Giebel (Dr. H.), Radium, Uranium, and Emanation Radiations in the Spectrum of Nova Geminorum, 432
 Gilchrist (Prof. J. D. F.), South African Zoology, 166; New Species of Trygon, 469
 Gillman (F.), a Point in Geological Nomenclature, 661
 Gilruth (J. A.), Introduction of the Cattle-tick and Tick-fever in Australia, 469
 Gilruth (J. A.) and Georgina Sweet, *Onchocerca gibsoni* the cause of Worm Nodules in Cattle, 469
 Girard (P.), Electric Charge of Red Corpuscles in Blood, 599
 Gladstone (Hugh S.), Catalogue of the Vertebrate Fauna of Dumfriesshire, 627
 Godfrey (C., M.V.O.), the Algebra Syllabus in the Secondary School, 44
 Godfrey (C., M.V.O.) and A. W. Siddons, Algebra for Beginners, 602
 Godlewski (Prof. Tadeusz), Electrolytic Transportation of the Active Deposit of Actinium through Water, 86
 Gold (Dr. E.), St. Elmo's Fire, 7; Heat-waves in Asia, Dr. H. von Ficker, 151; Sunshine at Trieste, Dr. E. A. Kiehlhäuser, 151
 Goldmann (Prof. E.), Method of Examining Normal and Diseased Tissues by *intra-vitam* Staining, 76
 Goldsbrough (G. R.), the "Girdle Stanes" of Dumfriesshire, 328
 Goodrich (Dr. E. S., F.R.S.), Heredity, 6
 Goodrich (W. F.), Modern Destructor Practice, 628
 Gorce (R. J. de la, and P. de la), Solar Eclipse of April 17: Photometry, 261
 Gordon (Dr. W. T.), *Rhetinangium Arberi*, a new Type of Fossil Stem from Pettycurl, 131
 Gouy (M.), Continuous Spectrum of Metallic Vapours and the Solar Photosphere, 495
 Gowland (Prof. W., F.R.S.), Copper and its Alloys in Early Times, 98
 Graff (Dr.), the Solar Eclipse of April 17, 670
 Graham (A. W.), Siam: a Handbook of Practical, Commercial, and Political Information, 138
 Gray (Prof. A.), General Dynamics, 78
 Gray (John), Death, 223; Obituary, 246
 Gray (J. A.), Nature of γ Rays excited by β Rays, 104
 Gray (Dr. J. G.) and G. Burnside, Motor-spun Gyrostats and Applications, 364
 Green (C. E.), Local Incidence of Cancer, 601
 Green (E. E.), Strepsiptera in India, 632
 Green (J. W.), Remuneration of Public Analysts, 34
 Greenwood (Dr.), Plague in India, 177
 Grégory (Prof. J. W.), Structural and Petrographic Classification of Coast-types, 92; Fiords in Relation to Earth Movements, 179
 Gregory (Prof. R. A.), Cycles of the Sun and Weather, 147
 Greig-Smith (Dr. R.), Soil-fertility, 600
 Grieg (J. A.), Echinoderms (Arctiques), 107
 Grignard (V.) and E. Bellet, Synthesis of Nitriles in the Cylicanic Series, 495
 Grover (F. W.), Effect of Temperature and Frequency on Capacity and Phase Difference of Paper Condensers, 16
 Guenther (Dr. K.), Einführung in die Tropenwelt (Ceylon), 421
 Günther (R. T.), Oxford Gardens, 497
 Guilbert (G.), Method of Weather Forecasting, P. H. Gallé, 383
 Guillaume (C. E.), Expansion of Commercial Nickel, 105; Specific Heat of Water, 390
 Guillet (A.), Realisation of Uniform Circular Movement by Periodic Synchronising Action, 625
 Gulliver (G. H.), Effect of Vibration upon Structure of Alloys, 364
 Guye (P. A.) and others, Weight of a Litre of Air at Geneva, 364, 417
 Gwyther (R. F.), Complete Formal Solution of Equations of Stress in Cartesian, and in Cylindrical and Spherical Coordinates, 131
 Hackspill (Louis), Vapour Pressure of the Alkaline Metals between 250° C. and 400° C., 157
 Haddon (Dr. A. C., F.R.S.), International Congress of Americanists, 357; Nature and Man in Australia, Prof. B. Spencer, C.M.G., F.R.S., and F. J. Gillen, 608
 Hadfield (Sir R., F.R.S.), Sinhalese Iron and Steel of Ancient Origin, 360
 Haecker (Prof. V.), Allgemeine Vererbungslehre, 445
 Haldane (Dr. J. S., F.R.S.), Burdon Sanderson and Vitalism, 215; Methods of Air Analysis, 552
 Haldane (Lord), Address at Opening of new Engineering Laboratories at Liverpool University, 311
 Hale (A. J.), Practical Chemistry for Engineering Students, 578
 Hall (A. D., F.R.S.), Recent Advances in Agricultural Science—the Fertility of the Soil, 648
 Hall (Rev. C. A.), How to Use the Microscope, 525
 Hall (H. R.), Prehistoric Thessaly, A. J. B. Wace and M. S. Thompson, 294
 Hall (H. S.), a School Algebra, 602
 Hall (H. S.) and F. H. Stevens, Examples in Arithmetic, 602
 Hall (J. W.), Metallurgy of Steel, 315
 Halliburton (Prof. W. D., F.R.S.), Physiology, 166
 Haller (A.), Methylation of two Ketones, 53
 Hamilton (Major J. S.), Local Races of Burchell's Zebra, 364
 Hampshire (C. H.), Volumetric Analysis for Students of Pharmaceutical and General Chemistry, 552
 Hampson (Sir G. F., Bart.), Catalogue of the Noctuidæ in the British Museum, 374
 Hamy (M.), Temperature Regulator of the Stellar Spectrograph of Paris Observatory, 260
 Hamy and Millochau (MM.), Nova Geminorum No. 2, 121
 Hann (Prof. J.), Diurnal Variations of Wind-force on the Summit of Ben Nevis, 41
 Hannington (Major-Gen. J. C.), Table of Logarithms and Anti-logarithms to Four Figures, 318
 Hansen (Mr.), a Comet-like Object, 277
 Harbord (F. W.), the Heat Treatment of Tool Steel, H. Brearley, 501
 Harbord (F. W.) and J. W. Hall, Metallurgy of Steel, 315
 Harcourt (A. Vernon), Variation with Temperature of Rate of Chemical Change, 285
 Hardaker (W. H.), Discovery of a Fossil-bearing Horizon in Permian Rocks near Birmingham, 573
 Harden (Dr. A.) and Dorothy Norris, Bacterial Production of Acetylmethylcarbinol and 2:3-Butylene Glycol, 51
 Harden (Dr. A.) and W. J. Penfold, Chemical Action on Glucose of a Variety of *Bacillus coli communis*, 442
 Hardy (W. B.), General Theory of Colloidal Solutions, 311; Tension of Composite Fluid Surfaces and Mechanical Stability of Films of Fluid 311; Formation of a Heat-reversible Gel, 311
 Harger (Dr. J.), Prevention of Explosions in Mines, 406
 Harker (Dr. J. A., F.R.S.), Very High Temperatures: Royal Institution Discourse, 514
 Harker (Dr. J. A.) and Dr. G. W. C. Kaye, Generation of Electricity by Carbon at High Temperatures, 337
 Harper (Mr.), γ Geminorum a Spectroscopic Binary of exceptionally Long Period, 670
 Harper (Prof. M. W.), Manual of Farm Animals, ix
 Harrison (Prof. E. P.), Experimental Illustration of Reversal of Bright Line Spectra, 631
 Hart and McCollum (Messrs.) and others, Nutrition of Farm Animals, 618
 Hartley (Sir W. N.) and H. W. Moss, Ultimate Lines, and Quantities of Elements producing these Lines, in Spectra of the Oxyhydrogen Flame and Spark, 285
 Harwood (W. A.) and Dr. J. E. Petavel, Experimental Work on a New Standard of Light, 103
 Haskett-Smith (W. P.), Solar Halos on May 17, 322
 Hatfield (W. H.), Cast Iron in the Light of Recent Research, 169
 Hatschek (Dr. E.), Specimens and Slides illustrating Reactions in Gels, 78
 Hatschek (Dr. E.) and A. L. Simon, Gels in relation to Ore Deposition, 234
 Haug (Prof. E.), Traité de Géologie, 551
 Hausrath (Prof. H.), Pflanzengeographische Wandlungen der deutschen Landschaft, 421

- Haverfield (Prof. F.), Roman London, 614
 Haworth (Dr. H. F.), Maximum Sensibility of a Duddell
 Vibration Galvanometer, 466
 Hay (Dr. O. P.), Peculiar Tooth-like Palæozoic Fossils, 430
 Hayata (B.), W. Botting Hemsley, Icones of the Plants of
 Formosa, and Materials for a Flora, 449
 Hedley (C.), Palæogeographical Relations of Antarctica, 416;
 Land-shells collected in Queensland by S. W. Jackson,
 600
 Hedley (C.) and A. F. B. Hull, Polyplacophora of Lord
 Howe and Norfolk Islands, 600
 Hehn (Victor), Kulturpflanzen und Haustiere in ihrem
 Uebergang aus Asien nach Griechenland und Italien
 sowie in das übrige Europa, 164
 Hele-Shaw (H. S.), Theory of a New Form of the Chamber
 Crank Chain, 363
 Hemsalech (G. A.), Influence of Capacity, &c., on Velocity
 of Luminous Vapours in the Electric Spark, 105
 Henderson (Dr.), Physiography of W. Nelson District of
 New Zealand, 644
 Henri (Madame and Victor), Variation of Abiotic Power of
 Ultra-violet Rays with Wave-length, 600
 Henri (V.) and A. Ranc, Decomposition of Glycerol by
 Ultra-violet Rays, 314
 Henry (J. R.), Meteor-showers, 113, 218, 295, 321, 450, 581,
 660
 Hensen (Prof. V.), das Leben in Ozean (Plankton-Expedi-
 tion der Humboldt Stiftung), 94
 Hepburn (Prof. David), Anatomy of the Weddell Seal, 468
 Hepworth (Commander Campbell), the Isothermal Layer, 7
 Herbertson (F. D.), the Clarendon Geography, iii
 Herdman (Prof. W. A., F.R.S.), Tunicata of Scottish
 Antarctic Expedition, 78; Marine Life in Northern Seas
 (Voyage of the *Belgica*), 107; (with others), Lancashire
 Sea Fisheries, 645
 Herelle (F. d'), Propagation of Locust Disease, 53
 Heron-Allen (Ed.), Selsey Bill: Historic and Prehistoric, 290
 Heron-Allen (Ed.) and A. Earland, Recent and Fossil
 Foraminifera at Selsey Bill, Sussex, 290; New Astro-
 rhizidae, 467
 Herrick (F. H.), Natural History of the American Lobster, 9
 Herschel (Sir William), Royal Institution Discourse on, by
 Sir G. H. Darwin, K.C.B., F.R.S., 620, 645
 Herter (C. A.), Biological Aspects of Human Problems, 576
 Hérubel (Prof. Marcel A.), B. Miall, Sea Fisheries: their
 Treasures and Toilers, S. Reynolds, 1
 Heycock (C. T.) and F. E. Lamplough, Boiling Points
 of Zinc, Cadmium, &c., 208
 Heywood (Prof. H. B.) and Prof. M. Fréchet, l'Équation
 de Fredholm et ses applications à la Physique Mathé-
 matique, 499
 Hickling (Dr. H. G. A.), Variation of *Planorbis multi-*
formis, 131
 Hicks (Prof. W. M.), a Critical Study of Spectral Series, 52
 Hickson (Prof. S. J., F.R.S.), Coral *Endopachys grayi*,
 131; Zoological Nomenclature, 349; the Hydrocoralline
 Genus *Errina*, 416
 Hiesemann (M.), How to Attract and Protect Wild Birds,
 190
 Hilditch (Dr. T. P.), a First Year Physical Chemistry, 578
 Hill (L.) and M. Flack, Ozone and Ventilation, 72;
 Relation between Secretory and Capillary Pressure, 442
 Hinks (A. R.), Measurement of Celestial Distances, 329
 Hirayama (Prof. Shin), the Photographic Transit, 176
 Hirschwald (Prof. J.), Handbuch der bautechnischen
 Gesteinsprüfung, 344
 Hlava (Prof.), Bodies Found in Blood of Children with
 Measles, 306
 Hobart (H. M.), Design of Static Transformers, 475
 Hodgson (A. E.), Death, 39
 Hodgson (Dr. Shadworth H.), Death, 403
 Hodgson (T. V.), Glacial Problems of S. Victoria Land,
 644
 Hoff (J. H. van't), his Amsterdam Period, by Drs. Jorissen
 and Reicher, 42
 Hoffmann (J. I.), Recent Practice in Diamond Drilling and
 Borehole Surveying, 234
 Holland (J. H.), Useful Plants of Nigeria, 68; Sources of
 Alcohol, 226
 Holt (Dr. A.) and others, Sorption of Hydrogen by
 Palladium, 79
 Höhnigschmid (Dr. O.), Atomic Weight of Radium, 68
 Hooker (the late Sir Joseph), Appeal by Biographer for
 Letters of, 380; Life and Work of, by Prof. F. O. Bower,
 F.R.S., 456
 Hooton (W. M.) and A. Mathias, Introductory Course of
 Mechanics and Physics for Technical Students, 343
 Hořejší (J.), Symbiotic Union of an Alga with Roots of
Cycas revoluta, 307
 Horner (J.), the Flax-spinning Spindle, 590
 Hort (E. C.) and W. J. Penfold, Clinical Study of Experi-
 mental Fever, 76
 Hosseus (Dr. C. C.), Protection of Nature in S. Bavaria,
 347
 Hough (S. S.), Cape Observatory Report, 512; Personal
 Errors in Transit Observations, 566
 Houssay (Prof. F.), *Forme, Puissance et Stabilité des*
Poissons, 319
 Houston (Dr.), Report on Organisms in River Water, 225
 Howe (Prof. G. W. O.), Calibration of Wave-meters for
 Radio-telegraphy, 415
 Howe (Prof. G. W. O.) and J. D. Peattie, Efficiency of
 Generation of High-frequency Oscillations by aid of
 Induction Coil and Spark Gap, 546
 Howlett (R.), Effects of Friction in a Vacuum on Thorium
 Oxide, 606
 Hoyle (Dr. W. E.), Cephalopoda of Scottish Antarctic
 Expedition, 78
 Hrdlička (Dr. Ales), Natives of the Kharga Oasis, Egypt,
 326
 Hrdlička (Dr. Ales) and B. Willis, South American Expedi-
 tion, 674
 Hue (E.) and M. Baudouin, Atavic Characters of Lumbar
 Vertebrae of Neolithic Men, 209
 Hughes (A. Ll.), Emission Velocities of Photo-electrons, 415
 Hughes (Prof. H. J.) and A. T. Safford, Treatise on
 Hydraulics, 82
 Hughes (Prof. T. McKenny), Man of Neanderthal Type in
 the Cambridge Fens, 114
 Hugon (E. C.), Plant for Enrichment of Pyritic Blende
 Concentrates, 338
 Hume (A. O., C.B.), Obituary, 584
 Humphreys (Dr. W. J.), Origin of the "Earth Light," 355;
 Types of Atmospheric Disturbance, 588
 Hun (J. G.) and C. R. MacInnes, Elements of Plane and
 Spherical Trigonometry, 655
 Huntingdon (E.), Death of Forests in Turkestan, 663
 Hurd (W. E.), Wind Charts for N. Indian Ocean, 540
 Hussey (R. B.) and others, Artificial Daylight, 612
 Huxley (Julian S.), Courtship of the Redshank, 259
 Idle (G.) and G. S. Baker, Rolling of Irish Lightships, 124
 Iñiguez (Father), Spectrum of Nova Geminorum, 200
 Irving (Rev. Dr. A.), Remains of Prehistoric Horse in the
 Stort Basin, 218; Boulder Clay in Essex, 399, 632; a
 Point in Geological Nomenclature, 608
 Jack (R.), Magnetic Resolution of the Spectrum Lines of
 Niobium, 468
 Jackson (W. J.), Brachiopoda: Scottish Antarctic Expedi-
 tion, 468
 Jacob (Miss), Friction of Solids on Each Other, 303
 Jacomet (L.), *Matières Tannantes Cuirs*, 84
 Jadin (F.) and A. Astrug, the Presence of Arsenic in some
 Plants used as Food, 157; Presence of Arsenic in some
 Parasitic Plants, 590; Manganese in Plants, 625-6
 Jaekel (Prof. Otto), die Wirbeltiere: eine Uebersicht über
 die fossilen und lebenden Formen, 134; a Palæontological
 Society for Germany, 509
 Jameson (Dr. H. L.), the Ceylon Pearl Oyster and the
 Cestode Theory of Pearl Production, 77
 Jansen (Dr. M.), Achondroplasia, 275
 Jeffree (F. H.), Strength of Reinforced Concrete Piles, 69
 Jehu (Dr. T. J.), Discovery of Fossils in the Chert and
 Black Shale Series at Aberfoyle, 347
 Jelinek's Psychrometer-Tafeln, 5
 Jenkins (Dr. J. T.), Fisheries of Bengal, 20
 Jochelson (Dr.), Kamchatka and the Aleutian Isles, 301
 Johns (the late Rev. C. A.), E. T. Cook, British Trees
 including the Finer Shrubs, 30

- Johnson (Gilbert E.), Free-living Marine Nematodes, 320
 Johnson (Prof. T.), *Heterangium hibernicum*, Sp. nov., from Co. Cork, 150
 Johnston (Sir H. H., G.C.M.G., K.C.B.), Nature and Man in Eastern Africa, Rev. A. L. Kitching, Major J. Stevenson-Hamilton, 297; Views and Reviews, 553
 Johnston (Dr. S. J.), Trematodes from Australian Frogs, 626
 Johnstone (Mr.), Malignant Growths in Fishes, 645
 Jolly (Prof.), Positive Electrical Change in Isolated Nerve, 469
 Jones (Dr. D. W. Carmalt), an Introduction to Therapeutic Inoculation, 60
 Jones (F.), Volatility of Sulphur and its Action on Water, 338
 Jones (F. T.) and Prof. R. R. Tatnall, Laboratory Problems in Physics, 603
 Jones (Prof. H. C.), the Solvate Theory of Solution, 334
 Jones (Dr. Humphrey Owen, F.R.S.) and Mrs. Jones, Obituary, 638
 Jones (John Viriamu), and other Oxford Memories, Prof. E. B. Poulton, F.R.S., 419
 Jones (Prof. O. T.), Geological Structure of Central Wales, 259
 Jones (R. H.), Experimental Domestic Science, 604
 Jordan (W. H.), Principles of Human Nutrition: a Study in Practical Dietics, 422
 Jouniaux (M.), Cryoscopy in Camphor, 417
 Joye (P.) and C. Garnier, Neodymium Compounds, 25
- Kant's gesammelte Schriften, 447
 Kapp (Prof. Gisbert), Electrical Engineering, Prof. O. J. Ferguson, Prof. F. Bedell, Prof. H. W. Morse, G. W. Meyer, 472
 Kauffmann (Oscar), aus Indiens Dschungeln, 627
 Kaye (G. R.), Mediæval References to "Indian Mathematics," 132
 Kaye (W. J.), Butterflies in the Hot Summer of 1911, 510
 Kayser (E.), Influence of Uranium Salts on Alcoholic Ferments, 574
 Keane (Dr. C. A.), Technical Methods of Chemical Analysis, 341
 Keeble (Prof. F.) and Dr. E. F. Armstrong, Distribution of Oxydases in the Plant and their rôle in the Formation of Pigment, 258; the Oxydases of *Cytisus Adami*, 442
 Keith (Prof. A.), Skull of a Neanderthal Type in the Cambridge Fens, 138; Relationship of Neanderthal Man and Pithecanthropus to Modern Man: Hunterian Lectures, 155; Ancient Types of Man, 375
 Kellogg (Prof. V. L.), Distribution of Species of Mallophaga, 611
 Kelly (W. Redfern), New Belfast Graving Dock, 589
 Kelvin (Lord), Proposed Memorial Window to, 508
 Kemp (S. W.), Specimens of Peripatus from the Lower Abor Hills, 365
 Kerr (Dr. A. F. G.), *Dischidia rafflesiana* and *D. nummularia*, 157
 Kerr (Prof. J. G., F.R.S.), Zoology, 627
 Kew (H. W.), Pairing of False Scorpions, 614
 Kielhäuser (Dr. E. A.), Sunshine at Trieste, 151
 King (Dr. F. H.), Farmers of Forty Centuries in China and Japan, 500
 Kirchner (Prof. O. von), Blumen und Insekten, v
 Kirkpatrick (R.), Remarkable Associated Sponge and Alga, 353; *Merlia normani* and Palæozoic Fossils, 502; Nature of Stromatoporoids, 607
 Kirkpatrick (W.), Primitive Exogamy and the Caste System, 132; Comparative Vocabulary of the Language of European Gypsies and Colloquial Hindustani, 365
 Kitching (Rev. A. L.), on the Backwaters of the Nile, 297
 Kitto (E.), Storm of March 4, 34
 Kleeman (R. D.), the Different Internal Energies of a Substance, 208
 Klein (Prof. J. F.), Physical Significance of Entropy, or of the Second Law, 447
 Kloss (C. Boden), Mammals of the Trengganu Archipelago, 178
 Knibbs (G. H.), Statistical Representation, 92
 Knipe (Henry R.), Evolution in the Past, 137
 Knox (Alex.), Death, 428
 Knox (Dr. J.), Physico-Chemical Calculations, 578
 Kövessi (F.), Electrolytic Effect of Continuous Current on Cells of Plants, 495
 Korn (Prof. A.) and Prof. B. Glatzel, Handbuch der Photo-graphie und Telautographie, 110
 Kostinsky (Herr), Faint Stars with Large Proper Motions, 250
 Kränzlin (Fr.), Orchidaceæ, 31
 Kraus (Prof. G.), Boden und Klima auf kleinstem Raum, 186
 Krümmel (Prof. Dr. O.), Handbuch der Ozeanographie, Band ii., 133
 Krupp Establishments at Essen, 643
 Küster (Prof. E.), die Gallen der Pflanzen, 185
 Küstner (Dr.), Lines due to Uranium Radium Emanation in the Spectrum of Nova Geminorum No. 2, 329
 Kusano (S.), Transformation, due to Fungus, of a Flower into Leaf-like Organs, 92
- Lacroix (A.), the Volcanoes of Central Madagascar, 25; Granular Rocks intrusive in Basaltic Breccias of Reunion, 79; Corundum Deposits in Madagascar, 131; the Radio-active Uraniferous Niobotantalotitanates of the Madagascar Pegmatites, 235; the Gem-bearing Pegmatites of Madagascar, 677
 Lake (P.) and Prof. S. H. Reynolds, Geology of Mynydd Gader, Dolgelly, 286
 Lalesco (Prof. T.), Introduction à la Théorie des Équations Intégrales, 499
 Lamb (C. G.), Diptera of the Seychelles, 467
 Lamond (H.), the Gentle Art, 523
 Lamplough (F. E. E.), the Metastable Condition of Under-cooling in Metals, 208
 Landau (M.), Luminous Energy applied to Study of Chemical Analysis, 625
 Lanfranchi (Prof.), Attacked by Sleeping Sickness, 351
 Lanfry (M.), Action of Hydrogen Peroxide on the Bromo-thiophens, 235
 Lang (Andrew), Obituary, A. E. Crawley, 532
 Lang (Prof. W. H., F.R.S.), Branching in the Ophioglossaceæ, 78; Interpretation of the Vascular Anatomy of the Ophioglossaceæ, 260
 Langevin (P.), Comparison of Gaseous and Dissolved Molecules, 53
 Langhans (Dr. V. H.), der Grossteich bei Hirschberg, 488
 Langley (Dr. S. P.), Anniversary at Washington of First Flight of, 326
 Lankester (Sir E. Ray, K.C.B., F.R.S.), Acquired Characters and Stimuli, 61, 167
 Larken (E. P.), Leisure Hours with Nature, 137
 Lattey (R. T.) and H. T. Tizard, Velocities of Ions in Dried Gases, 24
 Laveran (A.), Generalised Infection of Mice by *Leishmania donovani*, 53
 Lay (E. J. S.), the Teachers' Book of Constructive Work for Elementary Schools, 528
 Lazarus-Barlow (Dr. W. S.), Presence of Radium in some Carcinomatous Tumours, 76
 Leach (J. A.), an Australian Bird Book, 85
 Leavitt (Miss), Light Variations of 25 Stars in the Small Magellanic Cloud, 459
 Lebedew (Prof. P. N.), Death, 118
 Leclainche and Vallée (MM.), Specific Treatment of Wounds, 79
 Ledoux (R.), Electrical Properties of Copper-tin Alloys, 495
 Leduc (E.), Sur la Constitution et la Formation du Ciment Portland, 177
 Lee (Prof. F. S.), Scientific Features of Modern Medicine, 575
 Lees (Prof. C. H., F.R.S.), National Physical Laboratory, 386
 Lemoine (G.), Decomposition of Hydrogen Peroxide with Heat, 495
 Lemoine (M. P.), Géologie du Bassin de Paris, 56
 Lemoult (P.), Diphenylethylene Derivatives, 574
 Lempfert (R. G. K.), the Thunderstorm of July 29, 1911, 24
 Lempfert (R. G. K.) and H. W. Braby, Method of Summarising Anemograms, 208
 Lenard (Prof. P.), Jubilee, 381
 Leslie (A. S.), A. E. Shipley, F.R.S., the Grouse in Health and Disease, 658

- Letulle (M.) and L. Nattan-Larrier, Epithelioma of the Embryonic Ectoderm, 209
 Lévy (R.), Hæmolytic caused by Arachnolysin, 574
 Lewellyn (Dr. T. L.), Causes and Prevention of Miners' Nystagmus, 24
 Lewis (A. L.), Megalithic Remains in Gloucestershire, 91
 Lewis (L. P.), Railway Signal Engineering (Mechanical), 549
 Lewis (T.) and S. Chapman, Effect of Magnetism on the Rate of Chronometers, 312
 Leyst (Dr. E.), Diurnal Inequalities of Barometric Pressure in Years of Sun-spot Maximum and Minimum, 564
 Lickley (Dr. J. D.), the Nervous System, 575
 Lifchitz (S.), Range of the Particles in Brownian Motion, 313
 Ligondès (M. du), Condensation of the Solar Nebula in Laplace's Hypothesis, 25
 Lippmann (Gabriel), Biography of, by E. Lebon, 81
 Lister (Arthur, F.R.S.), Gulielma Lister, Monograph of the Mycetozoa, 137
 Lister (Lord), Appeal by Biographer for Letters, 12; Tribute from Sir H. Morris, 66; Will, 143; Bust for R.C.S., 562; Memorial, 536
 Livens (H. M.), Earth and her Children, 32
 Livesey (R. M.), Rolling Stock on Irish Railways, 589
 Ljungström Steam Turbine, 175
 Lloyd (Prof. J. E.), Carnarvonshire, 346
 Lockyer (Sir Norman) and Lady Lockyer, Presentations to, by the British Science Guild, 295
 Lockyer (Dr. W. J. S.), the Total Eclipse of the Sun, April, 1911, at Vavau, Tonga Islands: Royal Institution Discourse, 151; the Solar Eclipse of April 17 as observed near Chavenay, France, 219; the Royal Academy and Nature Study, 244
 Lockyer (Dr. W. J. S.) and F. Maclean, the Solar Eclipse of April 17, 175
 Lohmann (H.), das Nannoplankton und die Zentrifugierung kleinster Wasserproben, 94
 Lones (Dr. T. E.), Aristotle's Researches in Natural Science, 653
 Longstaff (Dr. G. B.), Butterfly-hunting in Many Lands, 291
 Longstaff (Jane), New Lower Carboniferous Gasteropoda, 104
 Looss (Dr. A.), *Agchylostoma duodenale* (Hook-worm), 672
 Loria (Prof. Gino), Poliedri, Curve e Superficie secondo i metodi della Geometria Descrittiva, 655
 Lotsy (J. P.), Vorträge über botanische Stammesgeschichte, 342
 Love (Prof. A. E. H., F.R.S.), Some Problems of Geodynamics, 471
 Lowe (Percy R.), a Naturalist on Desert Islands, 523
 Lowell (Prof. P.), Rotation of Uranus, 277, 312
 Lucas (A. H. S.), Marine Algæ of Australia: Supplementary List, 391
 Lucas (Dr. Keith), the Process of Excitation in Nerve and Muscle: Croonian Lecture, 390
 Ludendorff (Dr.), Spectrum of Nova Geminorum No. 2, 589
 Luizet (M.), Nova Geminorum No. 2, 364
 Lukis (Sir C., C.S.I.), Malaria in India, 505
 Lunge (Prof. G.), Technical Methods of Chemical Analysis, 341
 Lydekker (R., F.R.S.), the Ox and its Kindred, 523; the Horse and its Relatives, 627
 Lydekker (R.), J. T. Cunningham, G. A. Boulenger, and J. A. Thomson, Reptiles, Amphibia, Fishes, and Lower Chordata, 523
 Lyster (Dr. R. A.), Text-book of Hygiene for Teachers, 604
 Maas (Prof. O.) and Dr. O. Renner, Einführung in die Biologie, 393
 McAldowie (Dr.), Prehistoric Time Measurement, 619
 MacBride (Prof. E. W., F.R.S.), Hybrid Sea-urchins, 450; Erratum, 511
 MacCabe (Surgeon-Captain F. F.), Larvicides in Action, 496
 McCallum (Alex.), Midlothian, iii
 McCay (Major D.), Jail Diets of the United Provinces of India, 249
 McClelland (Prof. J. A.) and H. Kennedy, Large Ions in the Atmosphere, 521
 McClelland (Prof. J. A.) and J. J. Nolan, Electric Charge on Rain, 227, 521
 Macdermott (F. A.), Luminous Organs of Insects, 331
 MacDonald (G. W.), Historical Papers on Modern Explosives, 372
 Macdonald (Right Hon. Sir John H. A., K.C.B., F.R.S.), the Road: Past, Present, and Future: Royal Institution Discourse, 127
 MacDougall (Dr. R. S.), Bionomics of the large Larch-Sawfly, 52
 McDougall (Wm.), Body and Mind: a History and Defence of Animism, 396
 McDowall (S. A.), Laboratory Note-book of Physics, 317
 Mace (Herbert), Influence of Weather on Bees, 62
 Mach (Prof. E.), Populär-wissenschaftliche Vorlesungen, 447
 Mach (Prof. E.), Dr. K. Habart, Grundriss der Naturlehre für Gymnasien und Realschulen, 343
 Mackenzie (G. C.), Magnetic Concentration Experiments with Iron Ores of Canada; a Copper Nickel Ore, 378
 Mackenzie (J. E.) and T. M. Finlay, Red Water, 113
 M'Lean (J. C.), Bush-birds of New Zealand, 439
 McLeish (J.), Mineral Resources of Canada: Report, 378
 McLintock (W. F. P.) and T. C. F. Hall, Topaz and Beryl from the Granite of Lundy Island, 443
 Macquaire (Paul), Two Combinations formed by Iodine and the Tyrosine obtained by the Trypsic Hydrolysis of Albuminoid Materials, 183
 Magie (Prof. W. F.), Thermal Relations of Solutions, 334
 Magnan (A.), Yield of Eggs in Ducks submitted to four different Modes of Feeding, 443
 Mahler (P.) and E. Goutal, Use of Oxygen under Pressure for Determination of Total Carbon in Ferro-alloys, 443
 Mair (D. B.), the Teaching of Mathematics, 44, 305; Junior Mathematics, 655
 Mallock (H. R. A., F.R.S.), Aërial Flight: Lecture before the Institute of Civil Engineers, 252
 Malosse (H.), Determination of Density of Camphor by Densities of its Solutions, 443
 Mangan (J.), Presence of Maxillulæ in Larvæ of Dytiscidæ, 260
 Manili Astronomicum Liber II, H. W. Garrod, 239
 Manley (J. J.), Observed Variations in the Temperature Coefficients of a Precision Balance, 233
 Mann (Albert R.), Beginnings in Agriculture, 163
 Mann (Prof. C. R.), Teaching of Physics for Purposes of General Education, 630
 Marcolongo (Prof. Robert), Prof. H. E. Timerding, Theoretische Mechanik, 447
 Markétos (M.), Anhydrous Nitrates of Uranyl and of Zinc, 574
 Marsden (E.) and C. G. Darwin, Transformations of the Active Deposit of Thorium, 285
 Marsh (C. F.), Reinforced Concrete Compression Member Diagram, 549
 Marshall (Dr. F. H. A.), Effects of Castration and Ovariectomy upon Sheep, 24; an American Manual of Farm Livestock, Prof. M. W. Harper, ix
 Martin (C. H.), Protozoa from Sick Soils and Life-cycle of a Monad Flagellate, 442
 Martin (Dr. E. K.), Effects of Ultra-violet Rays on the Eye, 76
 Massee (George), British Fungi: with a Chapter on Lichens, 30
 Massol (G.), Radio-activity of the Mineral Waters of Usson, 625
 Masson (H.), Constituents of Essence of Labdanum, 25
 Mather (Sir W.), Speech at British Science Guild, 296
 Matignon (C.), Magnesium Nitride, 339; Atmospheric Destruction of Lead Antiquities, 417
 Matthews (Dr. F. E.), Production of Synthetic Rubber, 402
 Maurain (C.) and A. Toussaint, Study of Surfaces of Aëroplanes with an Electric Carriage, 53
 Maw (P. Trentham), Complete Yield Tables for British Woodlands and the Finance of British Forestry, 319
 Maxim (Sir Hiram S.), New System for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 542
 Maxwell (Right Hon. Sir Herbert, Bart., F.R.S.), Insect Parasites on Trees, 191; a Flower Sanctuary, 581, 600
 Mayer (A. G.), Ctenophora, or Comb-jellies, 327

- Meade-Waldo (E. G. B.) and others, Preservation of Native Fauna of Great Britain, 416
- Means (J.), Aërial Signalling, 351
- Meek (Prof. A.), Development of the Cod, *Gadus morrhua*, 416
- Mees (Dr. K.), Screens for Artificial Daylight, 612
- Méker (P.), Soude-Potasse-Sels, 84
- Mellor (Dr. E. T.), Geology of a Portion of the Central Witwatersrand, 87
- Melville (Dr. J. Cosmo) and R. Standen, Marine Mollusca: Scottish Antarctic Expedition, 468
- Mendel and Nägeli, H. H. O'Farrell, 477
- Merchant (Dr. F. W.) and C. A. Chant, the Ontario High School Physics, 343; the Ontario High School Laboratory Manual in Physics, 343
- Merlin (M.), Discovery of Greek Bronzes in a Sunken Galley, 119
- Mersey (Lord), Report on the Loss of the *Titanic*, 581
- Merton (T. R.), Changes in Absorption Spectra in different Solvents, 363
- Mesernitsky (P.), Radium Emanation in Mineral Springs, 93
- Meunier (Prof. A.), Microplankton des Mers de Barents et de Kara, 107
- Meyer (Gustav W.), Maschinen und Apparate der Starkstromtechnik, 472
- Meyer (Prof.) and V. F. Hess, Heat Effect of Hönigschmid's Standard Radium Preparations, 543
- Mikkelsen (Capt.) and Mr. Iversen, Arrival, 585
- Mill (Dr. H. R.), Rainfall in British Isles, October, 1911-March, 1912, 198
- Millar (A. H.), Handbook and Guide to Dundee and District, 658
- Milne (Prof. J., F.R.S.), Catalogue of Destructive Earthquakes, 197
- Milne (Rev. J. J.), an Elementary Treatise on Cross-ratio Geometry, 655
- Minchin (Prof.), Simplest Forms of Life and their Origin on Earth, 430
- Mines (G. R.), Electrocardiograms of Cold-blooded Animals, 467
- Möbius (Prof. M.), Mikroskopisches Praktikum für systematische Botanik, 497
- Moir (Dr.), Valency and Chemical Affinity, 469
- Moir (J. Reid), Mammalian Remains at the Base of the Chalky Boulder Clay Formation in Suffolk, 268; Striated Flints from the Chalky Boulder Clay, 607
- Moir (J. Reid) and A. Keith, Human Skeleton found under a Stratum of Chalky Boulder Clay near Ipswich, 259
- Moldenhauer (Dr. W.), Chemisch-technisches Praktikum, 398
- Molinari (Prof. E.), Trattato di Chimica Organica Generale e Applicata all' Industria, 554
- Moore (Prof. Benjamin, F.R.S.), Importance of Substances present in Minute Amount in Food, 567
- Moore (Prof. Willis L.), Forests and Rainfall, 663
- Moreux (l'Abbé), the Eclipse of April 17, 93
- Morgan (Prof. W. C.) and Prof. J. A. Lyman, Chemistry: an Elementary Text-book, 291
- Morison (Miss Rosa), Proposed Memorial to, 466
- Morley (C.), a Revision of the Ichneumonidæ, 627
- Mornet (Prof. D.), les Sciences de la Nature en France au XVIIIe Siècle, 476
- Morris (Sir Henry), on Lord Lister, 66
- Morrow (Miss Genevieve V.), the Ultimate Lines of the Vacuum Tube Spectra of Manganese, Lead, Copper, and Lithium, 157; Influence of Self-induction on the Spark Spectra of the Non-metallic Elements, 495
- Morrow (Dr. J.), Steam Turbine Design, 159
- Morse (Prof. H. W.), Storage Batteries, 472
- Moseley (H. G.), Number of β -particles emitted in Transmutation of Radium, 415
- Moss (Dr. C. E.), British Elms, 275
- Moureu (C.) and A. Lepape, Some Natural Gases Rich in Helium, 573
- Moutier (A.), Measurement of the Arterial Elasticity in Clinical Practice, 25
- Müller (Fritz), Scent-organs of Butterflies, 291
- Müller (P. Th.) and Mlle. V. Guerdijkoff, Refraction and Magnetic Rotation of Mixtures, 25
- Münch (Prof. Wilhelm), University Education in Germany, 518
- Müntz (A.) and H. Gaudechon, Degradation of Phosphatic Manures in the Soil, 599
- Müntz (A.) and E. Lainé, Quantity and Frequency of Watering as depending on Physical Properties of the Soil, 25
- Muir (Dr. T., C.M.G., F.R.S.), Theory of Determinants in the Historical Order of Development, 237; Resultant of a Set of Homogeneous Lineo-linear Equations, 287
- Muirhead (Dr. R. F.), Mechanism for Finding Real Roots of Algebraic Polynomial Equations, 431
- Munro (Dr. Neil Gordon), Prehistoric Japan, 423
- Murray (James), awarded Prize by R.S.E., 428
- Myers (Dr. C. S.), Primitive Music, 78; Text-book of Experimental Psychology, 316
- Naccari (A.), Magnetic Influence in the Solar Rays (Samuel Hunter Christie), 93
- Natanson (Prof.), Energy Content of Material Bodies, 250
- Nathansohn (Prof. A.), Allgemeine Botanik, 654
- Negretti and Zambra (Messrs.), New Continuous Recorder of Direction of Wind, 120
- Němec (Prof. B.), das Problem der Befruchtungsvorgänge und andere zytologische Fragen, viii
- Newall (H. F.), Photography of the Spectrum of Nova Geminorum, 207
- Newlands (A.), Water-power in the Highlands, 328
- Nichols (A. R.), Polyzoa and Echinodermata (Clare Island Survey), 313
- Nicholson and Morley (Messrs.), an Exhaust-gas Calorimeter for Internal Combustion Engines, 383
- Nicoll (Dr. W.), Two New Trematode Parasites from the Indian Cobra, 416
- Nicolle (C.) and others, Susceptibility of the Magot to Trachoma, 574
- Nogier (Ph.), Therapeutic Methods based on Increasing and Decreasing the Activity of the Endocrinal Glands by Physical means, 261
- Noguès (P.), New Kinematograph, 599
- Norris (F. E.), Earthquake of May 23, 377
- Norsa (L.), Electrical Properties of Copper-zinc Alloys, 625
- Nussbaum (M.), G. Karsten, and M. Weber, Lehrbuch der Biologie für Hochschulen, 264
- Nutting (P. G.), Outlines of Applied Optics, 603
- Oberthür (C.), Nomenclature, 610
- O'Brien (Major A.), Shrines of Mohammedan Saints in the Valley of the Indus, 225
- O'Donoghue (C. H.), Circulatory System of the common Grass-snake, 259
- Oersted (H. C.), the Electric Theory of Light, 664
- O'Farrell (H. H.), Mendel and Nägeli, 477
- Ogden (Prof. H. N.), Prof. R. T. Hewlett, Rural Hygiene, 527
- Ogle (Dr. William), Obituary, 172
- Okada (Prof. T.), Geometrical Constructions for Finding Motion of a Cyclone from Shift of Wind, 68
- Omori (Prof. F.), Application of the Seismograph to measure Vibrations of Railway Carriages, 174; Eruptions of the Asama-Yama in 1909-11, 487
- Onnes (Prof. K.), Resistance of Mercury at Low Temperatures, 42; Erratum, 147
- Onnes (Prof.) and Dr. Perrier, Magnetic Properties of Solid Oxygen, 41
- Orléans (Duc d'), Campagne Arctique de 1907, 107
- Orr (Capt. C. W. J.), the Making of Northern Nigeria, 35
- Orton (J. H.), the Slipper Limpet, 641
- Osborn (Prof. H. Fairfield), Scientific Worthies: Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, D.C.L., O.M., F.R.S., 367; Heredity: Harvey Lecture, 382
- Osborn (T. G. B.), Moulds attacking Cotton Goods, 78
- Osmond (Floris), Death, 454
- Ostwald (Prof. Wilhelm), Grundlinien der anorganischen Chemie, 526
- Ostwald (Prof. Wilhelm), Dr. W. W. Taylor, Outlines of General Chemistry, 526
- Oswald (Dr. F.), Roman Camp of Margidunum, Notts, 538
- Owen (E. A.), Passage of Homogeneous Röntgen Rays through Gases, 104

- Oxley (A. E.), Variation of Magnetic Susceptibility with Temperature, 208; Detection of Small Amounts of Polarisation in Light from a Dull Sky, 313, 669
- Oxner (M.), Memory in Marine Fishes, 79; Experiments on Memory in a Fish, *Serranus scriba*, 131
- Pakes (W. C. C.), Dr. A. T. Nankivell, the Science of Hygiene, 604
- Palladin (Prof. W.), Pflanzenphysiologie, 371
- Palmer (Andrew H.), Glazed Frost, 192
- Pariselle (H.), an Unsaturated Alcohol, 104
- Parker (G. W.), Elements of Hydrostatics, 603
- Parkhurst (J. A.), Spectrum of Nova Geminorum No. 2, 329
- Parsons (Sir Charles A., K.C.B.), the Steam Turbine: Rede Lecture, 159
- Pascal (P.), Thermal Analysis of Hexachloroethane and its Binary Mixtures, 157
- Paton (A. W.), Handbook and Guide to Dundee and District, 658
- Patterson (H. S.), R. S. Cripps, and Whytlaw-Gray, Orthobaric Densities and Critical Constants of Xenon, 103
- Patton (Capt. W. S.), Etiology of Kala-Azar, 386
- Peabody (J. E.) and A. E. Hunt, Elementary Plant Biology, 497
- Peach (Dr. B. N.), Report on Rock Specimens dredged by the *Michael Sars*, H.M.S. *Triton*, and H.M.S. *Knight Errant*, 364
- Peake (Harold), Scheme for Anthropological Survey of the British Isles, 173
- Peano (Prof. G.), Definition of Probability, 431
- Pearson (Dr. J.), Ceylon Pearl Banks, 91
- Pearson (Prof. Karl, F.R.S.), the Grammar of Science, 188; Tuberculosis, Heredity, and Environment, 426; Social Problems: their Treatment, 426; Intensity of Natural Selection in Man, 494
- Pearson (R. S.), Commercial Guide to Forest Economic Products of India, 539
- Peddie (Prof. W.), Molecular Theory of Magnetism in Solids, 53
- Pegg (H. V.), Peat for Power Purposes, 590
- Pélabon (H.), Selenide Batteries, 364
- Peppert (Prof. R.), World's Supply of Citric Acid, 226
- Péard (A.), Measurement of small Industrial Standards, 469
- Peringuey (L.), Bushman Sticks decorated in Intaglio and Poker-work, 287
- Perkin (Prof. W. H., F.R.S.) and Prof. F. S. Kipping, F.R.S., Organic Chemistry, 578
- Perkins (J.), das Pflanzenreich: Monimiaceæ, 31
- Perkins (Prof. W. H.), Production of Synthetic Rubber, 402
- Perret (L.), Gold and Platinum Alluvial Deposits in Russia, 337
- Perry (Prof. John, F.R.S.), Forced Vibrations, 424
- Perrycoste (F. H.), Wanted—a Flower Sanctuary, 529, 607
- Petrie (Dr. J. M.), Chemistry of the *Doryphora sassafras* Tree, 391; Hydrocyanic Acid in Plants, 391
- Pettersson (Prof. Otto), Connection between Hydrographical and Meteorological Phenomena, 130
- Phillips' Comparative Series of Wall Atlases, 267
- Phillips (Dr. P.), Viscosity of Carbon Dioxide, 363
- Phillips (Rev. T. E. R.), Red Spot on Jupiter, 487
- Phisalix (Mme.), Immunity of Hedgehog towards Poison of Lizard, 365
- Piaggio (H.), Sign of the Newtonian Potential, 608
- Picado (C.), Nutrition of Bromeliaceæ, 53
- Picard (H. K.), Graphic Method of Illustrating Results of Extraction Tests, 52
- Pickering (Prof.), Magnitude Observations at Harvard, 486
- Pickering (Spencer, F.R.S.), Effect of Grass on Plants, 399
- Pickering (Prof. W.), Orbits of Comets, 617
- Pidduck (F. B.), Wave-problem of Cauchy and Poisson for Finite Depth and slightly Compressible Fluid, 24
- Pinoy (E.), Preservation of Wood, 53
- Pionchon (J.), the Solution of Copper in Water, 157
- Pixell (Miss Helen L. M.), Polychæta from the Pacific Coast of N. America, 416
- Planck (Prof.), Address to German Chemical Society, 406
- Platania (Dr. G.), Sea Oscillations on Coast of Sicily, 68; Temperature of Flowing Lava, 457
- Plimmer (H. G.), Blood Parasites, 77
- Plummer (H. C.), Motions of Stars, 312
- Pluvinel (Comte A. de la B.), Kinematography of the Solar Eclipse of April 17, 260; Observation of Solar Eclipse from a Dirigible, 304
- Pluvinel (A. de la B.) and F. Baldet, Spectrum of Comet 1911c (Brooks), 338
- Pocock (R. I., F.R.S.), a Rare Stag (*Cervus wallichii*) from Nepal, 207; the Distastefulness of *Anosia plexippus*, 243; Local Races of Burchell's Zebra, 399; Antler Growth in the Cervidæ, 416; Taste or Smell in the Laughing Jackass (Dacelo), 425
- Poincaré (Henri), Diffraction of the Hertzian Waves, 131; Note on, 246; Mathematical Lectures at the University of London, 279; Obituary, 535
- Poincaré (H.), H. Vergne, Leçons sur les Hypothèses Cosmogoniques Professées à la Sorbonne, vi
- Pokrowski (Prof.), Observations of Bielid Meteor Shower, 42
- Pollok (Dr. J. H.), Vacuum Tube Spectra of some Non-metallic Elements and Compounds, 495
- Pope (Prof.) and C. S. Gibson, Resolution of Racemic Benzoylalanine, 208
- Pope (Prof.) and J. Read, the Optically Active Hydroxyhydrindamines, 208
- Porter (Dr. Annie), Isle of Wight Bee Disease, 410
- Porter (Prof. A. W.) and Dr. F. W. Edridge Green, Negative After-images and Successive Contrast with pure Spectral Colours, 494
- Porter (Dr. T. C.), Flicker: III, 234; Clouds and Shadows, 244, 348
- Post (Prof. J.) and Prof. B. Neumann, Traité complet d'analyse chimique appliquée aux essais industriels, 423
- Poulton (Prof. E. B., F.R.S.), Distastefulness of *Danaïda (Anosia) Plexippus*, 375; John Viriamu Jones, and other Oxford Memories, 419; Address at Second International Congress of Entomology, 610
- Poynting (Prof. J. H.), Changes in Dimensions of a Steel Wire when Twisted, and Pressure of Distortional Waves in Steel, 103
- Pratt (H. Keay), Boiler Draught, 215
- Prichard (H. Hesketh), "Through Trackless Labrador," 35
- Pring (Dr. J. N.), Laboratory Exercises in Physical Chemistry, 291
- Prior (Dr. G. T.), Minerals of the El Nakhla el Baharia Meteorite, 443
- Pritchard (J. E.), Prof. J. C. Ewart, Discovery of Skull of Ancient Type of Horse, 67
- Prunet (A.), the Japanese Chestnut at the Experimental Station at Lindois, 25
- Przibram (Dr.), Method for Visualising and Projecting on a Screen the Range of α Rays, 543
- Puiseux (M.), Spiral Nebulæ, 228
- Punnett (Prof. R. C.), Mendelism, 215; Coat-colour and Heredity in Rabbits, 467
- Purvis (J. E.) and G. Walker, Effect of Sewage on Formation of Nitrates in Sea-water, 590
- Quain's Elements of Anatomy, 447
- Quénisset (M.), Observations of Jupiter, 617
- Quidor (A.), New Stereoscopic Microscope with a Single Objective, 495
- Quine (Rev. J.), the Isle of Man, 346
- Rabaud (É.), le Transformisme et l'Expérience, 501
- Radais (M.) and A. Sartory, Comparative Toxicity of Various Poisonous Fungi, 547
- Radau (H.), Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania: Cuneiform Texts: Sumerian Hymns and Prayers, 60
- Rainey (Paul J.), Hunting Trip to British East Africa, 674
- Ramsay (Sir Wm., K.C.B., F.R.S.), Lecture in Honour of H. Moissan at the Chemical Society, 12; Speech at British Science Guild, 296; Experiments with Kathode Rays, 502
- Ratner (S.), Mobilities of the Radio-active Atom-ions in Gases, 677
- Ray (Prof. P. C.), Vapour Density of Ammonium Nitrite, 616

- Rayleigh (Lord, O.M., F.R.S.), Self-induction of Electric Currents in a Thin Anchor Ring, 103; the Principle of Reflection in Spectroscopes, 167; Electrical Vibrations on a Thin Anchor Ring, 493
- Raymond (G.), les Merveilles du Monde Sédéral, 459
- Reboul and de Bollemond (MM.), Disintegration of Metals at High Temperatures, 643
- Regan (C. T.), Antarctic Fish Fauna, 521
- Reid (Sir George), the World of Matter and the World of Mind, 251
- Reid (Dr. G. Archdall), Acquired Characters and Stimuli, 113
- Reid (Prof. H. F.), Choice of a Seismograph, 405
- Reid (Prof. L. W.), the Elements of the Theory of Algebraic Numbers, 164
- Reignier (C.), the Starting Period in Aéroplane Motors, 105
- Rennie (Dr. J.), Cestoda of the Scottish Antarctic Expedition, 468
- Renshaw (Graham), More Animal Romances, 264
- Revis (C.), Production of Variation in Physiological Activity of *Bacillus coli* by Use of Malachite Green, 130
- Reynolds (J. H.), Observations of Spiral Nebulæ in Polarised Light, 312
- Reynolds (Prof. M. H.), Veterinary Studies for Agricultural Students, 58
- Reynolds (S.), Sea Fisheries: their Treasures and Toilers, Prof. M. A. Hérubel, B. Miall, 1
- Rheinberg (J. and E.), Micro-spectra Method of Colour Photography, 117, 307
- Rhodes (J. E. W.), Micropetrology for Beginners, 31
- Ribaud (G.), Appearance of New Lines in a Geissler Tube containing Bromine in a Magnetic Field, 261
- Riccò (Prof. A.), Sun-spots and Faculæ in 1911, 42; the Etean Eruption of September, 1911, 149; Solar Prominences, 250, 304, 511; Earthquakes following Eruption of Etna, 458; Halley's Comet, 644
- Richters (F.), Faune des Mousses Arctiques: Tardigrades, 107
- Ridgway (R.), Birds of North and Middle America, 91
- Ridley (H. N., C.M.G., F.R.S.), Spices, 374
- Rignano (E.), Upon the Inheritance of Acquired Characters, 576
- Rimington (Prof. A. Wallace), Colour-Music, 166
- Rindl (M.), a Reversible Photochemical Reaction, 608
- Rischbieth (Dr. H.) and Amy Barrington, Dwarfism, 375
- Ritchie (T. E.), Artificial Daylight, 611
- Roberts (E.), Famous Chemists, 32
- Roberts (Dr. J. H. T.), the Disintegration of Metals at High Temperature, 660
- Robertson-Scott (J. W.), Sugar Beet, 28
- Robinson (John H.), Principles and Practice of Poultry Culture, 240
- Rogers (A. G. L.), Interference with Insect Pests, 610
- Rolfe (F. Percy), Illogical Precision in Mine Reports, 337
- Rolleston (Prof. George), Monograph on, Prof. E. B. Poulton, F.R.S., 419
- Rolston (W. E.), Nova Geminorum, 201; a Brilliant Meteor, 250
- Rosenhain (Dr. Walter), Floris Osmond, 454
- Ross (E. H.), Development of a Leucocytozoon of Guinea-pigs, 51
- Ross (Dr. F. E.), Variation of Latitude, 617
- Ross (Dr. H.), die Pflanzengallen (Cecidien) Mittel- und Nordeuropas, ihre Erreger und Biologie und Bestimmungstabellen, 185
- Ross (H. C.), J. W. Cropper, and E. H. Ross, Further Researches into Induced Cell Reproduction and Cancer, 601
- Ross (Sir Ronald, K.C.B., F.R.S.), Malaria in India, 505
- Ross (Sir R.) and W. Stott, Tables of Statistical Error, 15
- Rotch (Prof. A. Lawrence), Death, 171; Obituary, 195
- Rotch (Prof. A. Lawrence) and A. H. Palmer, Charts of the Atmosphere for Aëronauts and Aviators, 57
- Roth (Prof. W. A.) and Dr. F. Eisenlohr, Refraktometrisches Hilfsbuch, 111
- Rothschild (Hon. N. C.), Nature Reserves, 610
- Rousselet (C. F.), New Rotifera, 77; Four Rotifera from Devil's Lake in N. Dakota, 130
- Rowell (Percy E.), Introduction to General Science with Experiments, 165
- Rowland (Dr.), Plague-vaccine, 178
- Royal-Dawson (W. G.), a Simple Eclipse Experiment, 347
- Royal Observatory Staff, Greenwich, Nova Geminorum, 208
- Royds (R.), Testing of Motive-power Engines, 27
- Rudge (W. A. D.), Variation of Atmospheric Electric Potential with Altitude, 287; Action of Sunlight and of Radium Salts on Glass, 312
- Rusby (Prof. H. H.), Manual of Structural Botany, 497
- Russ (C.), Improved Method for Opsonic-index Estimations, 76
- Russell (Arthur), Minerals and Mineral-localities of Shropshire, 78
- Russell (Dr. B. R. G.), the Manifestation of Active Resistance to the Growth of Implanted Cancer, 258
- Russell (E. J.), Soil Structure and Plant Growth, Prof. G. Kraus, 187
- Russell (Prof. H. N.), Relations between Characteristics of Stars, 335
- Russell (James), Transverse Induction Changes in Demagnetised Iron and the Molecular Theory of Magnetism, 131
- Russell (Rollo), Preventable Cancer, 601
- Ruston (A. G.), Air Pollution by Coal Smoke, 590
- Rutter (W. P.), the Production of Wheat, 135
- Ryan (H.) and T. Nolan, Higher Ketones and Secondary Alcohols derived from Amides of Palmitic and Stearic Acids, 313
- Ryland (H. S.), Optical Experiments, 554
- Ryland (H. S.) and B. T. Lang, an Instrument for Measuring the Distance between the Centres of Rotation of the Two Eyes, 51
- Ryves (Reginald), High Dams of Great Length, 93
- Sabatier (P.) and A. Mailhe, Catalytic Preparation of Phenolic and Diphenylenic Oxides, 599
- Sabatier (Paul) and M. Murat, Direct Addition of Hydrogen by Catalysis to the Benzoic Esters: Preparation of the Hexahydrobenzoic Esters, 183; Preparation of Phenylcyclohexane, &c., 364; Preparation of the four Dicyclohexylpropenes, 625
- Sadow-Pittard (Prof. H. de), Autophanous Eyes, 87
- Salvesen (T. E.), Modern Whaling: Lectures at the R.S.A., 173
- Sampson (Prof. R. A.), a New Treatment of Optical Aberration, 363
- Sanderson (Burdon) and Vitalism, 215
- Satterly (Dr. J.), the Quantities of Radium and Thorium Emanations in the Air of Soils, 208; Junior Heat, 603
- Savage (Dr. William G.), Milk and the Public Health, 422
- Schäfer (Prof. E. A., F.R.S.), Text-book of Microscopic Anatomy, 447
- Schar (Dr. R. F.), Reptilia and Amphibia: Clare Island, 521; the Prairie Wolf and Antarctic Dog, 632
- Scharff (R. F.), Distribution and Origin of Life in America, 523
- Schaumasse (M.), Comet 1911e, 305
- Scheel and Heuse (Drs.), Expansion of Mercury (Callendar and Moss), 69; Specific Heat of Air, 511
- Scheffer (Prof. W.), Wirkungsweise und Gebrauch des Mikroskops und seiner Hilfsapparate, 525
- Sheid (Prof. K.), Vorbereitungsbuch für den Experimentalunterricht in Chemie, 398
- Schleip (Dr. W.), Anleitung zum praktischen Studium niederer Tiere, 264
- Schlich (Sir W., F.R.S.), Forests and Rainfall, 662
- Schmidt (Dr. Heinrich), Wörterbuch der Biologie, 189
- Schmidt (Dr. Johs.), Reproduction and Spawning Places of the Fresh-water Eel, 633
- Schomberg (Major H.), Capture of Pigmy Hippopotamuses, 510
- Schon (H. A. E. C. von), Hydro-electric Practice, 214
- Schorr (Prof.), the Solar Eclipse of April 17, 670; the Hamburg Observatory, 670
- Schröder (O.), Remarkable Effort of an Organism to free itself from a Parasite, 91
- Schubert (J.), Forests and Rainfall, 663
- Schultz (L. G.), the Weather of 1911, 33
- Schuster (Prof.), Address on Opening new Laboratory Buildings at Manchester, 46
- Schwalbe (Prof. C. G.), die Chemie der Cellulose unter

- besonderer Berücksichtigung der Textil- und Zellstoff-industrien, 238
- Schwes (F.), Refraction and Magnetic Rotation of Mixtures, 625
- Scidmore (Miss E. R.), "Adam's Second Eden" (Ceylon), 640
- Slater (W. L.), a History of the Birds of Colorado, 523
- Scott (Dr. D. H.), *Botrychioxylon paradoxum*: a Palaeozoic Fern with Secondary Wood, 234
- Scott (E. Erskine), Tables of Logarithms and Antilogarithms to Five Places, 318
- Scott (E. K.), Manufacture of Nitrates from the Atmosphere, 463, 490
- Scott (Hugh), Coleoptera, Lamellicornia, and Adepaga, 467
- Scott (Dr. T.), Entomotraca of Scottish Antarctic Expedition, 78
- Scott (Prof. W. D.), Increasing Human Efficiency in Business, 629
- Scrivenor (J. B.), Occurrence of Cassiterite and Strüverite in Perak, 443
- Searle (Prof. Arthur), Resignation, 207
- Searle (Dr. G. F. C.), a Simple Viscometer for very Viscous Liquids, 312
- Sedgwick (Rev. S. N.), Moths of the Month and How to Identify Them, 346
- Seitz (Dr. A.), Insect Vision, 611
- Seligman (Dr. R.), Modern Uses of Aluminium, 383
- Senderens (J. B.), Catalytic Dehydration of Fatty Alcohols in the Wet Way, 105; Catalysis of the Cyclanols in the Wet Way by means of Sulphuric Acid, 261; Use of Carbonates in Catalytic Preparation of Ketones, 390
- Senderens (J. B.) and J. Aboulenc, Catalytic Production of Esters of Cyclohexanols, 547
- Senter (Dr. G.), a Text-book of Inorganic Chemistry, 291
- Seton (Ernest T.), the Arctic Prairies: a Canoe Journey to the North of Aylmer Lake, 317
- Seward (Prof. A. C., F.R.S.), Links with the Past in the Plant World, 189; an Early Cretaceous Flora, E. W. Berry, 330
- Sexton (Mrs. E. W.), Brackish-water Amphipoda from Bremerhaven, 559
- Shann (E. W.), Alcyonaria from Singapore: Classification of Nephthyidæ, 130
- Shannon (D. M.), Some Aspects of Diesel Engine Design, 250
- Shattock (S. G.) and L. S. Dudgeon, Certain Results of Drying Non-sporing Bacteria in a Charcoal Liquid Air Vacuum, 76
- Shaw (E. W.) and M. J. Munn, Coal Oil and Gas of Foxburg Quad., Pennsylvania, 617
- Shearer (Dr. Cresswell), Sex Determination in *Dinophilus gyrociliatus*, 40
- Shearer (Cresswell), W. De Morgan, and H. M. Fuchs, Inheritance of Paternal Characters in Echinoid Hybrids, 425
- Sheldon (C.), the Wilderness of the Upper Yukon: a Hunter's Explorations for Wild Sheep, 83
- Shelford (R.), Mimicry amongst the Blattidæ, 77; Death, 428
- Shelly (Dr. C. E.) and E. Stenhouse, Life and Health, 397
- Shennan (Dr. T.), Post Mortems and Morbid Anatomy, 477
- Sherlock (Dr. R. L.) and A. H. Noble, Glacial Origin of the Clay-with-Flints of Buckinghamshire, and a Former Course of the Thames, 104
- Shimek (B.), Physiography of the Prairies, 567
- Shipley (A. E.), Fitting Men for Practical Post-academic Life, 233
- Shiras (G.), Game of Kenai Peninsula, 539
- Shuman Sun-heat Absorber, 122
- Siddall (J. D.), Life-history of some Marine Diatoms from Bournemouth, 234
- Sidgreaves (Rev. W., S.J.), Stonyhurst Observatory, 147; Earthquake of May 23, 348; the Earthquake in Turkey on August 9, 607
- Simpson (Dr. G. C.), Coronæ and Iridescent Clouds, 466
- Simpson (Prof. S.), Effects of Seasonal Changes on Body Temperature, 78
- Sinclair (Upton), Prof. R. T. Hewlett, the Fasting Cure, 527
- Sindall and Bacon, the Testing of Wood Pulp: a Practical Handbook for the Pulp and Paper Trades, 658
- Skinner (S.), New Dew-gauge, 406
- Slocum (Prof.), Parallax of Nova Lacertæ, 176
- Smith (Prof. Alex.), awarded Keith Prize by the R.S.E., 428; International Congress of Applied Chemistry, 503
- Smith (Anna T.), State Universities of France, 571
- Smith (Bernard), Glaciation of the Black Combe District (Cumberland), 156
- Smith (C. Tilden), Clouds and Shadows, 168
- Smith (Geoffrey), Primitive Animals, 31
- Smith (Prof. G. Elliot, F.R.S.), the Human Form, Prof. E. Gaupp, 37; the Nature of Bone, Prof. H. von Eggeling, 59; Left-handedness, Dr. Ewald Stier, 108; Hair of Mammals, Dr. Hans Friedenthal, 419
- Smith (Dr. G. F. Herbert), Gem-stones and their Distinctive Characters, 294
- Smith (Dr. Graham) and others, Isle of Wight Bee Disease, 410
- Smith (H. M.), the Pearl Industry, 640
- Smith (S. W. J.) and J. Guild, Self-demagnetisation of Steel, 546
- Smith (Warren), Philippines Mineral Report, 458
- Snow (E. C.), Influence of Selection and Assortative Mating on Ancestral and Fraternal Correlations of a Mendelian Population, 130
- Soddy (F., F.R.S.), the Chemistry of the Radio-elements, 291
- Solly (Frederick, F.R.S.), the Origin of Radium, 203
- Solly (R. H.), the Rathite Group, 443
- Sommerville (Dr. D. M. J.), Bibliography of Non-Euclidean Geometry, 266
- Sorensen (A. S. M.), Theory of Production of Electrical Oscillations, 276
- Sotome, Hoasi, and Toda (MM.), Photographs of Halley's Comet, 147
- Southern (R.), Clare Island Survey: Platyhelminths, 260
- Speight (Dr.), (1) Glacier Action in the Southern Alps; (2) Artesian Wells of Canterbury, New Zealand, 644
- Spemann (Prof. H.), Development of Eye in Frog Embryos, 327
- Spencer (Prof. Baldwin, C.M.G., F.R.S.) and F. J. Gillen, Across Australia, 608
- Spencer (Dr. J. F.), an Experimental Course of Physical Chemistry, Part i., 291; Part ii., 578
- Spengel (Prof. J. W., Geh. Hofrat), Festschrift zum 60-ten Geburtstage, by his Disciples, 580
- Spielmann (Dr. Percy E.), Anatomy of the Bee's Sting, 348
- Spisar (Dr. K.), Biology, &c., of a Dodder Parasitic on Willows, 307
- Stanton (Dr. T. E.), Law of Comparison for Surface Friction and Eddy-making Resistances in Fluids, 124
- Stapf (Dr. O., F.R.S.), a Florula of São Paulo, Prof. A. Usteri, 420
- Stapley (W.), Cervical Ribs in Man and some Mammals, 469
- Stather (J. W.), Shelly Clay dredged from the Dogger Bank, 442
- Stead (G.), Spectrum of Argon, 467
- Stebbing (E. P.), Stalks in the Himalaya, 81
- Stebbing (Rev. T. R. R.), Vaunthompsonia, 77
- Stebbins (Joel), Variability of Polariss, 669
- Steche (Dr. O.), Hydra and the Hydroids, 91
- Stefansson (Vilhjalmur), a Lost Tribe among the Eskimo, 644
- Stein (Dr. M. Aurel), Ruins of Desert Cathay, 88
- Stephens (Miss Irene), Teaching of Mathematics to Young Children, 34
- Stephens (Miss J.), (1) Cœlenterata, (2) Marine Sponges (Clare Island Survey), 468
- Stephens (Dr. J. W. W.) and Dr. H. B. Fantham, Measurement of *Trypanosoma rhodesiense*, 258
- Steuer (Prof. A.), Leitfaden der Planktonkunde, 94
- Stevenson-Hamilton (Major J.), Animal Life in Africa, 297
- Stier (Dr. Ewald), Untersuchungen über Linkshändigkeit und die funktionellen Differenzen der Hirnhälften: Linkshändigkeit in der deutschen Armee, 108
- Stirling (Prof. Wm.), Gaumont Speaking Kinematograph Films: Royal Institution Discourse, 333
- Stocks (H. B.), Water Analysis for Sanitary and Technical Purposes, 552
- Stonham (C., C.M.G.), Lilian M. Medland, the Birds of the British Islands, 637

- Stopes (Dr. Marie C.), Halo during the Solar Eclipse of April 17, 217; Petrifications of the Earliest European Angiosperms, 258, 641
- Story (Louisa), Organisation of Teaching of Mathematics in Secondary Schools for Girls, 44
- Strachan (James), Beekite in Fossil Shells, 145
- Strasburger (Prof. Eduard), Obituary, 379
- Strauchon (J.), Report on New Zealand Survey Operations, 222
- Stringer (E. B.), a Modified Form of the Lever Fine-adjustment, and a Simple Turn-out Device for the Sub-stage Condenser, 234
- Stromeyer (C. E.), Unity in Nature: an Analogy between Music and Life, 86
- Stroude (F.), the Steinmetz Index for Transformer Iron, Stalloy, and Cast-iron, 466
- Strutt (Hon. R. J.), After-luminosity of Electric Discharge in Hydrogen observed by Hertz, 103; the Ammonia Flame, 320; Chemically Active Modification of Nitrogen, produced by Electric Discharge, 415; Molecular Statistics of some Chemical Actions, 493
- Struve (Dr.), Axis and Compression of Mars, 121
- Suess (Prof. Ed.), la Face de la Terre, 3
- Sumner (E. J.), Chemistry Note-book, 291
- Supan (Prof. A.), Grundzüge der physischen Erdkunde, 500
- Sutton (Dr. J. R.), Some Meteorological Conditions controlling Nocturnal Radiation, 287; Physical Significance of the mean Diurnal Curve of Temperature, 678; Earthquakes of the South African Table-land, 678
- Suzuki (S.), Age of the Earth, 564
- Swanwick (F. T.), Elementary Trigonometry, 655
- Swinburne (J., F.R.S.), Actual Chemistry, Prof. M. de Kay Thompson, 136
- Swinton (A. A. C.), Electricity Supply: Past, Present, and Future: Royal Institution Discourse, 281
- Tansley (A. G.), Types of British Vegetation, 212
- Tattersall (W. M.), Clare Island Survey: Schizopoda and Cumacea, 260
- Taylor (R. L.), Action of Bleaching Agents on the Colouring Matter of Linen, 287
- Taylor (R. L.) and C. Bostock, Action of Dilute Acids on Bleaching Powder, 78
- Thole (F. B.), Qualitative Organic Analysis, 552
- Thomas (H. H.), *Stachypteris Hallei*, a new Jurassic Fern, 467
- Thomas (H. H.) and Prof. O. T. Jones, Pre-Cambrian and Cambrian Rocks of Brawdy, &c., in Pembrokeshire, 259
- Thomas (Oldfield), Mammals from Eastern Asia, 178
- Thomas (Prof. V.) and D. Gauthier, Notions Fondamentales d'Analyse Qualitative, 578
- Thompson (Prof. D'Arcy W., C.B.), Lobsters in the Ægean, 321; the Dundee Meeting of the British Association, 349; the North Sea and its Fisheries, 593; an Introduction to Aristotelian Science, Dr. T. E. Lones, 653
- Thompson (H. Stuart), Sub-alpine Plants, 654
- Thompson (Prof. M. de Kay), Applied Electrochemistry, 136
- Thompson (Prof. Silvanus P., F.R.S.), Optical Science: Presidential Address at Optical Convention, 436; Oersted and the Electric Theory of Light, 664
- Thomson (Harold), the Brazilian Eclipse on October 10, 433
- Thomson (Sir J. J.), Order of Merit, 65
- Thornton (Prof. W. M.), Electrical Conductivity of Bacteria and Rate of Inhibition of Bacteria by Electric Currents, 76; Dielectric Hysteresis at Low Frequencies, 546
- Thorne (Sir Edward, C.B., F.R.S.) and others, a Dictionary of Applied Chemistry, 162
- Thoulet (Prof. J.), Étude Lithologique de Fonds recueillis dans les Parages de la Nouvelle-Zemble, 107
- Thurston (Edgar, C.I.E.), Omens and Superstitions of Southern India, 530
- Tian (A.), Variations in the Radiations of the Quartz Mercury Lamp, 547
- Tikhoff (Dr. G. A.), Nova Geminorum No. 2, 384
- Tilden (Sir W., F.R.S.), Prof. S. Cannizzaro: Memorial Lecture, 455
- Timiriacheff (Prof. C. A.), Miss Anna Chéréméteff, the Life of the Plant, 393
- Timmermans (Dr. Jean), Experimental Researches on the Density of Liquids below 0° C., 157
- Tobler-Wolff (Dr. G.) and Prof. F. Tobler, Anleitung zur mikroskopischen Untersuchung von Pflanzenfasern, 497
- Todd (Dr. T. Wingate), Optical Properties of Muscle, Dr. F. Vlès, 462
- Torii (R.), Aborigines of Formosa, 326
- Townsend (J. S.), Diffusion and Mobility of Ions in a Magnetic Field, 233
- Tremearne (Major A. J. N.), Hammock Dance of Sierra Leone, 510
- Trillat (A.) and M. Fouassier, Influence of Gases dissolved in Water on Vitality of Micro-organisms, 105
- Trotter (A. P.), Alleged Ultra-violet Rays from Filament Lamps, 377
- Trouton (Prof. F. T., F.R.S.), Osmotic and Liquid Membranes, 32
- Turner (Dr. Dawson), Production of the Thorium Emanation and its Use in Therapeutics, 468
- Turner (Prof. H. H., F.R.S.), Tentative Explanation of the "Two Star Streams" in terms of Gravitation, 208; the Great Star Map, 398
- Turner (R. E.), Fossorial Wasps of the Family Scoliidæ, 312
- Tutton (Dr. A. E. H., F.R.S.), Crystallo-chemical Analysis, Prof. E. von Fedorow, 503
- Tyrrell (J. B.), Law of the Paystreak in Placer Deposits, 337
- Unstead (Dr. J. F.), Climatic Limits of Wheat Cultivation in Canada, 457
- Urbain (Prof. G.), Introduction à l'Étude de la Spectrochimie, 211
- Ussher (R. J.), Birds (Clare Island Survey), 313
- Usteri (Prof. A.), Flora der Umgebung der Stadt São Paulo in Brasilien, 421
- Vaillant (P.), Influence of Temperature and of Light on the Conductivity of a Phosphorescent Body, 157
- Vallery (L.), Coagulation of Albumen by Heat, &c., 626
- van t' Hoff, see Hoff
- Vasey (S. A.), Soot: Correction, 42
- Vavon (G.), Catalytic Hydrogenation of Ketones, 599
- Vernon (R. D.), Geology and Palæontology of the Warwickshire Coalfield, 573
- Verschaffelt (J. E.), Physics and Astrophysics, 176
- Vlès (Dr. Fred), Propriétés Optiques des Muscles, 462
- Volk (Ernest), Archaeology of the Delaware Valley, 307
- Volterra (V.), E. Rutherford, R. W. Wood, and C. Barus, Lectures on Physics at the Twentieth Anniversary of Clark University, 528
- Wace (A. J. B.) and M. S. Thompson, Prehistoric Thessaly, 294
- Waddell (Lieut.-Col. L. A., C.B.), Western Culture in Ancient Cathay, Dr. M. Aurel Stein, 88
- Wade (Dr. John), Death, 639
- Wahl (A.) and M. Doll, Preparation of $\alpha\beta$ -diketonic Esters, 313
- Wahl (Dr. W.), Optical Determinations at High Pressures, 363; Optical Investigations of Crystallised Nitrogen, Argon, &c., 494
- Wailles (G. H.), Fresh-water Rhizopoda from the States of N.Y., N.J., and Georgia, and Species from the Seychelles, 286
- Wait (F. G.), Analysis of Canadian Ores, Minerals, &c., 378
- Walcott (Dr. C. D.), Fossils from British Columbia, 334
- Walker (E. W. A.), Variability of Streptococci in Relation to Fermentation Tests, 442
- Walker (Dr. G. T.), Forests and Rainfall in India, 664
- Walker (J.), a Leucocytosoon Infection of the Ostrich, 469
- Walker (T. L.), Molybdenum Ores of Canada, 378
- Wallace (Dr. Alfred Russel, O.M., F.R.S.), Letter to Biology Class of University of Colorado, 12; Biography ("Scientific Worthies"), by Prof. H. F. Osborn, 370
- Wallis (B. C.), a Geography of the World, iii
- Walther (P.), a Mineral from Copper Ore, 322
- Wang (Chung Yu), Bibliography of the Mineral Wealth and Geology of China, 615
- Ward (Prof. R. De C.), Value of Non-instrumental Weather Observations, 92

- Warren (Dr. T. H.), Poetry and Science, 73
 Warth (H.), Red Water, 138
 Wedderburn (E. M.), Temperature Observations in Loch Earn, 131
 Wernher (Sir J., Bart.), Obituary, 301
 West (W.), Clare Island Survey: Fresh-water Algæ, 260; Fresh-water Algæ and Marine Diatoms (Clare Island Survey), 641
 West (W. and Prof. G. S.), a Monograph of the British Desmidiaceæ, 523
 Western (Col. C. M.), the Practical Science of Billiards and its "Pointer," 447
 Weston (F. E.), Elementary Experimental Chemistry, 291
 Wheeler (Eng.-Lieut. S. G., R.N.), Heat and Steam, 319
 Whetham (W. C. D., F.R.S.), the Use of Pedigrees: Royal Institution Discourse, 310
 Whetham (W. C. D., F.R.S., and Catherine D.), Heredity and Society, 263; an Introduction to Eugenics, 263
 Whiddington (R.), Transmission of Kathode Rays through Matter, 52; Velocity of the Secondary Kathode Particles ejected by Röntgen Rays, 52
 Whitehead (Dr. A. N., F.R.S.) and B. Russell, F.R.S., Principia Mathematica, 474
 Whiteley's (Messrs.), New Premises, 432
 Whitmell (C. T.), Mars and a Lunar Atmosphere, 6; Inquiry for Tables of Elliptic Functions of the Second Kind, 555
 Wicksteed (C.), Reciprocating Straight-blade Sawing-machines, 590
 Wien (Prof. W.), Recent Advances made by the Theory of Radiation: Nobel Lecture, 146
 Wilde (Dr. Henry, F.R.S.), Search-lights for the Mercantile Marine, 325, 338
 Wilkinson (P.) and F. W. Cook, Macmillan's Reform Arithmetic, 655
 Willcocks (Sir Wm.), the Garden of Eden and its Restoration, 381
 Williams (F. N.), Prodromus Floræ Britannicæ, 405
 Williamson (R. W.), Dr. A. C. Haddon, F.R.S., the Mafulu Mountain People of British New Guinea, 556
 Willis (Bailey), Geological Structure of the Alps, 145
 Wilson (C. T. R.), Expansion Apparatus for making Visible Tracks of Ionising Particles in Gases, 415
 Wilson (Prof. E.), B. C. Clayton, and A. E. Power, Hysteresis Loss as affected by Magnetic History, 546
 Wilson (Dr. E. A.), British Antarctic Expedition, 302
 Wilson (F. R. L.) and G. W. Hedley, a School Chemistry, 578
 Wilson (L. J.), Brilliant Spots on Mars, 17
 Wilson (W.), the β -Particles reflected by Sheets of Matter of different Thicknesses, 285
 Withers (T. H.), Early Fossil Cirripedes of Genus Scalpellum, 130
 Witting (R.), Tides of the Baltic, 615
 Woglom (Dr. Wm. H.), Nature of the Immune Reaction to Transplanted Cancer in the Rat, 258
 Wolf (Prof. Max), Nova Geminorum No. 2, 121, 250; the new Star 87 1911 Persei, 459
 Wollaston (A. F. R.), Pygmies and Papuans: the Stone Age To-day, 556
 Wollaston (H. J. B.), New Method of Working Vertical Tow-nets, 521
 Wood (Prof. R. W.), Colour Photography of the Moon, 643
 Wood (Prof. T. B.), Food Value of Bread, 568
 Woodcock (H. de Carle), the Doctor and the People, 575
 Woodcock (H. M.), Birds' Nests, 321
 Woodruff (L. L.), Protozoan Fauna of Hay Infusion, 430
 Woodward (Dr. A. S.), Cretaceous Dinosauria in German East Africa, 273
 Worcester (Dean), the Taal Volcano, 431
 Worgitzky (Dr. G.), Lebensfragen aus der heimischen Pflanzenwelt, 497
 Worthington (W. B.), Solar Eclipse Photographs, 251
 Wourtsel (E.), Synthesis of Nitrosyl Chloride and Atomic Weight of Chlorine, 625
 Wright (Fred E.), Methods of Petrographic-microscopic Research, 673
 Wright (Wilbur), Death, 351
 Yates (Lucy H.), the Gardener and the Cook, 111
 Young (J. W. A.), Monographs on Topics of Modern Mathematics Relevant to the Elementary Field, 395
 Young (Prof. W. H., F.R.S.), Fourier Functions, 415, 417; Fourier Constants, 494
 Yule (G. Udny), Methods of Measuring Association between two Attributes, 406
 Zeeman (Prof.), Experiments on Liquid Air in an Electric Field, 93
 Zenneck (Prof. Dr. J.), Jahrbuch der drahtlosen Telegraphie und Telephonie, 400
 Zimmern (Dr. O.), Viscosity of Gases at Low Temperatures, 540
 Zschokke (Prof. F.), die Tiefseefauna der Seen Mitteleuropas, 488

SUBJECT INDEX.

- Abor Hills 365
 Acquired Characters and Stimuli, Sir E. Ray Lankester, K.C.B., F.R.S., 61, 167; Dr. G. Archdall Reid, 112
 Aërial Derby, 381
 Aërial Signalling, J. Means, 351
 Aërolite Fall near St. Albans, Supposed, G. E. Bullen, 34, 62
 Aëronautical Society of Great Britain, History, 406; New Secretary, 508
 Aëronautics: Accident to Mr. Graham Gilmour, 16; Dirigibles and the Cagnola Prize, 39; Charts of the Atmosphere for Aëronauts and Aviators, A. L. Rotch and A. H. Palmer, 57; Centre of Pressure on Triangular Plane Gliders at Small Angles of Incidence, Prof. Herbert Chatley, 138; Naval and Military Aviation, 171; Aërial Flight: James Forrest Lecture, H. R. A. Mallock, F.R.S., 252; Anniversary of Langley's First Successful Flight, 326; Apparatus called Tourne-Sol for observing Ground from an Aëroplane, M. Duchène, 364; Report of the Advisory Committee, 543; "Holes in the Air," 588
 Aëroplanes: Study of the Surfaces of Aëroplanes with an Electric Carriage, C. Maurain and A. Toussaint, 53; the Starting Period in Aëroplane Motors, 105; Aëroplane Stability, 564
 Africa: on the Backwaters of the Nile, Rev. A. L. Kitching, Sir H. H. Johnston, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., 297; Animal Life in Africa, Major J. Stevenson-Hamilton, Sir H. H. Johnston, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., 297
 Agricultural Department for Ireland: Summer Courses of Instruction, 267
 Agricultural Development Fund: Grant of 2500*l.* per annum for three years for Forestry, 171; Grants for Scientific Purposes, 568
 Agricultural Science: Recent Advances: Soil Fertility: Royal Institution Discourse, A. D. Hall, F.R.S., 648
 Agriculture: Experimental Error in Agricultural Investigations, 97; Effects of Self-fertilisation on Maize, Dr. Shull, 127; Beginnings in Agriculture, Albert R. Mann, 163; Kulturpflanzen und Haustiere in ihrem Uebergang aus Asien nach Griechenland und Italien sowie in das übrige Europa, Victor Hehn, O. Schrader, and others, 164; Rural Education in Village Schools, R. J. J. Mackenzie, 311; American Bulletins on Agricultural Subjects, 332; Agriculture in Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Gough, 484; Agricultural Education in the United States Schools, Prof. B. M. Davis, Prof. J. R. Ainsworth-Davis, 489; Farmers of Forty Centuries (China and Japan), Dr. F. H. King, 500; West Indian Reports, 511; Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society, 568; Nutrition of Farm Animals, Messrs. Hart, McCollum, Steenbock, and Humphrey, Dr. Crowther, 618
 Air, Weight of a Litre of, at Geneva, P. A. Guye and others, 417
 Albumen: Precipitation by Potassium Iodomercurate, 626
 Alcohol: an Unsaturated Alcohol, H. Pariselle, 104; Sources whence Alcohol is obtained, J. H. Holland, 226
 Alcoholism in Adults, D. Heron, 563
 Algæ, Clare Island, W. West, 641
 Algebra: Elements of the Theory of Algebraic Numbers, Prof. L. W. Reid, 164; Algebra for Beginners, C. Godfrey, M.V.O., and A. W. Siddons, 602; a School Algebra, H. S. Hall, 602
 Alloys: Effect of Vibration upon Structure, G. H. Gulliver, 364; Use of Oxygen under Pressure for determining Carbon in Ferro-alloys, P. Mahler and E. Goutal, 443; Alloys of Platinum with Aluminium, M. Chouriguine, 547
 Aluminium, Modern Uses and Methods of Fusing, Dr. R. Seligman, 383
 America, Distribution and Origin of Life in, R. F. Scharff, 523
 American Indians, C. M. Barreau, 483
 Americanists, Eighteenth International Congress of, 169; Dr. A. C. Haddon, F.R.S., 357
 Ammonia Flame, the, Alfred C. Egerton, 270; Hon. R. J. Strutt, F.R.S., 320
 Ammonium Nitrite: Vapour Density of, Prof. P. C. Ráy, 616
 Analysts, Remuneration of Public, J. W. Green, 34
 Anaphylaxy and Immunity, M. Arthus, 339
 Anatomy: die äusseren Formen des menschlichen Körpers in ihrem allgemeinen Zustandekommen, Prof. E. Gaupp, Prof. G. Elliot Smith, F.R.S., 37
 Anatomy of Plants: Objects for Naked Eye Study, Dr. V. Arcichovskij, 382
 Ancient Monuments, Bill for Protection of, 247
 Anemones, Aged Sea, Dr. N. Annandale, 607
 Angiosperms, Prof. M. Möbius, Dr. F. Cavers, 497; Petri-factions of the Earliest European, Dr. Marie C. Stopes, 258, 641
 Animal Intelligence, M. N. W., 192
 Animism: Body and Mind: a History and Defence of Animism, Wm. McDougall, 396
 Annuals, Hardy and Half-hardy, C. H. Curtis, Dr. F. Cavers, 497
 Antarctic: the Antarctic Campaign, Dr. Wm. S. Bruce, 17; Norwegian Expedition's Arrival at the South Pole, 43; the *Terra Nova*, 116; the British Antarctic Expedition, 141; 302, 561; Dr. Mawson's Australian Expedition, 196; Palæogeographical Relations, C. Hedley, 416; Fauna collected by the *Scotia*, 521; Glacial Problems of South Victoria Land, T. V. Hodgson, 644
 Anthropology: Skull of a Neanderthal Type in the *Cambridge Fens*, Prof. A. Keith, 138; *Argentina, Tierras coidas* of Monte Hermoso, Col. A. A. Romero, 144; *Biometrika*, 144; Relation between *Pigmentation* and Disease, C. Saunders, 144; Relationship of Neanderthal Man and Pithecanthropus to Modern Man: *Hunterian Lectures* at the R.C.S., Prof. Arthur Keith, 155; *l'Institut de Paléontologie Humaine*, MM. Breuil and Obermaier, 172; Suggested Anthropological Survey of the *British Isles*, H. Peake, 173; Atavic Characters of Lumbar Vertebrae of *Neolithic* Men from Vendrest, E. Hue and M. Baudouin, 209; Prehistoric Human Remains near Cuzco in *Peru*, 226; I. Bowman, G. F. Eaton, 584; *Morphologie Médicale: Etude des quatre types humains*, A. Chaillon and L. MacAuliffe, 237; Human Skeleton found under Chalky Boulder Clay near *Ipswich*, J. Reid Moir and A. Keith, 259; Natives of the *Kharga Oasis* in Libyan Desert, Dr. A. Hrdlicka, 326; Aborigines of *Formosa*, R. Torii, 326; *Ashanti* Skull with defective *Dentition*, Dr. Duckworth, 430; Former *Allemannian* Race in Switzerland, 430; Remarkable *Rock Carvings* of a Male and Female in Dordogne, Dr. G. Lalanne, 483; Encephalus of the Fossil Man of *La Quina*, R. Anthony, 495; *New American Quarterly* "Current Anthropological Literature," 510; *Views and Reviews*, Sir H. Johnston, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., 553; a Lost Tribe among the *Eskimo*, V. Stefansson, 644; *Smithsonian* Expeditions, 674
 Antler Growth in the Cervidæ, R. I. Pocock, 416
 Ants: Invasion of Brisbane by *Pheidole megacephala*, H. Tryon, 587
 Aphasia, K. Heilbronner, 374
 Apples: Bitter Pit in Apples, Prof. Ewart, 511
 Arabia, *see* Uz
 Archaeology:
 America: Archaeology of the Delaware Valley, E. Volk, 307
 Asia: Archaeology and the Government in India, 38; Hittite History and Excavation at the Mound of Jerablus, D. G. Hogarth, 91; Prehistoric Fishing in Japan, K. Kishinouye, 144; Babylonian Tablet of Sargon, 538; Babylon, 586; Carchemish Excavations, 563
 Britain: Distribution of Early Bronze Settlements in Britain, O. G. S. Crawford, 40; Megalithic Remains in Gloucestershire, A. L. Lewis, 91; Interpretation of the Origin of the Grave-mounds of New Grange and Gavrinis, J. Dechelette, 172; Pottery Making without Wheel or regular Kiln, Rev. J. W. Hayes, 225;

Archæology (*continued*):

Classification of Prehistoric British Stone Industries, W. J. L. Abbott, 248; the Girdle Stanes of Dumfriesshire and Astronomy, G. R. Goldsbrough, 328; Exhibition of Prehistoric Implements at Halifax, H. P. Kendall and H. Ling Roth, 382; Roman and pre-Roman Exhibits at Croydon, E. A. Martin, 510; Roman Camp at Margidunum, Notts, Dr. F. Oswald, 538; Transition between Stone and Metal Implements, O. Bates, 563; Prehistoric Time Measurement in Britain, Dr. McAldowie, 619; Egyptian Research Account, Prof. Petrie, 196
France: Rock Carvings in Seine-et-Oise, G. Courty, 586
See also Copper and Greece
Arctic: Campagne Arctique de 1907, Duc d'Orléans, Prof. Herdman, F.R.S., 107; State of Ice in Arctic Seas in 1911, 145; German Expedition for the North-east Passage, 428; Return of Capt. Mikkelsen and Mr. Iversen, 561; *see also* Canada and Crocker Land
Aristotle's Researches in Natural Science, Dr. T. E. Lones, Prof. D'Arcy W. Thompson, C.B., F.R.S., 653
Arithmetic: Examples in Arithmetic, H. S. Hall and F. H. Stevens, 602; Macmillan's Reform Arithmetic, P. Wilkinson and F. W. Cook, 655
Arsenic in some Plants used as Food, F. Jadin and A. Astruc, 157; *Arsenic in Parasitic Plants and their Hosts*, F. Jadin and A. Astruc, 599
Arterial Elasticity, Measurement of, in Clinical Practice, A. Moutier, 25
Aseptic Life, Experiments with Pure Cultures following on, M. Cohendy, 79
Asia, Central: Western Culture in Ancient Cathay, Dr. M. Aurel Stein, Lieut.-Col. L. A. Waddell, 89
Asiatic Society of Bengal, 322
Aster, chinensis, Bacterial Disease of, Dr. G. L. Pavarino, 642
Asterias rubens, *see* Embryology
Astrology: Manili Astronomicum Liber II, H. W. Garrod, Dr. J. K. Fotheringham, 239
Astronomer of Ireland, Royal, 248
Astronomy (*see also* Stars and Sun):
 Astronomical Societies, 541
Astronomische Nachrichten, New Supplement, 617
Comets: Cometary Phenomena, Prof. K. Bohlin, 17; Cometary Statistics, M. Borrelly, 199; Spectra, Prof. A. Fowler, 227; Orbits, Prof. W. Pickering, 617; a Comet-like Object, Mr. Hansen, 277; *Halley's Comet*, Photographs, MM. Sotome, Hoasi, Toda, 147; Prof. Riccò, 644; *Holmes's Comet*, Dr. Zwiers, 644; *Comet 1911c (Brooks)*, Prof. Millosevich, 42, A. de la B. Pluvinel and F. Baldet, 338, Prof. Barnard, 616; *Comet 1911e (Borrelly)*, M. Schaumasse, 305; *Comet 1911f (Quéniisset)*, Elements, Dr. Ebell, 42; *Comet 1911h (Schaumasse)*, Dr. Schaumasse, 42
Earth Light, Origin, Dr. W. J. Humphreys, 355
Herschel, Sir W., Sir G. H. Darwin, F.R.S., 620, 645; William Herschel and his "Desertion," Dr. J. L. E. Dreyer, 660
Instruments: Photographic Transit, Prof. S. Hirayama, 176; Temperature Regulator in Use with the Stellar Spectrograph of Paris Observatory, M. Hamy, 260; Reflecting Meridian Circle for Minor Planets, G. Bigourdan, 390
Laplace's Hypothesis, Condensation of the Solar Nebula in, 25
Latitude Variation, Prof. Albrecht, 512
Measurement of Celestial Distances, A. R. Hinks, 329
Meteors: Meteor-showers, F.R.A.S., 8; J. R. Henry, 8, 218, 321, 581, 660; Bielsids, Prof. Pokrowski, 42; Analysis of Stone Meteorites, O. C. Farrington, 94; the El Nakhla el Baharia Meteorite, Dr. John Ball, Sir N. Lockyer, K.C.B., F.R.S., 147; a Daylight Meteor, F. J. Gibbons, 147; W. F. Bushell and others, 175; a Brilliant Meteor, Mr. Rolston, 250; May Aquarids and Halley's Comet, C. Hoffmeister, 320
Moon: Lunar Craters, J. Escard, 625; Colour Photography of the Moon, Prof. R. W. Wood, 643
Nebulae: Spiral Nebulae, M. Puiseux, 228; Observations of Spiral Nebulae in Polarised Light, J. H. Reynolds, 312
Observatories: Stonyhurst Observatory, Father Sid-

greaves, 147; United States Naval Observatory, 304; Royal Observatory, Greenwich, 356; Transvaal re-named Union, 380; Cape, S. S. Hough, 512; Oxford, Prof. Turner, 512; 5-ft. Reflector for Argentine, at Cordoba, 482; Lyons: new Director, 666; Hamburg, Prof. Schorr, 670
Personal Errors in Transit Observations, S. S. Hough, 566
Planet Jupiter: Position of Red Spot, Rev. T. E. R. Phillips, 487; Prof. Barnard, Herr Archenhold, 589; M. Quéniisset, 617
Planet Mars: Mars and a Lunar Atmosphere, C. T. Whitmell, 6, "the Writer of the Note," 62; Brilliant Spots on Mars, L. J. Wilson, 17; Axis and Compression, Dr. Struve, 121
Planet Saturn: Observations, Dr. H. E. Lau, 199
Planet Uranus: Spectroscopic Discovery of Rotation of, Prof. P. Lowell, 277, 312
Planets, Minor: Planet 1911 M.T., Dr. Palisa, 356; Messrs. Haynes and Pitman, Prof. Franz, 384
Astrophysics: Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, Mr. Abbot's Report, 42; Physics and Astrophysics, J. E. Verschaffelt, 176
Atmosphere: Weight of a Normal Litre of Air at Geneva, P. A. Guye and others, 364; Highest Strata of Earth's Atmosphere, Dr. A. Wegener, 485; Large Ions in the Atmosphere, J. A. McClelland and H. Kennedy, 521; Diurnal Inequalities of Barometric Pressure in Years of Sunspot Maximum and Minimum, Dr. E. Leyst, 564; Spectroscopic Determination of Aqueous Vapour in the Atmosphere, F. E. Fowle, 566; Types of Atmospheric Disturbances, Prof. W. J. Humphreys, 588
Atomic Weights: Attempt to Determine some Atomic Weights, H. Pecheux, 364; Calculation by Hinrichs's Method, H. Le Chatelier, 547; Atomic Weight of Chlorine, E. Wourzel, 625; G. Baume and F. L. Perrot, 677; of Uranium, P. Lebeau, 547
Australia: Rainfall Map, 92; University of Western Australia, 572; Across Australia, Prof. Baldwin Spencer, C.M.G., F.R.S., and F. J. Gillen, Dr. A. C. Haddon, F.R.S., 608; Mining Operations, 642
Australia, N.E., Physiography of, Dr. J. V. Danes, 567
Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania: Series A: Cuneiform Texts: Sumerian Hymns and Prayers, H. Radau, 60; Babylonian Section of Museum of University of Pennsylvania, 586
Bacillus coli, Variation in Physiological Activity of, due to Malachite-green, C. Revis, 130; *Bacillus coli communis*, Chemical Action on Glucose of a Variety of, Dr. A. Harden and W. J. Penfold, 442
Bacteriology: Disintegrating Bacteria and other Organic Cells, J. E. Barnard, 21; Bacterial Production of Acetyl-methylcarbinol and 2:3-butylene Glycol, Dr. A. Harden and Dorothy Norris, 51; Results of Drying Non-sporing Bacteria in a Charcoal Liquid Air Vacuum, S. G. Shattock and L. S. Dudgeon, 76; Electrical Conductivity of Bacteria and Rate of Inhibition of Bacteria by Electric Currents, Prof. W. M. Thornton, 76; Selective Media, C. Revis, 586; *Azotobacter chroococcum*, Dr. Prazmowski, 587; Bacterial Disease of Aster, Dr. G. L. Pavarino, 642
Bathyrheometer, a Self-recording, Y. Delage, 209
Batteries, Storage, Prof. H. W. Morse, Prof. G. Kapp, 472
Battersea Polytechnic, 233
Bees: Influence of Weather on Bees, Herbert Mace, 62; Anatomy of the Bee's Sting, Dr. Percy E. Spielmann, 348; Parasitic Hymenoptera from N.S.W., P. Cameron, 391; Isle of Wight Bee Disease, Drs. Graham Smith, Fantham, Annie Porter and Malden, and G. W. Bullamore, 410
Beyond that is Within, the, É. Boutroux, 630
Biography: Savants du Jour: Gabriel Lippmann, E. Lebon, 81
Biology:
 General: Wörterbuch der Biologie, Dr. Heinrich Schmidt, 189; Applied Biology: an Elementary Text-book, Prof. M. A. Bigelow and Anna N. Bigelow, 190; Lehrbuch der Biologie für Hochschulen, M. Nussbaum, G. Karsten, and M. Weber, 264; Outlines of Evolutionary

Biology (continued):

- Biology, Prof. A. Dendy, F.R.S., 393; *Lebensweise und Organisation: eine Einführung in die Biologie der wirbellosen Tiere*, Prof. P. Deegener, 393; *Einführung in die Biologie*, Prof. O. Maas and Dr. O. Renner, 393; *the Life of the Plant*, Prof. C. A. Timiriazeff, Miss Anna Chéréméteff, 393
- Particular:** Biology of the Danube Delta and Inundation Area, Dr. G. Antipa, 40; *Acquired Characters and Stimuli*, Sir E. Ray Lankester, K.C.B., F.R.S., 61, 167, Dr. A. G. Reid, 112; *Fresh-water Rhizopoda from the States of New York, &c.*, G. H. Wailes, 286; a *Dodder parasitic on Willows*, Dr. K. Spisar, 307; *Symbiotic Union of an Alga with the Roots of *Cycas revoluta**, J. Hořejší, 307; *Polyzoa and Echinodermata: Clare Island Survey*, A. R. Nichols, 313; *Caradocian Cystidea from Girvan*, Dr. F. A. Bather, 364; *Distribution and Origin of Life in America*, R. F. Scharff, 523; *Biological Aspects of Human Problems*, C. A. Herter, 576; *Biology of Panama Canal Zone: Smithsonian Expedition*, 674
- Marine:** *Scottish Antarctic Expedition: Entomostraca*, Dr. Thomas Scott; *Cephalopoda*, Dr. W. E. Hoyle; *Tunicata*, Prof. W. A. Herdman, all 78; *Campagne Arctique de 1907: Duc d'Orléans, J. A. Grieg, P. Dautenberg and H. Fischer, F. Richters, Prof. A. Meunier, Prof. Herdman, F.R.S., 107; Alcyonaria from Singapore and Classification of Nephthyidae*, E. W. Shann, 130; *Port Erin Biological Station*, 150; *Report of St. Diego Station*, W. E. Ritter, 173; *New Free Crinoids found in the Indo-Malay Archipelago by the Siboga*, 197; *Life-history of some Marine Diatoms from Bournemouth*, 234; *Free-living Marine Nematodes*, Gilbert E. Johnson, 320; *Marine Algae of Australia*, A. H. S. Lucas, 391; *the British Tunicata*, J. Alder and A. Hancock, J. Hopkinson, 523; *see also* Tow-nets
- Biometrika, 144
Bird Notes, 231, 439
Birds: *Aleutian Islands: Smithsonian Expedition*, 675; *America*, Catalogue of Birds of N. and Middle, R. Ridgway, 91; *Australian Bird Book: a Pocket-book for Field Use*, J. A. Leach, 85; *British: the Birds of the British Islands*, C. Stonham, C.M.G., Lillian M. Medland, 637; *Terek Sandpiper in Britain*, 641; *Bull-finch*, *Damage to Fruit by*, W. E. Collinge, 484; *Clare Island Survey*, R. J. Ussher, 313; *Colorado*, a History of the Birds of, W. L. Sclater, 523; *the Grouse in Health and Disease*, Committee's Report, 658; *Hawaiian Collection for California University*, Miss A. M. Alexander, 562; *Italy: Appeal for more stringent Legal Protection in*, Prof. G. Martorelli, 588; *Laughing Jackass*, Taste or Smell in the, R. I. Pocock, F.R.S., 425; *T. Muffett* (d. 1604), Writings of, W. H. Mullens, 67; *Owl*, Little, and *Game-poaching*, Mr. Meade-Waldo, 510; *Penguin*, Adélie, L. Gain, 483; *Redshank*, Courtship of the, Julian S. Huxley, 259; *Titmice Nests in Metropolitan Gas Co.'s Lamp*, 616; *Wild Birds*, How to Attract and Protect, M. Hiesemann, Emma S. Buchheim, 190
Birds' Egg Diary, 405
Birth Registration Systems, 668
Bleaching Powder, Action of Dilute Acids on, R. L. Taylor and C. Bostock, 78
Blood, Normal Manganese in the, G. Bertrand and F. Medigreceanu, 183; *Electric Charge of Red Corpuscles*, P. Girard, 599
Boats and Davits Committee: Notice to Inventors, 613; Boats on Ships, 661
Boiler Draught, H. Keay Pratt, 215
Bones: *der Aufbau der Skeletteile in den freien Gliedmassen der Wirbeltiere: Untersuchungen in urdolen Amphibien*, Prof. H. von Eggeling, Prof. G. Elliot Smith, F.R.S., 59; *Osteo-arthritis in the Polished Stone Age*, M. Baudouin, 339;
Books: *Forthcoming Books of Science*, 46; *New Editions*, 384; *Cheap Books on Science*, 407
Boron as a Constituent of Animal Tissues, G. Bertrand and H. Agulhon, 574
Botanic Gardens, Peradeniya, 90; Missouri, 90
Botany:
General: Practical Botany, Dr. F. Cavers, 5; *das Pflanzenreich: Araceae-Lasioidae*, A. Engler: *Moni-*
miaceae, J. Perkins: *Orchidaceae*, Fr. Kränzlin, 31; *Links with the Past in the Plant World*, Prof. A. C. Seward, F.R.S., 189; *Plant Life: a Text-book*, Prof. Eug. Warming, Metta M. Rehling and Elizabeth M. Thomas, 213; *Wild Flowers as they Grow: Photographed in Colours Direct from Nature*, H. Essenhigh Corke, G. C. Nuttall, Dr. F. Cavers, 213, 497; *Plant Life and Evolution*, Prof. D. H. Campbell, 213; *an Intermediate Text-book of Botany*, Ernest Evans, 213; *Vorträge über botanische Stammesgeschichte*, J. P. Lotsy, 342; *Elementary Plant Biology*, J. E. Peabody and A. E. Hunt; *Manual of Structural Botany*, Prof. H. H. Rusby; *Microskopisches Praktikum für systematische Botanik*, Prof. M. Möbius; *Lebensfragen aus der heimischen Pflanzenwelt*, Dr. G. Worgitzky; *Anleitung zur mikroskopischen Untersuchung von Pflanzenfasern*, Dr. G. Tobler-Wolf and Prof. F. Tobler, all Dr. F. Cavers, 497; *Plant-breeding*, Prof. J. M. Coulter, 510; *a Text-book of Botany for Colleges and Universities*, Drs. J. M. Coulter, C. R. Barnes, and H. C. Cowles, 654; *Sub-alpine Plants*, H. Stuart Thompson, 654; *Botany*, G. S. Boulger, 654; *Allgemeine Botanik*, Prof. A. Nathansohn, 654; *see also* Ecology
- Special:** *Angiospermic Plants, Endosperm of*, Prof. Coulter, 145; *Angiosperms*, Prof. M. Möbius, Dr. F. Cavers, 497; *Australia*, Additions to Flora of W. and N.W., Dr. Karel Domin, 286; *Breeding of Plants*, Prof. J. M. Coulter, 510; *Britain: Prodromus Florae Britannicae*, F. N. Williams, 405; *a Flower Sanctuary*, F. H. Perrycoyte, 548, 607; *Right Hon. Sir H. Maxwell, Bart., F.R.S., 581; Right Hon. Sir Ed. Fry, G.C.B., F.R.S., 661; Brasilien*, Flora der Umgebung der Stadt São Paulo in, Prof. A. Usteri, Dr. O. Stapf, F.R.S., 420; *Calamites*, Internodes of, Prof. P. Groom, 77; *China: Flora of Kwangtung*, E. T. Dunn and W. J. Tutchter, 275; *Clare Island Survey: Fresh-water Algae*, W. West, 260; *Marine Algae*, A. D. Cotton, 521; *Desmidiaceae*, a Monograph of the British, W. West and Prof. G. S. West, 523; *Dischidia rafflesiana* and *D. nummularia* and the Ants harboured by them, Dr. A. F. G. Kerr, 157; *Koreana*, Flora, T. Nakai, 564; *La Mortola Garden Plants*, A. Berger, 510; *Ophioglossaceae*, Branching in the, Prof. W. H. Lang, F.R.S., 78; *Ophioglossaceae*, Interpretation of the Vascular Anatomy of, Prof. W. H. Lang, 260; *Orchid Gastrodia and Fungus Armillaria*, Prof. S. Kusano, 484; *Photosynthesis and Stomatal Aperture*, W. L. Balls, 555; *Pistia stratiotes*, Re-discovery in Nile Delta of, Prof. G. Schweinfurth, 67; *Polypodium from Panama*, New, R. Mason, 14; *Sterile Media*, Method for Culture of the Higher Plants in, R. Combes, 157; *Transformation of Flower into Leaf-like Organs due to Fungus*, 92; *Water-lily*, N. American, Messrs. Miller and Standley, 587
Boulder Clay in Essex, Rev. Dr. A. Irving, 632
Bread, Prof. T. B. Wood, 568
British Association Dundee Meeting, Prof. D'Arcy W. Thompson, C.B., 349, 480; Erratum, 511; *Popular Lectures*, 508; *Geography*, Section E, 508; *List of Foreign Guests*, 612; *Handbook and Guide to Dundee and District*, 658; *Note*, 665
British Columbia, How to Make an Orchard in, J. T. Bealby, Dr. F. Cavers, 497
British Medical Association, 567
British Museum Reading-room Handbook, 643
British Science Guild, 295
Brownian Motion, Range of the Particles in the, S. Lifchitz, 313
Building: Messrs. Whiteley's New Premises, 432; *Building Stones: Handbuch der bautechnischen Gesteinsprüfung*, Prof. J. Hirschwald, 344
Bull-finch, *Damage to Fruit*, W. E. Collinge, 484
Bushmen, Namaqualand, Miss L. Currlé, 677
Butterflies: *the Distastefulness of Anosia plexippus*, A. M. Banta, R. I. Pocock, F.R.S., 243, Prof. E. B. Poulton, F.R.S., 375; *Butterfly-hunting in Many Lands*, Dr. G. B. Longstaff, 291; *Scent-organs of Butterflies and Moths*, F. Müller, 291; *Butterfly Migration in Relation to Mimicry*, J. Evershed, 659
Cacti as Stock Food, 332

- Caffeine, Rôle of, in Cardiac Action of Coffee, H. Busquet, 625
- Calculus for Beginners, W. M. Baker, 602
- Calcutta, *see* India
- Calendar Reform in States of the Greek Church, V. Anestin, 46
- Calorimeter, an Exhaust-gas, for Internal Combustion Engines, Messrs. Nicholson and Morley, 383
- Cambridge University, the Reform Movement, 280
- Camphor, Density in Solution, H. Malosse, 443
- Canada: Canadian Naval Service Report, 14; Canadian Rockies, the, Prof. A. P. Coleman, F.R.S., 35; Maxima and Minima of Temperature, 276; the Arctic Prairies, Ernest T. Seton, 317
- Canary Island Gomera, 484
- Cancer: Manifestation of Active Resistance to the Growth of Implanted Cancer, Dr. B. R. G. Russell, 258; Nature of the Immune Reaction to Transplanted Cancer in the Rat, Dr. Wm. H. Woglom, 258; Imperial Cancer Research Fund, 531; the Cause of Cancer, J. J. Clarke, 601; Preventable Cancer, Rollo Russell, 601; Further Researches into Induced Cell-reproduction and Cancer, H. C. Ross, J. W. Cropper, and E. H. Ross, 601; Local Incidence of Cancer, C. E. Green, 601
- Cape Observatory, S. S. Hough, 512
- Carbon and Nitrogen, New Compound of, G. Darzens, 303
- Caridina, Classification of the Genus, and the Extraordinary Variations of a Species, *Caridina brevisrostris*, E. L. Bouvier, 183
- Carnarvonshire, Prof. J. E. Lloyd, 346
- Carnegie Foundation Report, 156
- Castration and Ovariectomy, Effects upon Sheep, F. H. A. Marshall, 24
- Catenary, Measurement by Metal Tapes and Wires in, Prof. O. Henrici, F.R.S., and Capt. E. O. Henrici, R.E., 479
- Celluloid Fire at Moor Lane, London, 616
- Cellulose, die Chemie der, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Textil- und Zellstoff-industrien, Prof. C. G. Schwalbe, 238; *see also* Wood pulp
- Cement, Portland, E. Leduc, 177
- Ceramics, Ancient Egyptian, W. Burton, 641
- Cervidæ, Antler Growth in the, R. I. Pocock, 416
- Ceylon Pearl and other Fisheries, Dr. J. Pearson, 91; "Adam's Second Eden," Miss E. R. Scidmore, 640
- Charts, Ocean and Great Lake, of U.S. Weather Bureau, 354
- Chemical Change, Variation of Rate with Temperature, A. Vernon Harcourt, 285
- Chemical Engineers, Transactions of the American Institute of, 549
- Chemical Law of Mass Action, H. le Chatelier, 417
- Chemical Research and National Welfare, S.P.C.K., 406
- Chemical Society, 12; Address to German Chemical Society, Prof. Planck, 406
- Chemical World*, 540
- Chemistry:
- Text-books (see also below):* the Story of the Five Elements, E. W. Edmunds and J. B. Hoblyn, 60; Chemistry: an Elementary Text-book, Profs. W. C. Morgan and J. A. Lyman, 291; Outlines of General Chemistry, Prof. W. Ostwald, 526
- Special:* Isomorphism of the Acid Tartrates and Tartaric acids of Potassium, Rubidium, and Cæsium, T. V. Barker, 443; Action of Emulsion upon Salicin in Alcoholic Solution, Ed. Bourquelot and M. Bridel, 183; Solid Solutions of Iodine in Cyclic Hydrocarbons, G. Bruni and M. Amadori, 486; the Acyclic Acid Aldehydes, E. Carrière, 261; Isolation of two Stereoisomers of Symmetrical Dichloroethylene, G. Chavanne, 120; Oxidation of Parathymol, H. Cousin and H. Hérissée, 574; Oxyhydrofuranes, G. Dupont, 53; Action of Hydrogen Peroxide upon Lactic Acid and Glucose, J. Effront, 339; Water-cyclohexanol, R. de Forcrand, 547; Direct Production of Urea at expense of Albuminoids either by Oxidation or Hydrolysis, R. Fosse, 261; Frequent Accompaniment of Rupture of a Double-bond by Trans-substitution, Prof. Frankland, 276; Preparation of 1:5-diphenyl-2:2:4:4-tetra-methyl-3-pentanone, &c., A. Hallrer, 53; Formula of Organomagnesium Compounds, P. Jolibois, 625; Action of Hydrogen Peroxide on the Bromothiophens, M. Lanfry, 235; Velocity of Decomposition of Hydrogen Peroxide under the Influence of Heat, G. Lemoine, 495; Diphenylethylene Derivatives, P. Lemoult, 574; Nitrates, Anhydrous, of Uranyl and of Zinc, M. Markétos, 574; Constituents of Essence of Labdanum, H. Masson, 25; Preparation and Heat of Formation of Magnesium Nitride, C. Matignon, 339; Higher Ketones and Secondary Alcohols derived from Amides of Palmitic and Stearic Acids, H. Ryan and T. Nolan, 313; Preparation of Phenylcyclohexane, &c., P. Sabatier and M. Murat, 364; Hydrocarbons: Preparation of the four Dicyclohexylpropanes, P. Sabatier and M. Murat, 625; Molecular Statistics of some Chemical Actions, Hon. R. J. Strutt, 493; Preparation of the α -diketonic Esters, A. Wahl and M. Doll, 313
- Analytical:* Huiles Minérales, H. Delahaye; Matières Tannantes Cuir, L. Jacomet; Soude-Potasse-Sels, P. Méker; Alcools: Alcool, Alcool Dénaturé, Dénaturants, L. Calvet; les Matières Cellulosiques, Prof. F. J. G. Beltzer and J. Persoz, *all* 84; *Traité Complet d'Analyse Chimique appliquée aux Essais Industriels*, Prof. J. Post and Prof. B. Neumann, 109; Thermal Analysis of Hexachloroethane and its Binary Mixtures, P. Pascal, 157; *Traité complet d'analyse chimique appliquée aux essais industriels*, Prof. J. Post and Prof. B. Neumann, 423; an Introduction to Quantitative Analysis, Dr. S. J. M. Auld, 552; Volumetric Analysis for Students of Pharmaceutical and General Chemistry, C. H. Hampshire, 552; Qualitative Organic Analysis, F. B. Thole, 552; Methods of Air Analysis, Dr. J. S. Haldane, F.R.S., 552; Notions Fondamentales d'Analyse Qualitative, Prof. V. Thomas and D. Gauthier, 578; *see also* Water
- Applied:* a Dictionary of Applied Chemistry, Sir Edward Thorpe, C.B., F.R.S., and others, 162; International Congress, 248, Prof. Alex. Smith, 503
- Catalytic:* Catalytic Dehydration of Fatty Alcohols in the Wet Way by Sulphuric Acid, J. B. Senderens, 105; Direct Addition of Hydrogen by Catalysis to the Benzoic Esters: Preparation of the Hexahydrobenzoic Esters, Paul Sabatier and M. Murat, 183; Catalysis of the Cyclanols in the Wet Way by means of Sulphuric Acid, J. B. Senderens, 261; Use of Carbonates in Catalytic Preparation of Ketones, J. B. Senderens, 390; Catalytic Production of Esters of Cyclohexanol, J. B. Senderens and J. Aboulenc, 547; Catalytic Preparation of Phenolic Oxides, P. Sabatier and A. Mailhe, 599; Catalytic Hydrogenation of Ketones, G. Vavon, 599
- Experimental:* Elementary Experimental Chemistry, F. E. Weston, 291; Vorbereitungsbuch für die Experimentalunterricht in Chemie, Prof. K. Scheid, 398
- Industrial:* Manufacture of Nitrates from the Atmosphere, E. K. Scott, 490; Introduction to the Study of Fuel, Dr. F. J. Brisle, 549
- Inorganic:* a Text-book of Inorganic Chemistry, Dr. G. Senter, 291; Grundlinien der anorganischen Chemie, W. Ostwald, 526
- Magneto-, Prof. E. Wedekind, 528
- Note-book, E. J. Sumner, 291
- Organic:* Identification of Organic Compounds, Dr. G. B. Neave and Dr. I. M. Heilbron, 346; Organic Chemistry, Prof. W. H. Perkin, F.R.S., and Prof. F. S. Kipping, F.R.S., 578; Trattato di Chimica Organica Generale e Applicata all' Industria, Prof. E. Molinari, 554
- Physical, Text-books:* an Experimental Course of Physical Chemistry, Dr. J. F. Spencer, 291; Laboratory Exercises in Physical Chemistry, Dr. J. N. Pring, 291; Monographs, 486; an Experimental Course of Physical Chemistry, Dr. J. F. Spencer, 578; a First Year Physical Chemistry, Dr. T. P. Hilditch, 578; Physico-chemical Calculations, Dr. J. Knox, 578
- Physical, Special Papers:* Orthobaric Densities and Critical Constants of Xenon, H. S. Patterson and others, 103; Neodymium Compounds, P. Joye and C. Garnier, 25; Optically Active Hydroxyhydrindamines, Prof. Pope and J. Read, 208; Boiling Points of Zinc, Cadmium, &c., C. T. Heycock and F. E. E. Lamp-lough, 208; Standard Melting and Boiling Points on the Constant Volume Nitrogen Thermometer, Messrs.

Chemistry (*continued*):

- Day and Sosman, 227; Physical Properties of Cyclohexanol, M. de Forcrand, 339; Optical Determinations at High Pressures, Dr. W. Wahl, 363; Density and Compressibility of Nitrosyl Chloride, E. Wourtsel, 547
- Physiological:** Probleme der physiologischen und pathologischen Chemie, Prof. Dr. O. von Fürth, 422
- of Plants: Chemistry of *Doryphora sassafras*, J. M. Petrie, 391; Hydrocyanic Acid in Plants, Dr. J. M. Petrie, 391
- Practical:** Text-book of Practical Chemistry for Technical Institutes, Dr. A. E. Dunstan and F. B. Thole, 291; Practical Chemistry for Medical Students, Dr. A. C. Cumming, 291; Practical Chemistry for Engineering Students, A. J. Hale, 578; a School Chemistry, F. R. L. Wilson and G. W. Hedley, 578
- Synthetical:** Syntheses: Butyrene, MM. Amouroux and Murat, 209; Syntheses by means of mixed Organometallic Derivatives of Zinc, E. E. Blaise, 235; Synthesis of Nitriles in the Cyclanic Series, V. Grignard and E. Bellet, 495; Syntheses by means of mixed Organometallic Derivatives of Zinc, E. E. Blaise, 495; Synthesis of Nitrosyl Chloride and Atomic Weight of Chlorine, E. Wourtsel, 625
- Technical:** Approximate Value of the Molecular Weight of India-rubber, P. Bary, 261; Technical Methods of Chemical Analysis, Prof. G. Lunge, Dr. C. A. Keane, 341; Bücher der Naturwissenschaft: Chemie und Technik, Dr. G. Bugge, Prof. Dr. S. Günther, 398; Chemisch-technisches Praktikum, Dr. W. Moldenhauer, 398
- Chemists, Famous, E. Roberts, 32
- Child, Food and the, 280
- China, Mineral Wealth and Geology of, Chung Yu Wang, 615; China, Korea, and Japan, Permanent Agriculture in, Dr. F. H. King, 500
- Chlorine, Atomic Weight, G. Baume and F. L. Perrot, 677
- Chlorous Acid, M. Lasègue, 547
- Cholera and its Treatment, Prof. L. Rogers, 136
- Chronograph, an Electro-, with Synchronised Sparks, A. Blondel, 209
- Citric Acid, World's Supply, Prof. R. Peppert, 226
- Civil Service Appointments: Royal Commission, 76
- Clare Island Survey: Algæ and Marine Diatoms, W. West, 641
- Climatology: Temperature in Spain, Dr. A. B. Rosenstein, 230; Climate of Porto Rico, Dr. O. L. Fassig, 231; Climate of the S.E. part of the North Sea, Dr. J. P. van der Stok, 588
- Clouds and Shadows, C. Tilden Smith, 168; Dr. T. C. Porter, 244; C. J. P. Cave, 268; Cyril Crossland, 322; Dr. T. C. Porter, 348; Alice Everett, 426, 459
- Coal: Coal Supply, 117; Coal Formation, J. J. Stevenson, 513; Coalfields of West Nelson, N.Z., Dr. Henderson, 644
- Coal Mines: Prevention of Explosions in Mines, Dr. J. Harger, 406; Coal Mine Accident at Cadeby Pit, Yorkshire, 482; Coal-dust Explosions in Mines Committee's Report, 562; Committee to investigate Spontaneous Combustion of Coal in Mines, 585
- Cod, Development of the, Prof. A. Meek, 416
- Colloids: die Bedeutung der Kolloide für die Technik, Prof. Kurt Arndt, 28; General Theory of Colloidal Solutions, W. B. Hardy, 311
- Colorado, Biological Survey of, M. Cary, 615
- Colour: Confusion Test for Colour Blindness, Dr. G. J. Burch, 130; Colour-music, Prof. A. W. Rimington, 166; Hunterian Lectures on Colour-vision and Colour-blindness, Prof. F. W. Edridge-Green, 476; Experiments with Rotating Films, C. V. Boys, 493; Negative After-images and Successive Contrast with Pure Spectral Colours, Prof. A. W. Porter and Dr. F. W. Edridge-Green, 404; Colour-blindness and the Trichromatic Theory, Sir W. de W. Abney, 404; Contrast Colours in the Use of Zone-plates, W. B. Croft, 581
- Comets: Cometary Phenomena, Prof. K. Bohlin, 17; Statistics, M. Borrelly, 100; Spectra, Prof. A. Fowler, 227; Orbits, Prof. W. Pickering, 617; a Comet-like Object, Mr. Hansen, 277; Halley's Comet: Photographs, MM. Sotome, Hoasi, and Toda, 147; Prof. Riccò, 644; Holmes's Comet, Dr. Zwiers, 644; Comet 1911c (Brooks), Prof. Millosevich, 42; A. de la B. Pluvinel and F. Baldet, 338; Prof. Barnard, 616; Comet 1911e (Borrelly), M. Schumasse, 305; Comet 1911f (Quénisset), Elements, Dr. Ebell, 42; Comet 1911h (Schumasse), Dr. Schumasse, 42
- Concrete: Concrete High Dams of Great Length, R. Ryves, 93; Non-corrosion of Rag Bolt found in a Slab of Concrete, 227; Concrete Mixing, 355
- Concrete, Reinforced: Strength of Piles, F. H. Jeffree, 69; Design, O. Faber and P. G. Bowie, 501; Compression Member Diagram, C. F. Marsh, 549
- Copper and its Alloys in Early Times, Prof. W. Gowland, F.R.S., 98; Copper Deposits of the Appalachian States, W. H. Weed, 617
- Copyright, Photographic, G. E. Brown and A. Mackie, 631
- Coral, *Endopachys grayi*, from Persian Gulf, Prof. S. J. Hickson, 131
- Cornwall: Joint Meeting of Learned and Technical Societies, 353, 591
- Corrosion, C. Chappell, 278; J. N. Friend, J. Ll. Bentley, and W. West, 278
- Corundum Deposits in Madagascar, A. Lacroix, 131
- Cotton-combing Hand Cards, Ling Roth, 353; Cotton Cultivation: Papers and Reports, Dr. W. R. Dunstan, F.R.S., 427
- Crocker Land Expedition, 206, 403
- Crocodylian Remains from Upper Tertiaries, C. Rovereto, 539
- Croydon Roman Exhibits, 510
- Cryoscopy in Camphor, M. Jouniaux, 417
- Crystallo-chemical Analysis, Prof. E. von Fedorow, Dr. A. E. H. Tutton, F.R.S., 503
- Crystallography: Quartz Twins, Dr. J. Drugman, 77; Crystallisation of Metals, Dr. Cecil H. Desch, 359; Optical Investigations of Crystallised Nitrogen, Argon, Methane, and some simple Organic Compounds at Low Melting Points, Dr. W. Wahl, 494; Isomorphism of Irido- and Rhodio-chlorides of Alkali Metals, A. Duffour, 574
- Curie's Constant in the Ferromagnetic State, J. R. Ashworth, 503, 555
- Curves: the "J.R.B." Patent Adjustable Curve Ruler, 477; Convex Closed Curves, &c., C. Jordan and R. Fiedler, 669
- Cyclones, Geometrical Constructions for finding Motion of, Prof. T. Okada, 68
- Dairy Cattle and Milk Production, Prof. Clarence H. Eckles, 163
- Daylight: Daylight Saving Bill, 247; Daylight, Prof. E. L. Nichols, 249; Artificial Daylight, T. E. Ritchie, R. B. Hussey, J. E. Ives and Dr. K. Mees, 612; Prof. W. M. Gardner, 631
- Deaths: Allen (J. Bernard), 351; André (Prof. Charles), 403, 429; Austin (B. J.), 352; Boisbaudran (F. Lecoq de), 352; Borup (George), 224; Bosanquet (R. H. M., F.R.S.), 613; Brothers (A.), 666; Bullen (Rev. Robert Ashington), 667; Chatin (Prof. Johannis), 538; Craig (Prof. John), 666; Dean (Alexander), 666; Dent (Clinton Thomas), 666; Divers (Prof. Edward, F.R.S.), 142, 170; Donaldson (Harold), 585; Dunn (James), 532; Festing (Major-General E. R., C.B., F.R.S.), 209; Forel (Prof. François Alphonse), 613, 638; Fouillée (Alfred), 613; Franklin-Adams (John), 639; Frühling (Prof.), 273; Gillen (Francis James), 666; Gray (John), 223, 246; Hawkins (E. C.), 196; Hobbs (Dr. Perry L.), 196; Hodgson (A. E.), 39; Hodgson (Dr. Shadworth H.), 403; Hume (Allan Octavian, C.B.), 584; Jones (Dr. Humphrey Owen, F.R.S.) and Mrs. Jones, 638; Julian (Henry Forbes), 325; Knox (Alexander), 428; Lang (Andrew), (A. E. Crawley), 532; Lebedew (Prof. P. N.), 118; Leeds (Charles Edward), 118; Lévy (Lucien), 613; McClintic (Dr. T. B.), 667; Montgomery (Dr. T. H.), 118; Münch (Prof. Wilhelm), 90; Ogle (Dr. William), 172; Pacinotti (Prof. A.), 90; Paine (Prof. John Alsop), 585; Poincaré (Henri), 535; Richards (Prof. Eugene Lamb), 640, 666; Richardson (Dr. M. H.), 666; Rogers (Dr. T. L.), 613; Rotch (Prof. A. Lawrence), 171, 195; Sanger (Dr. Charles Robert), 38; Shelford (R. W. C.), 428; Smith (Dr. John Bernhard), 90; Stiffe (Captain Arthur William), 667; Strasburger (Prof. Eduard), 379;

- Tarr (Prof. Ralph S.), 118; Töpler (Prof. August), 90; Wade (Dr. John), 639; Weber (Prof. H. F.), 403; Wernher (Sir Julius, Bart.), 301; Wilson (Dr. Andrew), 666; Woodworth (Dr. W. McM.), 380; Wright (Wilbur), 351
- Deluge: der Mythus von der Sintflut, G. Gerland, 605
- Dentition of Shrewmice, Dr. Augusta Arnback-Christie-Linde, 539
- Desmidiaceæ, Monograph of the British, W. West and Prof. G. S. West, 523
- Destructor Practice, Modern, W. F. Goodrich, 628
- Determinants, Theory of, in the Historical Order of Development, Dr. T. Muir, C.M.G., F.R.S., 237
- Dew-gauge, New, S. Skinner, 406
- Diesel Engines: the *Selandia*, 42, 124; Dr. R. Diesel, 70; Some Aspects of Diesel Engine Design, D. M. Shannon, 250; Trials of the *Jullandia*, 304; Diesel Engines for Land and Marine Work, A. P. Chalkley, Dr. R. Diesel, 549
- Diet: Jail Dietaries of the United Provinces in India, Major D. McCay, 249; Modern Theories of Diet and their Bearing upon Practical Dietetics, Dr. Alex. Bryce, 422; Principles of Human Nutrition: a Study in Practical Dietetics, W. H. Jordan, 422
- Differential Geometry of Curves and Surfaces, Dr. A. R. Forsyth, F.R.S., 579
- Disease Investigations: Grants by Local Government Board, 381; Entomology for Medical Officers, A. Alcock, C.I.E., F.R.S., 474; Filariasis and Elephantiasis in Fiji, P. H. Bahr, 487
- Disease, Cattle: Gall Sickness, Dr. Theiler, 485
- Disease, Fish, Mr. Johnstone, Mr. Riddell, and Dr. Alexander, 645
- Disease, Plant: der Malvenrost (*Puccinea malvacearum*), J. Eriksson, 397
- Dock, Leviathan, at Liverpool, 384
- Doctor and the People, the, H. de C. Woodcock, 575
- Dog, Guide to the Dissection of the, Dr. O. C. Bradley, 630
- Domestic Animals, Victor Hehn, Prof. A. Nehring, 165
- Domestic Science, Experimental, R. H. Jones, 604
- Dumfriesshire, Catalogue of Vertebrate Fauna of, H. S. Gladstone, 627
- Dundee and District, Handbook and Guide to, 658
- Dwarfs, Dr. M. Jansen, 275; Dwarfism, Dr. H. Rischbieth and Amy Barrington, 375
- Dysentery in Fiji, Dr. P. H. Bahr, 275
- Earth, the: Formation of the Earth's Surface, C. Beckenhaupt, 405; Age of the Earth, S. Suzuki, 564
- Earth Light, Origin, Dr. W. J. Humphreys, 355
- Earthquakes: Catalogue of Destructive Earthquakes from A.D. 7 to A.D. 1899, Prof. Milne, 197; Earthquakes in Norway, 275; Earthquake of May 23, Rev. W. Sidgreaves, S.J., 348; Earthquakes in China, N. F. Drake, 405; Swiss Earthquake Commission, Dr. J. Früh, 431; Earthquakes in Isle of Zante, G. Bonavia, 485; Rarity of Earthquakes in Brazil, Prof. J. C. Branner, 588; Earthquake at Constantinople on August 9, Rev. W. Sidgreaves, S.J., 607, 613; South African Earthquakes, Dr. J. R. Suttton, 678; see also Seismology
- Eclipses: les Éclipses d'Hiver et les Éclipses d'Été, W. de Fonvielle, 269; Eclipse Experiment, a Simple, W. W. Royal-Dawson, 347; Eclipse of the Sun, see Sun
- Ecology: Pond-snails of Genus *Physa*, Miss Jean Dawson, 14; Types of British Vegetation, Members of the Central Committee for the Survey of British Vegetation, 212; Gamlingay, near Cambridge, R. S. Adamson, 328; das Plagefenn bei Chorin, H. Conwentz and others, A. E. Crawley, 665
- Education: School Attendance Bill, 232; University Education and Practical Life, A. E. Shipley, 233; National Teaching of Science Subjects, 331; Constructive Work for Elementary Schools, E. J. S. Lay, 528; Secondary and Technical Education in England, 675
- Eel: Eel Migration, A. Cligny, 105; Eels, Dr. H. W. Fowler, 225; Reproduction and Spawning Places of the Fresh-water Eel, Dr. Johs. Schmidt, 632
- Egg Yield of Ducks for different Foods, A. Magnan, 443
- Egypt: the Survey of Egypt, 126; Notes to Geological Map of Egypt, Dr. W. F. Hume, 540; Ancient Egyptian Ceramics, W. Burton, 641; Meteorological Report of Survey Department, 668; Magnetic Observations at Helwan, 669
- Electrical Engineering: Inductance of Compact Coils of Wire without Iron Cores, Prof. Brooks and Mr. Turner, 120; Elementary Course of Practical Applied Electricity and Magnetism, W. M. Hooton and A. Mathias, 343; Elements of Electrical Transmission, Prof. O. J. Ferguson, Prof. Gisbert Kapp, 472; Direct and Alternating Current Manual, Prof. F. Bedell, Prof. Gisbert Kapp, 472; Storage Batteries, Prof. H. W. Morse, Prof. G. Kapp, 472; Maschinen und Apparate der Starkstrom-technik, G. W. Meyer, Prof. Gisbert Kapp, 472; Design of Static Transformers, H. M. Hobart, 475
- Electricity: Batteries, Selenide, H. Pélabon, 364; Condensers, Effect of Temperature and Frequency on Capacity and Phase Difference of Paper, F. W. Grover, 16; Conductivity of a Phosphorescent Body, Influence of Temperature and of Light on the, P. Vaillant, 157; Currents produced by Electrons emitted by Metals at High Temperatures, Dr. K. Fredenhagen, 276; Discharge in Hydrogen, After-luminosity of, observed by Hertz, Hon. R. J. Strutt, 103; Discharge in Oxygen, an Anode Dark Space in the, F. W. Aston, 218; Generation of Electricity by Carbon at High Temperatures, Dr. J. A. Harker and Dr. G. W. C. Kaye, 337; Inductances, Method of Measuring small, S. Butterworth, 337; Kerr Effect in Liquid Air, Prof. Zeeman, 93; Oscillations, Theory of Production of Electric, A. S. M. Sörensen, 276; Potential Effect in Selenium, E. E. Fournier d'Albe, 52; Potential Distribution in Kathode Dark Space of Vacuum Tube, Dr. K. Eisenmann, 355; Properties, Electrical, of Copper-tin Alloys, R. Ledoux, 495; Properties, Electrical, of Copper-zinc Alloys, L. Norsa, 625; Resistance of Mercury at Low Temperatures, Prof. Onnes, 42; Applications of Heaviside's Resistance Operators, Dr. W. H. Eccles, 416; Spark, Influence of Capacity, &c., on Velocity of Luminous Vapours in the, G. A. Hemsalech, 105; Relative Velocities of Luminous Vapours of Various Elements in the Electric Spark, G. A. Hemsalech, 157; Electricity Supply: Past, Present, and Future: Royal Institution Discourse, A. A. C. Swinton, 281; Surface Leakage Experiments with Alternating Currents, G. L. Addenbrooke, 416; Vibrations on a Thin Anchor Ring, Lord Rayleigh, 493; Waves, Long Electric: Propagation during the Solar Eclipse, Dr. W. H. Eccles, 191; Diurnal Variations of the Electric Waves occurring in Nature and Propagation of Electric Waves round the Bend of the Earth, Dr. W. H. Eccles, 494
- Electricity, Atmospheric: Electric Charge on Rain, (1) Prof. McClelland and Mr. Nolan, (2) M. Baldi, 227; Variation in Atmospheric Electric Potential with Altitude, W. A. D. Rudge, 287; Electric Charge on Rain, J. A. McClelland and J. J. Nolan, 521
- Electricity, Technical: George Montefiore Prize to be awarded for the best work on Technical Applications of Electricity, 224
- Electrochemistry, Applied, Prof. M. de Kay Thompson, J. Swinburne, F.R.S., 136
- Electrolytic Effect of Continuous Current on Cells of Living Plants, F. Kövessi, 495
- Elephant Calf born at Copenhagen, 275; Congo Water-elephant, R. J. Cuninghame, 614
- Elliptic Functions, C. T. Whittemell, 555
- Elms, Revision of British, Dr. C. E. Moss, 275
- Embryology: Rearing *Asterias rubens*, L., Larvæ with Double Hydrocœle, J. F. Gemmill, 426
- Encyclopædia: Handwörterbuch der Naturwissenschaften, edited by E. Korschelt and others, 502
- Engineering: Internal Combustion Air-compressor of the Free Piston System, G. Matricardi, 16; Opening of Harrison-Hughes Laboratories at Liverpool, 311; Reinforced Concrete Compression Member Diagram, C. F. Marsh, 549; Railway Signal Engineering (Mechanical), L. P. Lewis, 549; Practical Chemistry for Engineering Students, A. J. Hale, 578; see also Electrical
- Engineers, Chemical, Transactions of the American Institute of, 549
- Engineers, Mechanical: Meeting of Institution of, at

- Belfast: Rolling-stock on Irish Railways, R. M. Livesey; New Belfast Graving Dock, W. R. Kelly; Evolution of Flax-spinning Spindle, J. Horner; Peat for Power Purposes, H. V. Pegg; Durability of Wire Ropes, D. Adamson; Reciprocating Straight-blade Sawing-machines, C. Wicksteed, 589
- Engines: Testing of Motive-power Engines, R. Royds, 27; Heat Engines, H. A. Garratt, 628; Radial Tank Locomotives, 643; *see also* Diesel
- Entomology: Bionomics of *Nematus ericksoni*, the large Larch Sawfly, Dr. R. S. MacDougall, 52; Mimicry amongst the Blattidae, R. Shelford, 77; Acclimatisation in New England of the European Ground Beetle to check Destructive Moths, A. F. Burgess, 91; Attempts to check Gipsy and Brown-tail Moths in U.S., L. O. Howard and W. F. Fiske, 107; Maxillulæ, Presence of, in Larvæ of Dytiscidae, J. Mangan, 260; *Claviger longicornis* in Oxfordshire, J. J. Walker, 275; Entomology for Medical Officers, A. Alcock, C.I.E., F.R.S., 474; Larvicides in Action, Surgeon-Captain F. F. MacCabe, 496; Second International Congress of Entomology: Address by President, Prof. Poulton; Nature Reserves, Hon. N. C. Rothschild; Entomological Problems in the West Indies, W. A. Ballou, Sir D. Morris; Nomenclature, C. Oberthür; Insect Vision, Dr. A. Seitz; Distribution of Mallophaga, Prof. V. L. Kellogg, all 610-611; Pairing of False-scorpions of Subgenera Chelifer and Chernes, H. W. Kew, 614; *see also* Insects
- Enzyme Action, H. E. Armstrong and others, 311, 312
- Eoliths, R. Bonnet and G. Steinmann, 92
- Equations, Real Roots of Algebraic, Dr. R. F. Muirhead, 431
- Eskdalemuir Observatory, 593
- Eskimo, a Lost Tribe among, V. Stefansson, 644
- Ethnology: Primitive Exogamy and the Caste System: the *Sirki Walas*, W. Kirkpatrick, 132; Mohammedan Shrines in the Valley of the Indus, Major A. O'Brien, 225; Collections at Marischal College, Aberdeen, 274; Bushman Sticks decorated in Intaglio and Poker-work, L. Peringuey, 287; Indians of N.W. Coast of America, C. M. Barreau, 483; Hammock Dance at Sierra Leone, 510; Omens and Superstitions of Southern India, E. Thurston, 530; Pygmies of New Guinea, 556; Australia, Prof. B. Spencer, C.M.G., F.R.S., and F. J. Gillen, Dr. A. C. Haddon, F.R.S., 608; Ceremonies at Burial of a Chief in Rhodesia, D. Wright, 667; Namaqualand Bushmen, Miss L. Currlé, 677
- Etna Eruption, 640
- Eugenics: Eugenics Congress, 38, 558; President's Address, 558; an Introduction to Eugenics, W. C. D. Whetham, F.R.S., and Catherine D. Whetham, 263; Vererbung und Rassenhygiene, Dr. H. Bayer, 325; Dr. A. F. Tredgold, 586; *Eugenics Review*, 614; *see also* Dwarfism and Heredity
- Euphrates and Tigris Water Regulation, Sir W. Willcocks, 381
- Evolution: die Abstammungslehre: zwölf Vorträge über die Deszendenztheorie im Licht der neueren Forschung, O. Abel, A. Brauer, and others, 4; Evolution in the Past, Henry R. Knipe, 137; Evolution of Human Hand, and the Ape, Prof. H. Klaatsch, 374
- Exercising in Bed, S. Bennett, Prof. R. T. Hewlett, 527
- Explosions in Mines, 562
- Explosives: Historical Papers on Modern Explosives, G. W. MacDonald, 372
- Eyes: Instrument for Measuring the Distance between the Centres of Rotation of the Two Eyes, H. S. Ryland and B. T. Lang, 51; Histological Structure of Retina in Lateral Eyes of Sphenodon, Miss Freda Bage, 67; Prof. Bergson and the Eye of Pecten, Dr. W. J. Dakin, 86; Autophanous Eyes, Charlotte I. W. Cuffe, H. de S.-P., 87; Are Eyes ever Autophanous? K. H. Barnard, 138; Development of Eye in Embryos of Edible Frog, Prof. H. Spemann, 327
- False-scorpions, Pairing of, H. W. Kew, 614
- Fasting Cure, Upton Sinclair, Prof. R. T. Hewlett, 527
- Feeble Minded, *see* Mental
- Ferric Oxide, Transformation of, into Magnetic Oxide, Dr. G. E. Allan and J. Brown, 547
- Fever, a Clinical Study of Experimental, E. C. Hort and W. J. Penfold, 76
- Fibre: Anleitung zur mikroskopischen Untersuchung von Pflanzenfasern, Dr. G. Tobler-Wolff and Prof. F. Tobler, Dr. F. Cavers, 497
- Filaria Bancrofti*, P. H. Bahr, 487
- Fiords in relation to Earth Movements, Prof. J. W. Gregory, 179
- Fire: Technical Committee for Fire Prevention in France, 199; British Fire Prevention Committee, 586
- Fish: Living Specimens of the Australian Lung-fish, Dr. Bashford Dean, 207; Index to Pieter Bleeker's Papers, Dr. M. Weber and Dr. L. F. de Beaufort, 225; Poison Organs and Venoms of Poisonous Fishes, Dr. H. Muir Evans, 259; Fishes from British E. Africa, G. A. Boulenger, A. B. Percival, 312; Forme, Puissance et Stabilité des Poissons, Prof. F. Houssay, 319; Expedition to Panama Canal, 327; Pharyngeal Teeth of Carp, Col. Shepherd, 483; Antarctic (*Scotia*) Collection, C. T. Regan, 521; Age and Growth of Salmon and Trout in Norway, K. Dahl, I. Baillie, 523; New Japanese Cyclogaster, Messrs. Gilbert and Burko, 564; Diseases of Fishes, G. H. Drew, 641; Ornamentation during the Breeding Season, H. W. Fowler, 668; *see also* Eel
- Fisheries: Sea Fisheries: their Treasures and Toilers, Prof. Marcel A. Hérubel, B. Miall, S. Reynolds, 1; Fisheries of Bengal, Dr. J. T. Jenkins, 20; Sea Fisheries Organisation and Research, 509; the North Sea, Prof. D'A. W. Thompson, 593
- Fishing: the Gentle Art, H. Lamond, 523
- Flints, Striated, from Chalky Boulder Clay, J. Reid Moir, 607
- Flowers: Wild Flowers as they Grow: Photographed in Colour, H. E. Corke, G. C. Nuttall, Dr. Cavers, 213, 497; Flower Sanctuary, F. H. Perrycoste, 548, 607; Right Hon. Sir H. Maxwell, F.R.S., 581; Right Hon. Sir Ed. Fry, G.C.B., F.R.S., 661
- Fluorescence of Sodium Vapour, L. Dunoyer, 131
- Fluorine: Apparatus for Determining Minute Quantities, A. Gautier and P. Clausmann, 390, 443
- Fog: the Sun as a Fog-producer, Dr. J. Aitken, 131
- Food: Food and the Child, 280; *see also* Diet and Physiology
- Forced Vibrations, *see* Vibrations
- Forestry: Planting at High Altitudes in the Lake District, 14; Report of Departmental Committee in Scotland, 90; Complete Yield Tables for British Woodlands and the Finance of British Forestry, P. Trentham Maw, 319; Forest Resources of India, R. S. Pearson, 539; Development, 570; *Lichtgenuss* of Oak and Beech, G. P. Gordon, 587
- Forests and Rainfall, Sir W. Schlich, F.R.S., 662
- Fossils, Early Fossil Cirripedes of the Genus *Scalpellum*, T. H. Withers, 130; *Rhetinangium Arberi*, a new Type of Fossil Stem from Pettycur, Dr. W. T. Gordon, 131; Beekite in Fossil Shells, James Strachan, 145; Remarkable Cambrian Fossils from British Columbia, Dr. C. D. Walcott, 334; Guide to Fossil Invertebrate Animals in the British Museum (Natural History), 345; Discovery of Fossils in the Chert and Black Shale Series at Aberfoyle, Dr. Thomas J. Jehu, 347; Nature of Tooth-like Palæozoic Fossils *Edestus*, &c., Dr. O. P. Hay, 430; Nature of Stromatoporoids, R. Kirkpatrick, 607
- Fowls, *Spirochaetes* in, Dr. Andrew Balfour, 11
- France, State Universities of, Anna T. Smith, 571
- Friction of Solids, Miss Jacob, 303; Effects of Friction in a Vacuum on Thorium Oxide, R. Howlett, 606
- Frost, Glazed, Andrew H. Palmer, 192
- Fuel: Introduction to the Study of Fuel, Dr. F. J. Brislee, 549; Royal Commission to Report on Liquid Fuel, 561
- Fungi: British Fungi: with a Chapter on Lichens, G. Masee, 30; Fungi parasitic on Fruits and their Toxic Action, Dr. Diana Bruschi, 92; Lower Fungi, Dr. Némec, 530; Critical Summary of Works in 1911 on Cytology of Reproduction, J. Ramsbottom, 564
- Furnace, Crucible, for Laboratory Work up to a Temperature of 1600° C., A. Verneuil, 669
- Fusibility Curves of Volatile Binary Systems at Low Temperatures, G. Baume and N. Georgitsets, 70; Fusibility Curves of Volatile Systems, G. Baume and P. Pamfil, 652

- Galls: die Pflanzengallen (Cecidien) Mittel- und Nord-Europas, Dr. H. Ross, 185; die Gallen der Pflanzen, Prof. E. Küster, 185
- Gardener and the Cook, the, Lucy H. Yates, 111
- Gardening: Oxford Gardens, R. T. Günther; Gardening for the Ignorant, Mrs. C. W. Earle and Ethel Case; Annuals, Hardy and Half-hardy, C. H. Curtis; Irises, W. R. Dykes, all Dr. F. Cavers, 497
- Gases: Comparison of Gaseous and Dissolved Molecules, P. Langevin, 53; Steady and Turbulent Motion in Gases, J. J. Dowling, 494; Relation of Viscosity to Absolute Temperature at Low Temperatures, Dr. O. Zimmern, 540
- Gels: Reactions in Gels, Dr. Emil Hatschek, 78; Formation of a Heat-reversible Gel, W. B. Hardy, 311
- Gem-stones and their Distinctive Characters, Dr. G. F. Herbert Smith, 294
- Genetics: History of *Primula obconica* under Cultivation, A. W. Hill, 145
- Geochemical Statistics, Dr. F. W. Clarke, 334
- Geodesy: Compensation of the New Meridian of Quito, M. Bassot, 260; Geodetic Work in the Ordnance Survey, 479
- Geodynamics: Some Problems, Prof. A. E. H. Love, 471
- Geography: Upper Basin of Mungo River in Cameroon Protectorate, Dr. F. Thorbecke, 14; Publication of F. von Richthofen's Papers, 276; Servian Geographical Magazine, 588
- Geography, Physical: Grundzüge der physischen Erdkunde, Prof. A. Supan, 500
- Geological Congress, Twelfth International, in 1913, 509
- Geological Map of Central Europe, E. Stanford, 93
- Geological Nomenclature, a Point in, Rev. Dr. A. Irving, 608; F. Gillman, 661
- Geological Survey, Memoirs of the, 229
- Geologists' Association September Excursion, 640
- Geology:
- General*: la Face de la Terre, Prof. Ed. Suess, 3; Index to World's Publications, 92; Structural and Petrographic Classification of Coast-types, Prof. J. W. Gregory, 92; Traité de Géologie, Prof. E. Haug, 551; Regional Geology in Europe, Various Authors, 670
- British*: Glacial Origin of the Clay-with-Flints of Bucks and a Former Course of the Thames, Dr. R. L. Sherlock and A. H. Noble, 104; Glaciation of the Black Combe District (Cumberland), Bernard Smith, 156; Pre-Cambrian and Cambrian Rocks of Brawdy, Hayscastle, and Brimaston (Pembrokeshire), H. H. Thomas and Prof. O. T. Jones, 258; Geological Structure of Central Wales and adjoining Region, Prof. O. T. Jones, 259; Geology of Mynydd Gader, Dolgelly, P. Lake and Prof. S. H. Reynolds, 286; Evidence of Borings as to the Range of the S.E. Coalfield and of the Palaeozoic Floor, and as to the Thickness of the Overlying Strata, Prof. W. Boyd Dawkins, 442; the Warwickshire Coalfield, R. D. Vernon, 573; a Fossil-bearing Horizon in Permian Rocks near Birmingham, W. H. Hardaker, 573; Striated Flints from Chalky Boulder Clay, J. Reid Moir, 607; Boulder Clay in Essex, Rev. Dr. A. Irving, 632; see also Selsey Bill
- Foreign*: Géologie du Bassin de Paris, M. P. Lemoine, 56; Granular Rocks intrusive in the Basaltic Breccias of Reunion, A. Lacroix, 79; Transvaal, Survey Report, 87; Portion of the Central Witwatersrand, Dr. E. T. Mellor, 87; Campagne Arctique de 1907: Duc d'Orléans: Etude Lithologique de Fonds recueillis, Prof. J. Thoulet, Prof. Herdman, F.R.S., 107; Geological Structure of the Alps, Bailey Willis, 145; die antediluvianischen Oasen bei Taubach und Tonna, H. Habenicht, 173; Snow lingering and Glacier Relics in the Black Forest, F. Klute, 197; Rhine from Bale to Laufenburg, 328; Report on Rock Specimens dredged by the *Michael Sars*, H.M.S. *Triton*, and H.M.S. *Knight Errant*, Dr. B. N. Peach, 364; Mounds on Lake Shores in Cape Breton, W. S. Brodie, 405; Shelly Clay dredged from the Dogger Bank: Moorlog, J. W. Stather, 442; Geology of S. African Districts near Orange River and Luderitz Bay, Mr. Versfeld, 485; Liffey Valley, G. A. J. Cole, 521; Witwatersrand and the Cape Province, Prof. E. H. L. Schwarz, 540
- Geometry: Bibliography of Non-Euclidean Geometry, Dr. D. M. J. Sommerville, 266; Geometry for Schools, W. G. Borchardt and Rev. A. D. Perrott, 602, 655; an Elementary Treatise on Cross-ratio Geometry, Rev. J. J. Milne, 655; Junior Mathematics, D. B. Mair, 655; Poliedri, Curve e Superficie secondo i metodi della Geometria Descrittiva, Prof. Gino Loria, 655
- Germany, University Education in, Prof. W. Münch, 518
- Gifts and Grants:
- Australia*: University of W. Australia, 13,500*l.* annually from Parliament, and Chair of Agriculture Endowment, from Sir W. Hackett, 572
- Britain*: Board of Education, 14,504,765*l.* for salaries and expenses, from the Civil Service Estimates, 74; Belfast University, 3000*l.* for a Clinical Scholarship, left by Mrs. Magrath, 546; Birmingham University, 1000*l.*, from Prof. Malins, 520; Cambridge, 20,000*l.* to endow and equip a new (Balfour) Professorship of Genetics, from an anonymous donor, 50; Devonshire Agricultural College, 100,000*l.*, by the will of C. Seale Hayne, M.P., 651; Forestry, suggested demonstration area in Scotland, 90; Institution of Civil Engineers, 5000*l.*, by will of Sir J. Inglis, 562; International Seismic Association, 370*l.*, from the Civil Service Estimates, 74; Ireland, 138,591*l.* for Science and Art, 130,000*l.* for Universities, from the Civil Service Estimates, 74; London Imperial College of Science and Technology, increased grant from 8000*l.* to 13,000*l.*, from L.C.C., and annual grant of 30,000*l.*, from the Treasury, for 1912-17, 573; London Polytechnics, Grants from County Council, 493; London University, 305,000*l.*, for removing headquarters to a site behind the British Museum, from anonymous friends, the Drapers' Company, and the Duke of Bedford, 75, 102; 28,570*l.* for maintenance grants, from the L.C.C., 50; also 28,000*l.*, 102; Manchester, Victoria University, 20,000*l.*, by will of J. E. Taylor, 651; Meteorological Office, 17,000*l.*, from the Civil Service Estimates, 74; Royal Society and National Physical Laboratory, 23,775*l.*, from the Civil Service Estimates, 74; Scientific Investigation, including National Library and Museum for Wales, 125,523*l.* for, from the Civil Service Estimates, 74; South Wales University College, 10,000*l.*, from W. J. Thomas, 520; Universities and Colleges in Great Britain and Intermediate Education in Wales, 314,200*l.*, from the Civil Service Estimates, 74; Universities and University Colleges, 139,600*l.*, from the Treasury, 178; Wales, 10,000*l.*, for Higher Education, from an anonymous donor, 599; Wye College, 2562*l.*, from the Board of Agriculture, 103
- France*: Société de Secours des Amis des Sciences, 4000*l.*, Société d'Encouragement pour l'Industrie nationale, 4000*l.*, by will of M. Osmond, 613
- Germany*: Berlin University, 400*l.* for Prof. Nernst's Researches, from M. E. Solvay, 666
- South Africa*: 500*l.* for scientific work, from the Union Government, 508
- Switzerland*: Berne University, 8000*l.*, from Prof. Th. Kocher, 520
- United States*: California University, 100,000*l.* by will, from Mrs. Jane K. Sather, 75; Columbia University, 310,000*l.* by will, for Cancer Research, from the late Mr. G. Crocker, 103; Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Library and Maintenance, by will of G. E. Dering, 493; Yale University, 100,000*l.*, left by Dr. F. Bacon, 546; 50,000*l.* by will of C. D. Borden, 572
- Glandular Cells, Dr. H. Hoven, 668
- Glass: Devitrification of Silica Glass, Sir W. Crookes, 51; Action of Sunlight and of Radium Salts on Glass, W. A. D. Rudge, 312
- Gold and Platinum Alluvial Deposits in Russia, L. Perret, 337
- Graft Hybrid, see Oxydases
- Grass, Effect on Plants of, S. Pickering, F.R.S., 399
- Greece: Prehistoric Thessaly: Recent Excavations in N.E. Greece, A. J. B. Wace and M. S. Thompson, 294
- Greek Bronzes in Wreck of Sunken Galley, M. A. Merlin, F. E. Johnson, 119
- Green Crops, Prof. Malden, 568
- "Green Flash," J. W. Scholes, 351
- Grouse in Health and in Disease: Report of Committee of Inquiry, 658

- Guiana: Under the Roof of the Jungle, C. L. Bull, 396
- Gull, Differences in Lesser Black-backed, P. B. Lowe, 430
- Gypsy Lore Society, 197; Comparative Vocabulary of the Language of European Gypsies and Colloquial Hindustani, W. Kirkpatrick, 365
- Gyrostats: Gyrostatic Compass and Practical Applications of Gyrostats: Royal Institution Discourse, G. K. B. Elphinstone, 74; Walking and Climbing and Motor-spun Gyrostats, Dr. J. G. Gray, G. Burnside, 364
- Hair: Tierhaaratlas, Dr. Hans Friedenthal, Prof. G. Elliot Smith, F.R.S., 419
- Hamburg Observatory, Prof. Schorr, 670
- Hay Infusion, Protozoan Fauna of, L. L. Woodruff, 430
- Health: Life and Health, Dr. C. E. Shelly and E. Stenhouse, 397; Health Conference at Westminster, 429; Rural Hygiene, Prof. H. N. Ogden; the Fasting Cure, Upton Sinclair; Exercising in Bed, S. Bennett, *all* Prof. R. T. Hewlett, 527; *see also* Hygiene
- Heat:
- Text-books*: Heat and Steam, Eng.-Lieut. S. G. Wheeler, R.N., 319; Heat and the Principles of Thermodynamics, Dr. C. H. Draper, 603; Junior Heat, Dr. J. Satterly, 603; Heat Engines, H. A. Garratt, 628; Modern Destructor Practice, W. F. Goodrich, 628; Barker on Heating: Theory and Practice of Heating and Ventilation, A. H. Barker, 628
- Special Papers*: Variation of Specific Heat of Water investigated by the Continuous Mixture Method: Bakerian Lecture, Prof. H. L. Callendar, 24; New Thermo-electric Combustion Calorimeter, C. Féry, 104; Temperature Measurements up to 1750° C., Dr. A. L. Day, 334-5; Temperature of Sources of Light, H. Buisson and C. Fabry, 339; Specific Heat of Water from Regnault's Experiments, C. E. Guillaume, 390; Specific Heat of Air at Constant Volume, Drs. Scheel and Heuse, 511; *see also* Pyrometry and Temperature
- Helium: Natural Gases rich in Helium, C. Moureu and A. Lepape, 573
- Heredity:
- Text-books*: Heredity and Society, W. C. D. Whetham, F.R.S., and Catherine D. Whetham, 263; Heredity in Relation to Eugenics, C. B. Davenport, 263; Inheritance of Acquired Characters, E. Rignano, Prof. B. C. H. Harvey, 576
- Papers*: Heredity, Dr. E. S. Goodrich, F.R.S., 6; Alleged Specific Instance of Transmission of Acquired Characters, Dr. T. Graham Brown, 23; Cross-breeding of two Races of the Moth *Acidalia virgularia*, W. B. Alexander, 23; Use of Pedigrees: Royal Institution Discourse, W. C. D. Whetham, F.R.S., 310; (1) Discontinuity, (2) Mules' Skulls: Harvey Lecture, Prof. H. F. Osborn, 382; Inheritance of Paternal Characters in Echinoid Hybrids, C. Shearer, W. De Morgan, H. M. Fuchs, 425; Heredity in Poultry and Maize, Dr. Pearl, 484; Inheritance of Colour in Pigeons, 510; Inheritance of Mental Characters, C. Burt, 614; *see also* Eugenics, Horse-breeding, Plant-breeding
- Hertzian Waves, Diffraction of, H. Poincaré, 131
- Himalaya, Stalks in the, E. P. Stebbing, 81
- Hippopotamus, Pigmy, brought to Europe alive, 510; West African Pigmy Hippopotamus, Major Schomburgh, 641
- Hittite Art, 563
- Hook-worm, Life-history of the, Dr. A. Looss, 672
- Horse: Horse-breeding on Mendelian Lines, 66; Wild Horses in La Plata, 539; Light Horse Breeding, 569; the Horse and its Relatives, R. Lydekker, F.R.S., 627; Protection from Flies, 641
- Horticultural Exhibition, Royal International, 330; Horticultural Branch of Board of Agriculture, 403
- House-fly, Dangers, 483
- Hull Whaling Exhibition, 668
- Human Efficiency in Business, Increasing, Prof. W. D. Scott, 629
- Hurricanes, *see* Wind
- Hybrid Sea-urchins, Prof. MacBride, 450; Erratum, 511; Hybrids between Indian Humped and European Cattle, 563
- Hydraulics, Treatise on, Prof. H. J. Hughes and A. T. Safford, 82
- Hydro-electric Practice, H. A. E. C. von Schon, 214
- Hydrography: Connection between Hydrographical and Astronomical Phenomena, Prof. O. Pettersson, 130; Danish Oceanographical Expedition, 511
- Hydrolysis of Salicin by Emulsion, MM. Bourquelot and Bridel, 383
- Hydromechanics: Tension of Composite Fluid Surfaces and Mechanical Stability of Films of Fluid, W. B. Hardy, 311; a Total Immersion Areometer without Capillary Correction, A. Berget, 339; Steady and Turbulent Motion in Gases, J. J. Dowling, 494; a Treatise on Hydromechanics, Dr. W. H. Besant, F.R.S., and A. S. Ramsey, 655
- Hydrostatics, Elements of, G. W. Parker, 603
- Hygiene: Rural Hygiene, Prof. H. N. Ogden, Prof. R. T. Hewlett, 527; the Science of Hygiene, W. C. C. Pakes, 604; Text-book of Hygiene for Teachers, Dr. R. A. Lyster, 604; Experimental Domestic Science, R. H. Jones, 604; *see also* Health
- Hysteresis Loss as affected by Previous Magnetic History, Prof. E. Wilson, B. C. Clayton, and A. E. Power, 546; Dielectric Hysteresis at Low Frequencies, Prof. W. M. Thornton, 546
- Ice: Concentric Joints in Ice, R. M. Deeley, 34; Zoobiological Significance of the Ice Age, F. Zschokke, 374
- Icebergs in N. Atlantic, 249; Method of Detection of Ice at Sea, Dr. M. Coplans, 295; Icebergs and their Location in Navigation: Royal Institution Discourse, Prof. Howard T. Barnes, F.R.S., 411; Drift Ice of the Great Newfoundland Bank and its Danger to Navigation, Otto Baschin, 428
- Ichneumonidæ, a Revision of the, C. Morley, 627
- Illumination, *see* Lighting
- Imperial College of Science and Technology: Professor of Chemistry, 38; Report, 232
- Imperial Institute: Bulletin, 275
- India: Fisheries of Bengal, 20; Proposed Association for the Advancement of Science, 66; Agricultural Statistics (Blue-book), 91; Winter in India, H. H. H., 168; Winter in India: Correction, Dr. N. Annandale, 353; Agricultural Adviser, 274; Convocation of Calcutta University, 284; Survey Records, 328; Malaria, Sir R. Ross, K.C.B., F.R.S., 505; Meeting of Senate of Calcutta University to consider Mr. Tarak Nath Palit's gift and the founding of a University College of Science and Technology, 520; Omens and Superstitions of Southern India, E. Thurston, 530; Series of Reproductions of Photographs of Indian Art, A. K. Coomaraswamy, 538; Handbook of Forest Resources of India, R. S. Pearson, 539; Report of Board of Scientific Advice, 615; Advance of the S.W. Monsoon in 1912, Prof. Abbe, 619; aus Indiens Dschungeln, O. Kauffmann, 627; Strepsiptera in India, E. E. Green, "the Reviewer," 632
- Indol and Toxicity, E. Metchnikoff and E. Wollmann, 417
- Inheritance, *see* Heredity
- Insects: Insect Pests of the Chir Pine, E. P. Stebbing, 144; Insect Parasites on Trees, Right Hon. Sir H. Maxwell, Bart., F.R.S., 191; Luminous Organs, F. A. Macdermott, 331; Study of Insects from an Economic Point of View, W. W. Froggatt, 391; Social Life in the Insect World, J. H. Fabre, B. Miall, 401; Report of Entomologist for Dominion of Canada, 484; Fig Moth, Dr. Chittenden, E. G. Smyth, 484; Injurious Insects and other Animals in Ireland, Prof. G. H. Carpenter, 494; Insect Pests in Canada, 539; Noxious White Worms of the Enchytræid Group and Tubificids, Rev. H. Friend, 563; Insects and Disease, W. E. Brittan, 616
- Institutes, *see* Societies
- Institution of Mechanical Engineers: Belfast Meeting, 580
- Insurance, National, A. S. Comyns Carr, W. H. S. Garnett, and J. H. Taylor, with preface by the Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd George, M.P., 133
- Integrals: Introduction à la Théorie des Équations Intégrales, Prof. T. Lalesco, 199; l'Équation de Fredholm et ses Applications, Prof. H. B. Heywood and Prof. M. Fréchet, 499; Integral of a Function when the Parameter becomes Infinite, Dr. G. Giorgi, 642
- Iodine, Solid Solutions of, in Cyclic Hydrocarbons, G. Bruni and M. Amadori, 486

- Ions: Velocities of Ions in Dried Gases, R. T. Lattey and H. T. Tizard, 24
- Irises, W. R. Dykes, Dr. F. Cavers, 497
- Iron: Permeability of Iron for Hydrogen, G. Charpy and S. Bonnerot, 53; Cast Iron in the Light of Recent Research, W. H. Hatfield, Prof. J. O. Arnold, F.R.S., 169; Sinhalese Iron and Steel of Ancient Origin, Sir R. Hadfield, F.R.S., 360; Canadian Iron Ores: Magnetic Concentration, G. C. Mackenzie, 378
- Iron and Steel Institute: Gold Medal, 90; Annual Spring Meeting, 278; Autumn Meeting, 667
- Irrigation and Physical Properties of the Soil, A. Müntz and E. Lainé, 25
- Isle of Man, Rev. J. Quine, 346
- Isothermal Layer, Commander Campbell Hepworth, 7
- Japan, Prehistoric, Dr. Neil G. Munro, 423
- Johns Hopkins University, Resignation of President, 223
- Jupiter: Rev. T. E. R. Phillips, 487; Prof. Barnard, 589; Herr Archenhold, 589; M. Quéinisset, 617; Occultation of a Star by Jupiter, A. Burnet, 632
- Kala-Azar, Etiology of, Capt. W. S. Patton, I.M.S., 386
- Kamchatka and Aleutian Isles Expedition, Dr. W. Jochelson, 301
- Kathode Rays: (1) Transmission of, through Matter, (2) Velocity of the Secondary Kathode Particles ejected by Röntgen Rays, R. Whiddington, 52; Experiments with Kathode Rays, Sir Wm. Ramsay, K.C.B., F.R.S., 502
- Kew Gardens Bulletin and Guide, 668
- Kew Observatory, 592
- Kinematograph: Gaumont Speaking Kinematograph Films, Prof. W. Stirling, 333; Kinematograph in Science Teaching, 410; L.C.C. Demonstration, 538; Kinematography of the Solar Eclipse, M. Lobo, 541; New Kinematograph, P. Noguès, 599
- King's Birthday Honours, 403
- Krupp Establishments at Essen, 643
- Labrador: "Through Trackless Labrador," H. Hesketh Prichard, 35
- Larvicides in Action, Surgeon-Captain F. F. MacCabe, 496
- Latitude Variation, Prof. Albrecht, 512; Dr. F. E. Ross, 617
- Laughing Jackass (Dacelo), Taste or Smell in the, R. I. Pocock, F.R.S., 425
- Lead Objects, Atmospheric Destruction, C. Matignon, 417
- Leeds University: New Textile Extension, 228
- Left-handedness, B. D. Ewald Stier, Prof. G. Elliot Smith, F.R.S., 108
- Leishmania donovani*, Generalised Infection of Mice by, A. Laveran, 53
- Lepidoptera: Catalogue of the Noctuidæ in the British Museum, Sir G. F. Hampson, Bart., 374; Adams Collection of Foreign Lepidoptera, 666
- Libraries, Coordinated Purchase of Periodicals in two Newcastle, Basil Anderton, 61
- Life, Simplest Forms of, and their Origin on Earth, Prof. Minchin, 430
- Liffey Valley, G. A. J. Cole, 521
- Light: Optical Properties of Mercuric Iodide, T. V. Barker, 78; Experimental Work on a New Standard of Light, W. A. Harwood and Dr. J. E. Petavel, 103; Refraktometrisches Hilfsbuch, Prof. W. A. Roth and Dr. F. Eisenlohr, 111; Chemical Effects of Light on Organic Compounds, Prof. Paternò, C. Maselli, L. Mascarelli, 146; the Torque produced by a Beam of Light in Oblique Refraction through a Glass Plate, Dr. Guy Barlow, 233; Flicker, Dr. T. C. Porter, 234; Stereoscopic Inversions due to Association of two Systems of Retinal Impressions, A. Chauveau, 235; Detection of small amounts of Polarisation in Light from a Cloudy Sky, A. E. Oxley, 313, 669; Width of the Spectrum Lines and Production of Interference with Large Differences of Path, C. Fabry and H. Buisson, 313; Luminous Organs of Certain Insects, F. A. Macdermott, 331; a New Treatment of Optical Aberration, Prof. R. A. Sampson, 363; Extinction of Light by an Illuminated Retina, Sir W. de W. Abney, 363; Emission Velocities of Photo-electrons, A. Ll. Hughes, 415; Optical Science: Address, Prof. Silvanus P. Thompson, F.R.S., 436; Some Optical Experiments, H. S. Ryland, 555; Contrast Colours in the Use of Zone-plates, W. B. Croft, 581; *Lichtgenuss* in Forestry, 587; Outlines of Applied Optics, P. G. Nutting, 603; Refraction and Magnetic Rotation of Mixtures, F. Schwers, 625; Artificial Daylight, Prof. W. M. Gardner, 631; Oersted and the Electric Theory of Light, Prof. Silvanus P. Thompson, F.R.S., 664
- Lighting: Principes de la Technique de l'Éclairage, Dr. L. Bloch, 3; Illumination of House of Commons, 351; Luminous Efficiency of Illuminants, Mr. Dow, 354
- Linen, Action of Bleaching Agents on the Colouring Matter of, R. L. Taylor, 287
- Liquid Air, Prof. Zeeman, 93
- Liquids, Movements of Semi-oily, on a Water Surface, C. R. Darling, 416
- Lizard, Varieties of the Wall-, G. A. Boulenger, 364
- Load-extension Indicator, an Optical, Prof. W. E. Dalby, 52
- Lobsters: Natural History of the American Lobster, F. H. Herrick, 9; Lobsters in the Ægean, Prof. D'Arcy Thompson, C.B., 321; Dr. W. T. Calman, 529
- Locomotive, the Modern, C. Edgar Allen, 111
- Locust Diseases, Propagation in Argentina of Mexican, F. d'Herelle, 53
- Logarithmic Tables: Tables of Logarithms and Anti-logarithms to Five Places, E. E. Scott, 318; Tables of Logarithms and Anti-logarithms to Four Places, Major-General J. C. Hannynghton, 318; Four Place Tables of Logarithms and Trigonometric Functions, Prof. E. V. Huntington, 318
- London: London Institution (Transfer) Bill, 274; East London, G. F. Bosworth, 346; London Health Committee, Proposed Central, 537; London University New Site, 546; London County Council Lectures for Teachers, 573; Roman London, Prof. F. Haverfield, 614
- Mackerel Feeding Habits, G. E. Bullen, 641
- Magnetic Charts: Magnetic Declination Chart: U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, 175; Magnetic Charts of the Indian Ocean, Dr. L. A. Bauer, 335
- Magnetic Double Refraction, New Substances showing, A. Cotton and H. Mouton, 183
- Magnetic Rotation of Mixtures, Refraction and, P. T. Müller and Mlle. V. Guerdjikoff, 25
- Magnetisation: Self-demagnetisation of Steel, S. W. J. Smith and J. Guild, 546; Magnetisation of Iron: Constant P of Fröhlich's Equation, Dr. J. R. Ashworth, 616
- Magnetism: Magnetic Properties of Solid Oxygen, Glass, and Anhydrous Ferrous Sulphate at Low Temperatures, Prof. Onnes and Dr. Perrier, 41; Molecular Theory of Magnetism in Solids, Prof. W. Peddie, 53; Magnetic Influence in the Solar Rays, Sam. Hunter Christie, A. Naccari, 93; Transverse Induction Changes in Demagnetised Iron and the Molecular Theory of Magnetism, J. Russell, 131; Diffusion and Mobility of Ions in a Magnetic Field, J. S. Townsend, 233; Effect of Magnetism on Rates of Chronometers, T. Lewis and S. Chapman, 312; Curie's Constant in the Ferromagnetic State, J. R. Ashworth, 503
- Magnetism, Terrestrial: Graphic Representation of the Hourly Magnetic Character of the latter half of 1911, Prof. Bidlingmaier, 146; Magnetic Survey of Egypt, 199; U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, 276; Phenomena of Sunspots and Terrestrial Magnetism at Kew, Dr. C. Chree, 285; Magnetic Declination Tables for Atlantic, 616; *see also* Magnetic Charts
- Magnetochemie, Prof. E. Wedekind, 528
- Malaria in India, Sir Ronald Ross, K.C.B., F.R.S., 505
- Mammal Surveys, Four, 178
- Man: Ancient Types of Man, Prof. A. Keith, 375; Intensity of Natural Selection in Man, Prof. K. Pearson, F.R.S., 494
- Manchester: Manchester University, Extension of Physical Laboratories, 46; Manchester Oriental Society, 196; Manchester Microscopical Society: Extension Lectures, 651

- Manganese in the Animal Kingdom, G. Bertrand and F. Medigreceanu, 365, 495; Manganese in Plants, F. Jadin and A. Astruc, 626
- Maps: Comparison of German Atlases, Prof. Penck, 14; Phillips' Comparative Series of Wall Atlases of Europe, 267
- Mars: Mars and a Lunar Atmosphere, C. T. Whitmell, 6; "The Writer of the Note," 62; Brilliant Spots on Mars, L. J. Wilson, 17; Axis and Compression, Dr. Struve, 121
- Marsupials: Cœnolestes, Dr. R. Broom, 67
- Mathematicians, International Congress at Cambridge in August, 300, 636
- Mathematics:
- General*: The Teaching of Mathematics, Prof. H. S. Carslaw, 6; Teaching of Mathematics: Board of Education Reports, D. B. Mair, 45; Board of Education Papers, D. B. Mair, 305; Need for Periodic Summary of Literature, 68; Practical Mathematics and Geometry, E. Bates and F. Charlesworth, 240; M. Poincaré's Lectures at the University of London, 279; Monographs on Topics of Modern Mathematics Relevant to the Elementary Field, edited by J. W. A. Young, 395; *Principia Mathematica*, Dr. A. N. Whitehead, F.R.S., and Bertrand Russell, 474; Junior Mathematics, D. B. Mair, 655
- Algebra*: Elements of the Theory of Algebraic Numbers, Prof. L. W. Reid, 164; Algebra for Beginners, C. Godfrey, M.V.O., and A. W. Siddons, 602; a School Algebra, H. S. Hall, 602
- Arithmetic*: Examples in Arithmetic, H. S. Hall and F. H. Stevens, 602; Macmillan's Reform Arithmetic, P. Wilkinson and F. W. Cook, 655
- Calculus* for Beginners, the, W. M. Baker, 602
- Curves*: "J. R. B." Patent Adjustable Curve Ruler, 477; Convex Closed Curves, &c., C. Jordan and R. Fiedler, 669
- Economic Dynamics*, Mathematical Theory of, Dr. L. Amoroso, 92
- Equations*, Resultant of a Set of Homogeneous Linear, T. Muir, 287
- Geometry*: Bibliography of Non-Euclidean Geometry, Dr. D. M. J. Sommerville, 266; Geometry for Schools, W. G. Borchardt and Rev. A. D. Perrott, 602, 655; Elementary Treatise on Cross-ratio Geometry, Rev. J. J. Milne, 655; Junior Mathematics, D. B. Mair, 655; Poliedri, Curve e Superficie secondo i Metodi della Geometria Descrittiva, Prof. Gino Loria, 655
- Integral Equations*: Introduction à la Théorie des Équations Intégrales, Prof. T. Lalesco, 499; l'Équation de Fredholm et ses applications, Profs. Heywood and Fréchet, 499
- Mersenne's Numbers*, W. W. Rouse Ball, 86
- Network Problems* by Determinants, Solution of, R. Appleyard, 286
- Quaternions*, International Association for Promoting Study of, 588
- Riemann Integral* and Measurable Sets, J. Conran, 260
- Russian Peasant Method* of Multiplication, Prof. J. Bowden, 431
- Trigonometry*: Plane Trigonometry, Prof. L. K. Ghosh, 655; Elements of Plane and Spherical Trigonometry, J. G. Hun and C. R. MacInnes, 655; Elementary Trigonometry, F. T. Swanwick, 655
- Mathematics, Chinese, Early History, Prof. D. E. Smith, 485
- Mathematics, "Indian," Mediæval References to, G. R. Kaye, 132
- Matter, Foundations of a Theory of, Prof. Mie, 485
- Measles, Bodies in Blood of Children infected with, Prof. Hlava, 306
- Mechanical Engineering, *see* Engineering
- Mechanical Science: Changes in Dimensions of a Steel Wire when Twisted and Pressure of Distortional Waves in Steel, Prof. J. H. Poynting, 103; Flexure of Cylindrical Tubes of small Thickness, Dr. Th. von Kármán, 145; Theory of a New Form of the Chamber Crank Chain, H. S. Hele-Shaw, 363; Realisation of Uniform Circular Movement by Periodic Synchronising Action, A. Guillet, 625
- Mechanics: Torsional Oscillations of Magnesium Wire, G. P. Seamon, 53; General Dynamics, Prof. Andrew Gray, 78; Arrangements for Measurement of Densities of Solids of Volume 1 to 3 c.c., J. Escard, 104; Complete Formal Solution of the Equations of Stress, R. F. Gwyther, 131; Stresses in Spherical Shells, Dr. H. Reissner, 642; Analytical Mechanics, Prof. E. H. Barton, 655; Elementary Graphic Statics, Dr. W. J. Crawford, 655; *see also* Vibrations
- Medical Association, British, 429, 566
- Medical Science: Report of the Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories, 10; Post Mortems and Morbid Anatomy, Dr. T. Shennan, 477; Multiple Neuroma of the Central Nervous System, Drs. A. Bruce and J. W. Lawson, 547; Recent Methods in Diagnosis and Treatment of Syphilis, Dr. C. H. Browning and I. Mackenzie, and others, 575; Scientific Features of Modern Medicine, Prof. Fred. S. Lee, 575; Prevention and Treatment of Disease in the Tropics, E. S. Crispin, 575; the Doctor and the People, H. de C. Woodcock, 575; the Nervous System, J. D. Lickley, 575
- Memory and its Duration in Marine Fishes, M. Oxner, 79; Experiments on Memory in a Marine Fish, *Serranus scriba*, M. Oxner, 131
- Mendelism: Influence of Selection and Assortative Mating on the Ancestral and Fraternal Correlations of a Mendelian Population, E. C. Snow, 130; Mendelism, Prof. R. C. Punnett, 215
- Mental Defect: the Feeble-minded, C. G. Crosley, 40; Government Bill, 300, 325; Mental Defect and Alcoholism, D. Heron, 563
- Mercury: Expansion, Drs. Scheel and Heuse, 69; Apparatus for Rapid Distillation of Mercury in a Vacuum, L. Dunoyer, 339; Ayurvedic Method of Purifying Mercury by Garlic Juice, H. N. Banerjee, 495
- Merlia normani* and its Relation to certain Palæozoic Fossils, R. Kirkpatrick, 502
- Metallurgy: Quick Combination Methods in Smelter Assays, 52; the Metastable Condition of Undercooling in Metals, F. E. E. Lamplough, 208; Separation of Iron and Titanium, F. Bourion, 313; Exhibition of Non-ferrous Metals, 404; Purifying Mercury by Garlic Juice, H. N. Banerjee, 495; Heat Treatment of Tool Steel, H. Brearley, F. W. Harbord, 501; Disintegration of Metals at High Temperatures, MM. Reboul and Grégoire, 643; Dr. J. H. T. Roberts, 660
- Meteorites: Analysis of Meteorites, O. C. Farrington, 94; Meteorites and Moldavites, F. Berwerth, G. P. Merrill, 513; a Second Meteorite Find in Scott Co., Kansas, J. T. Freed, G. Merrill, 541
- Meteorological Charts: Meteorological Chart of N. Atlantic for May, 249; Monthly Wind Directions over the N. Indian Ocean, W. E. Hurd, 540
- Meteorological Elements from Kew, Eskdalemuir, &c., 198
- Meteorological Instruments: New Type of Instrument for continuously recording Direction of Wind, Messrs. Negretti and Zambra, 120; Automatic Release of Self-recording Instruments from *Ballons-sondes*, E. S. Bruce, 338
- Meteorological Observations: Value of Non-instrumental Weather Observations, Prof. R. De C. Ward, 92; Reports upon Observations, 202; Meteorological Observations at Cardiff, Dr. E. Walford, 303; Meteorological Observations required, D. Stenquist, 380; German Oversea Observations, 642; Egypt: Survey Department Report, 668
- Meteorological Observatories: Report of the Prussian Meteorological Institute, Prof. G. Hellmann, 174; Blue Hill bequeathed, 223; Meteorological Service of Argentine Republic, Sir W. G. Davis, 226; Norwegian Meteorological Institute, 588; Meteorological Office and its Observatories, 591; Messina Observatory, 642
- Meteorology:
- General*: British Weather, 14, 68, 117, 332, 353, 494, 640, 665; Weather of 1911, L. G. Schultz, 33; Weather of 1911 and Ultra-violet Radiation of the Sun, Dr. Carl Ramsauer, 376; Compagné Arctique de 1907; Duc d'Orléans, M. de Gerlache, Prof. Herdman, F.R.S., 107; Climate of Rome, 145; Cycles of the Sun and Weather, Prof. R. A. Gregory, 147; Indian Weather Review for 1910, 198; Tripoli and Benghazi Climatology, Dr. Eredia, 198; Our Weather, J. S. Fowler and W. Marriott, 267; Wind and Weather in the Adriatic, Prof. E. Mazelle, 540; Recent Weather,

- Meteorology (continued):
618; Advance of the S.W. Monsoon of 1912 over India, 619
Temperature: Heat-waves in Asia, Dr. H. von Ficker, Dr. E. Gold, 151; Physical Significance of the Mean Diurnal Curve of Temperature, Dr. J. R. Sutton, 678
Thunderstorms of May 31, 1911, J. Fairgrieve, 24; Thunderstorm of July 29, 1911, R. G. K. Lempfert, 24; Thunderstorm of March 11 in Sussex and Hants, C. J. P. Cave, 338
Weather Forecasting, New Method, M. G. Guilbert, P. H. Gallé, 383
Wind: Storm of March 4, E. Kitto, 34; Diurnal Variations of Force on Ben Nevis, Prof. J. Hann, 41; Method of Summarising Anemograms, R. G. K. Lempfert and H. W. Braby, 208; Hurricanes of the West Indies and other Tropical Cyclones, Dr. O. L. Fassig, 489
See also Climate and Rainfall
Meteors: Meteor-showers, F.R.A.S., 8; J. R. Henry, 8, 218, 321, 581, 660; Bielids, Prof. Pokrowski, 42; Analysis of Stone Meteorites, O. C. Farrington, 94; the El Nakhla el Baharia Meteorite, Dr. J. Ball, Sir N. Lockyer, K.C.B., F.R.S., 147; a Daylight Meteor, F. J. Gibbons, 147; W. F. Bushell and others, 175; a Brilliant Meteor, Mr. Rolston, 250; May Aquarids and Halley's Comet, C. Hoffmeister, 329
Mice, Fancy, Upcott Gill, C. J. Davies, 430
Micro-organisms: Experiments on Life without Micro-organisms, M. Cohendy, 25; Influence of Nature of Gases dissolved in Water on Vitality of Micro-organisms, A. Trillat and M. Fouassier, 105
Micropetrology for Beginners, J. E. W. Rhodes, 31
Microscope: Bausch and Lomb Co.'s New Models, 69; Wall Diagram of Construction and Optics of Microscope, E. Leitz, 120; Modified Form of Lever Fine-adjustment and a simple Turn-out Device for the Substage Condenser, E. B. Stringer, 234; New Stereoscopic Microscope with a Single Objective, A. Quidor, 495; Modern Microscopy, M. I. Cross and M. J. Cole, 525; Wirkungsweise und Gebrauch des Mikroskops und seiner Hilfsapparate, Prof. W. Scheffer, 525; How to Use the Microscope, Rev. C. A. Hall, 525; Simple Lens to clip on Thumb, 643; Methods of Petrographic-microscopic Research, Fred. E. Wright, 673
Milk and the Public Health, Dr. W. G. Savage, 422; Ropy Milk, J. Golding, 568
Mimicry, Butterfly Migration in relation to, J. Evershed, 659
Mineralogy: Theory of Blast-roasting of Galena, C. O. Bannister, 52; Zeolites from Killyflugh and White Head, Co. Antrim, Dr. G. F. H. Smith and F. N. A. Fleischmann, 77; Minerals and Mineral-localities of Shropshire, 78; a Mineral from Copper Ore, P. Walther, 322; Mineral Prospects in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, S. C. Dunn, 323; Canadian Mineral Resources, J. McLeish, F. G. Wait, 378; Cassiterite and Strüverite in Perak, J. B. Scrivenor, 443; Minerals of the E. Nakhla el Baharia Meteorite, Dr. G. T. Prior, 443; Recent Work on Mineralogy, J. C. Branner, E. T. Allen and others, R. E. Liesegang, C. Matveef, R. C. Burton, C. H. Warren and C. Palache, F. Zambonini, E. Mäkinen, F. Berwerth, G. W. Grabham, 513; Mineral Wealth and Geology of China, Chung Yu Wang, 615; Mineral Resources and Developments in the United States: Bulletins, 617; Microscopic Determination of Minerals, F. E. Wright, 673; Gem-bearing Pegmatites of Madagascar, A. Lacroix, 677
Miners' Nystagmus, Causes and Prevention of, Dr. T. L. Llewellyn, 24
Mining: Graphic Method of Illustrating the Results of Extraction Tests, H. K. Picard, 52; Recent Practice in Diamond Drilling and Borehole Surveying, J. I. Hoffmann, 234; Gels in relation to Ore Deposits, E. Hatschek and A. L. Simon, 234; Law of the Paystreak in Placer Deposits, J. B. Tyrrell, 337; Illogical Precision in Mine Reports, F. P. Rolfe, 337; Gold and Platinum Alluvial Deposits in Russia, L. Perret, 337; Plant for Enrichment of Pyritic Blende Concentrates, E. C. Hugon, 338; Meeting of Societies in Cornwall, 591; Institution of Mining Engineers, Birmingham Meeting, 640
Mink Breeding for Fur, 38
Moldavites, &c., F. Berwerth, G. P. Merrill, 513
Molecular Statistics of some Chemical Actions, Hon. R. J. Strutt, 493
Molybdenum Ores of Canada, T. L. Walker, 378
Monkeys: Retrograde Development of Skull of Howling Monkey, Dr. W. Leche, 327
Monmouthshire, H. A. Evans, 346
Monsoon, see India
Moon: Formation of Lunar Craters: Experimental Study, J. Escard, 625; Colour Photography of the Moon, Prof. R. W. Wood, 643
Morocco, Map of West, M. Bassot, 599
Morphological Studies of Benzene Derivatives, Prof. H. E. Armstrong and E. H. Rodd, 493
Mosquitoes and Gnats, Oriental Catalogue, E. Brunetti, 354; Mosquito Extermination in Philippines, 404
Mosses of the Yarrangobilly Caves District, N.S.W., Dr. V. F. Brotherus and Rev. W. W. Watts, 626
Moths of the Months and How to Identify Them, Rev. S. N. Sedgwick, 346
Moulds attacking exported Cotton Goods, T. G. B. Osborn, 78
Mules, Skull and Teeth of, Prof. H. F. Osborn, 382
Museum at Hull for Fishing and Shipping Industries, 119
Museums Association: Conference at Stockport, 224; at Dublin, 541, 614
Music: Primitive Music, Dr. C. S. Myers, 78
Mussels, Prof. Herdman, 645
Mutations, Parallel, in *Oenothera biennis*, R. R. Gates, 659
Mycetozoa, a Monograph of the: Descriptive Catalogue of the Species in the Herbarium of the British Museum, Arthur Lister, F.R.S., 137
Natal, Vegetation of, Prof. J. W. Bews, 405
National Physical Laboratory, Prof. C. H. Lees, F.R.S., 386
Natural History: Animal Intelligence, M. N. W., 192; Under the Roof of the Jungle: Animal Life in Guiana Wilds, C. L. Bull, 396; Preservation of Native Fauna of Great Britain: Discussion, 416; a Naturalist on Desert Islands, Percy R. Lowe, 523; the Horse and its Relatives, R. Lydekker, F.R.S., 627
Natural History Museum: Norman Collection, 119; Adams Collection of Lepidoptera, 666
Natural Science: Aristotle's Researches, Dr. T. E. Lones, Prof. D'Arcy W. Thompson, C.B., F.R.S., 653
Natural Selection in Man, Karl Pearson, 494; Nature Protection in S. Bavaria, Dr. C. C. Hosseus, 347; das Plagefenn bei Chorin, H. Conwentz and others, A. E. Crawley, 665
Nature Study: Earth and her Children, H. M. Livens, 32; Leisure Hours with Nature, E. P. Larken, 137; More Animal Romances, G. Renshaw, 264
Naval Architects, Institution of: Annual Meeting, 124
Naval Architecture: Military Principles bearing on Warship Design, Admiral Sir R. Custance, 124; Law of Comparison for Surface-friction and Eddy-making Resistances in Fluids, Dr. T. E. Stanton, 124; Rolling of Irish Lightships, G. Idle and G. S. Baker, 124; the Geared Turbine Channel Steamers, *Normannia* and *Hautonia*, Prof. J. H. Biles, 124
Naval Construction Appointments, 561
Nebulæ, Spiral, M. Puiseux, 228; Observations of, in Polarised Light, J. H. Reynolds, 312
Nerves, Fusion of, Dr. H. O. Feiss, 429
Nervous System, Factors in Rhythmic Functions of the, T. G. Brown, 312; Multiple Neuroma of the Central, Drs. A. Bruce and J. W. Lawson, 547; Nervous System, J. D. Lickley, 575
New Guinea: German New Guinea: Beiträge zur Völker- und Sprachenkunde, Dr. G. Frederici, 439; the Mafulu Mountain People, R. W. Williamson, 556; Pygmies and Papuans, A. F. R. Wollaston, 556
New Zealand: University Reform in New Zealand, 95; Jubilee of Philosophical Institute of Canterbury, 142; New Zealand Institute: Transactions and Proceedings, 644
Nickel, Expansion of Commercial, C. E. Guillaume, 105

- Nigeria: the Making of Northern Nigeria, Capt. C. W. J. Orr, 35; Useful Plants of Nigeria, J. H. Holland, 68
 Nile, see Ethnology
 Nitrates, Manufacture of, from the Atmosphere, E. Kilburn Scott, 490
 Nitrogen, Chemically Active Modification of, produced by Electric Discharge, Hon. R. J. Strutt, 415
 North Sea and its Fisheries: Royal Institution Lecture, Prof. D'Arcy W. Thompson, C.B., 593
 Nova Geminorum No. 2, Various Observers, 42, 94, 121, 131, 176, 209, 207, 208, 209, 250, 277, 329, 364, 384, 408; Supposed Radium Lines in Spectrum, Dr. H. Giebel, 432; R. Furuhielm, Dr. Ludendorff, 589
 Nutrition: Nutrition of the epiphytic Bromeliaceæ, C. Picado, 53; Nutrition of Farm Animals: Wisconsin Experiment Station Bulletins, 618; Principles involved in Animal Feeding, Dr. Crowther, 618
 Oceanography: Handbuch der Ozeanographie, Prof. Dr. O. Krümmel, 133; Drift of Sealed Bottle thrown from the S.S. *Indraghira*, 195
Oenothera biennis: Parallel Mutations in, R. R. Gates, 659
 Oil: Portland Experiments on Flow of Oil, S. D. Carothers, 415; Oil-finding: an Introduction to the Geological Study of Petroleum, E. H. C. Craig, 580; Coal Oil and Gas of the Foxburg Quadrangle, Pennsylvania, E. W. Shaw and M. J. Munn, 617; Oil and Gas Fields of the Carnegie Quadrangle, Pennsylvania, M. J. Munn, 617
 Oponic-index Estimations, Improved Method, C. Russ, 76
 Optical Aberration, New Treatment of, Prof. R. A. Sampson, 363
 Optical Convention, 309
 Optical Science: Address, Prof. Silvanus P. Thompson, F.R.S., 436
 Optical (and General) Scientific Instruments, Exhibition of, 435
 Optics, see Light
 Optics, Applied, Outlines of, P. G. Nutting, 603
 Orchard: How to Make an Orchard in British Columbia, J. T. Bealby, Dr. F. Cavers, 497
 Orchid *Gastrodia* and Fungus *Armillaria*, Prof. S. Kusano, 484
 Ordnance Survey, Geodetic Work in the, 470
 Osmotic and Liquid Membranes, Prof. F. T. Trouton, F.R.S., 32
 Osmotic Pressure of Sap of Developing Leaves of *Syringa vulgaris*, Changes in, Prof. H. H. Dixon and W. R. G. Atkins, 156
 Ovaries, Transplantation of, in Hens, C. B. Davenport, 67; the One-sided Reduction of Ovaries and Oviducts in the Amniota and Mammalian Evolution, Dr. Hans Gadov, 416
 Owl, Little, Mr. Meade-Waldo, 510
 Ox and its Kindred, the, R. Lydekker, 523
 Oxford: Oxford Memories, John Viriamu Jones and other, Prof. E. B. Poulton, F.R.S., 419; Oxford Gardens, R. T. Günther, Dr. F. Cavers, 497
 Oxydases of *Cytisus Adami*, Prof. F. Keeble and Dr. E. F. Armstrong, 442
 Oysters: Bacteriological Purification in Filtered Water, M. Fabre-Domergue, 314; the Slipper Limpet, J. H. Orton, 641
 Ozone and Ventilation, Leonard Hill and M. Flack, 72; Ozone Production Plant on Central London Railway, 304; Ozonair Portable Generators, 486
 Palæobotany: Oak-tree found in excavating near Charing Cross, 39; *Heterangium hibernicum*, sp. nov., Prof. T. Johnson, 156; *Botrychioxylon paradoxum*, a Palæozoic Fern with Secondary Wood, Dr. D. H. Scott, 234; *Psymnophyllum majus*, sp. nova, from Newfoundland, Dr. E. A. Newell Arber, 235; Petrifications of the earliest European Angiosperms, Dr. Marie C. Stopes, 258, 641; Early Cretaceous Flora of Maryland, E. W. Berry, Prof. A. C. Seward, F.R.S., 330; Palæobotany and Botany, Prof. J. M. Coulter, 510
 Palæontological Society, New, in Germany, 509, 613
 Palæontology: Large Mouse from Cave in Crete, Miss D. M. A. Bate, 14; Primitive Animals, Geoffrey Smith, 31; Skull of Ancient Type of Horse found in a Bristol Excavation, Prof. J. Cossar Ewart, 67; New Lower Carboniferous Gasteropoda, Jane Longstaff, 104; Fresh-water Tortoise from Lower Eocene in Congo, Prof. L. Dollo, 119; Power of Flight of Giant Pterodactyles of the Cretaceous due to Augmentation of Atmospheric Pressure, E. and A. Harlé, 119; Osteology of Pteranodon, Dr. G. F. Eaton, 123; Permian Vertebrate Fauna of North America, Prof. E. C. Case, 173; Remains of Prehistoric Horse in the Stort Basin, Rev. Dr. A. Irving, 218; Mammalian Remains at the Base of the Chalky Boulder Clay Formation in Suffolk, J. Reid Moir, 269; Recent Discoveries of Dinosauria in German East Africa, Dr. A. S. Woodward, 273; Insect Remains from the Midland and S.E. Coalfields, H. Bolton, 286; Recent Work, Various, 408; Skull of Triceratops for British Museum, 509; Crocodilian Remains from Upper Tertiaries of Parana, C. Rovereto, 539; South African Fossil Reptiles, Dr. R. Brom, 587; see also Fossils
 Palladium, Sorption of Hydrogen by, Dr. A. Holt, Dr. Edgar and Mr. Firth, 79
 Palms: Annals of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Calcutta: Asiatic Palms—Lepidocarpaceæ: the Species of *Dæmonorops*, Dr. Odoardo Beccari, 167
 Panama-Californian Exhibition, 563
 Parasites: Blood Parasites found in the Zoological Gardens, H. G. Plimmer, 77; Remarkable Effort of a Polyzoan to free itself from a Parasite, O. Schröder, 91; Two New Trematode Parasites from the Indian Cobra, Dr. W. Nicoll, 416; Blood Parasites of Animals in the Zoological Gardens, H. G. Plimmer, F.R.S., 429; Trematodes from Australian Frogs, Dr. S. J. Johnston, 626
 Pathology: Epithelioma of the Embryonic Ectoderm, M. Letulle and L. Nattan-Larrier, 209; Achondroplasia, Dr. Mark Jansen, 275; International Congress of Comparative Pathology, 509; Hæmarthrosis of the Knee, P. Delbet and P. Cartier, 574
 Pearls: the Ceylon Pearl Oyster and the Cestode Theory of Pearl Production, Dr. H. L. Jameson, 77; Clasmatosis of the Shell and Pearl, R. Dubois, 79; Ceylon Pearl Fishery, 350; Pearl Industry, H. M. Smith, 640
 Peat, J. J. Stevenson, 513
 Pedigrees, Use of: Royal Institution Discourse, W. C. D. Whetham, F.R.S., 310
 Pegmatites, Gem-bearing, of Madagascar, A. Lacroix, 677
 Penguin, Adélie, L. Gain, 483
 Perfumes, Natural, H. Gault, 146
 Peripatus from the Abor Hills, S. W. Kemp, 365
 Peru: Yale Expedition, Prof. H. Bingham, 68; Human Remains at Cuzco, 584
 Petrography: Recent Work; British Pillow-lavas, H. Dewey and J. S. Flett; Rocks rich in Alkalies, R. A. Daly; Improved Petrological Microscope, G. W. Grabham, 513
 Petroleum, see Oil
 Pharmacy: *Podophyllum emodi*, Indian Species, Puran Singh, 249
 Phenological Observations for 1911: Report, J. E. Clark and R. H. Hooker, 208
 Philadelphia: Medal Awards by Franklin Institute, 13; Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences, Centenary, 143
 Philippines: Report of Bureau of Science, Dr. P. C. Freer, 404
 Philosophy: Matter and Mind: Address to Royal Scottish Geographical Society, Sir George Reid, 251; see also Animism
 Photochemistry: Photochemical Action, Profs. Ciamician and Silber, 60; Photochemical Kinetics of the Chloroplatinic Acids in very Dilute Solutions, M. Boll and P. Job, 157; Photochemical Reaction, a Reversible, M. Rindl, 608
 Photography: Photographic Lenses: a Simple Treatise, Conrad Beck and H. Andrews, 5; Photography of Colour by purely Optical Means, J. and E. Rheinberg, 117; Rheinberg's Micro-spectra Method of Colour Photography, 307; Society of Colour Photographers' Exhibition, 352; Photographic Copyright, G. E. Brown and A. Mackie, 631
 Photolysis of Sugars Ketonic by Sunlight and by Ultraviolet Light, D. Berthelot and H. Gaudechon, 625

- Photomechanical Processes, Use of an Emulsion of Aqueous Solution of Gelatine and Gum Arabic in, Dr. Hans Strecker, 227
- Photometric Equipment of Holophane Co., 41
- Photosynthesis and Stomatal Aperture, W. Lawrence Balls, 555
- Phototelegraphy, *see* Telegraphy
- Physical Apparatus: Viscometer, Simple, for very Viscous Liquids, Dr. G. F. C. Searle, 312; Expansion Apparatus for making visible Tracks of Ionising Particles in Gases, C. T. R. Wilson, 415
- Physical Laboratories: Extension of Physical and Electro-technical Laboratories in the University of Manchester, 46; Jefferson Physical Laboratory, 324; *see also* National Physical Laboratory
- Physics:
- Books:* Jelinek's Psychrometer-Tafeln: Anhang: Hygrometer-Tafeln von J. M. Pernter, 5; a Laboratory Note-book of Physics, S. A. McDowall, 317; Grundriss der Naturlehre, E. Mach, Dr. K. Habart, 343; Introductory Course for Technical Students, W. M. Hooton and A. Mathias, 343; the Ontario High School Physics, Dr. F. W. Merchant and Prof. C. A. Chant, 343; the Ontario High School Laboratory Manual in Physics, Dr. F. W. Merchant and C. A. Chant, 343; Lehrbuch der Physik, Prof. H. Ebert, 343; an Intermediate Course of Practical Physics, Rajanikanta De, 343; Anniversary Lectures at Clark University, V. Volterra and others, 528; Laboratory Problems in Physics, F. T. Jones and Prof. R. R. Tatnall, 603; Teaching of Physics for Purposes of General Education, Prof. C. Riborg Mann, 630;
- Papers:* Vapour Pressure of the Alkaline Metals between 250° C. and 400° C., L. Hackspill, 157; Experimental Researches on the Density of Liquids below 0° C., Dr. Jean Timmermans, 157; Variations of the Pressure Coefficient with Temperature and on some Points which depend on it in the study of Internal Pressure of Fluids, E. H. Amagat, 183; the Different Internal Energies of a Substance, R. D. Kleeman, 208, 313; Observed Variations in the Temperature Coefficients of a Precision Balance, J. J. Manley, 233; Energy Content of Material Bodies, Prof. Natanson, 250; a Theory of Matter, Prof. Mie, 485; Experiments with Rotating Films, C. V. Boys, 493; Viscosity of Gases at Low Temperatures, 540; Effects of Friction in a Vacuum on Thorium Oxide, R. Howlett, 606; Sign of the Newtonian Potential, H. Piaggio, 608; *see also* Liquids
- Physiography of the Prairies and N.E. Australia, 567; Physiography and Ecology of Mt. Arrowsmith District, N.Z., Messrs. Speight, Cockayne, and Laing, 644
- Physiology: Composition of Blood Gases during Respiration of Oxygen, G. A. Buckmaster and J. A. Gardner, 24; Sir John Burdon-Sanderson: a Memoir by the late Lady Burdon-Sanderson, 55; Physiology, Prof. W. D. Halliburton, 166; the Instability of a Cortical Point, T. Graham Brown and Prof. C. S. Sherrington, 258; the Process of Excitation in Nerve and Muscle: Croonian Lecture, Dr. K. Lucas, 390; Relation between Secretory and Capillary Pressure, Leonard Hill and M. Flack, 442; Importance of Substances present in Minute Amounts in Food, Prof. Ben. Moore, F.R.S., 567; Boron in Animal Tissues, G. Bertrand and H. Agulhon, 574; Physiology of the Semicircular Canals and their Relation to Seasickness, Dr. J. Byrne, 575
- Physiology: Plant: Identification of Glucoside from Leaves of *Kalmia latifolia* with Asebotine, 25; Distribution of Oxydases in the Plant and their Role in Formation of Pigment, Dr. F. Keeble and Dr. E. F. Armstrong, 258; Plant Physiology: with special reference to Plant Production, Prof. B. M. Duggar, 265; Pflanzenphysiologie, Prof. W. Palladin, 371; Influence of sudden Temperature Changes on Respiration, L. Blanc, 495
- Phytogeography: Pflanzengeographische Wandlungen der deutschen Landschaft, Prof. H. Hausrath, 421; die Pflanzenwelt Dalmatiens, Prof. L. Adamović, 421; Einführung in die Tropenwelt, Dr. K. Guenther, 421
- Pinhole Images, R. Beattie, 295
- Plague in India, Dr. Greenwood, Dr. Rowland, 177
- Planet 1911 MT, Dr. Palisa, 356; Messrs. Haynes and Pitman, Prof. Franz, 384; 512
- Plankton to South of Isle of Man, Prof. Herdman and Mr. Scott, 645; *see also* Biology, Marine
- Plant-breeding, Prof. J. M. Coulter, 510
- Plants, Higher, Method for Culture in Sterile Media, R. Combes, 157
- Platinum: Method of Joining Platinum and Quartz, G. Berlemont, 313
- Poetry and Science, Dr. T. H. Warren, 73
- Poisons: Immunity of Lizard to Poison of *Heloderma suspectum*, Mme. Phisalix, 365; Poisonous Plants in S. Africa, Mr. Burt-Davy, 485; Toxicity of Fungi, M. Radais and A. Sartory, 547; Mechanism of Haemolysis caused by Arachnolysin, R. Lévy, 574; Toxic Properties of β -imidazoethylamine, A. Berthelot and D. M. Bertrand, 625
- Polaris, Variability, J. Stebbins, 669
- Polarisation in Light from a Cloudy Sky, Detection of small amounts of, A. E. Oxley, 313, 669
- Politics and Science, 426
- Polychæta from the Pacific Coast, Miss Helen L. M. Pixell, 416
- Polyplacophora of Lord Howe and Norfolk Islands, C. Hedley and A. F. B. Hull, 600
- Polypodium, New, from Panama, R. Mason, 14
- Pontoon, a Ferro-concrete Sludge-pumping, for the Manchester Ship Canal, 407
- Post Mortems and Morbid Anatomy, Dr. T. Shennan, 477
- Potential: Sign of the Newtonian Potential, H. Piaggio, 608
- Poultry: Principles and Practice of Poultry Culture, J. H. Robinson, 240; Conference of International Association of Poultry Instructors, 537
- Prairie Wolf and Antarctic Dog, Dr. R. F. Scharff, 632
- Prairies, B. Shimek, 567
- Primula obconica* under Cultivation, A. W. Hill, 145
- Protozoology: Lehrbuch der Protozoenkunde, Prof. Dörflein, 372
- Prussic Acid, Free, in Living Tissues of Plants, Dr. Peche, 539
- Psychology: Text-book of Experimental Psychology with Laboratory Exercises, Dr. C. S. Myers, 316; Introduction to the Study of the Senses, J. A. Dell, 476; Increasing Human Efficiency in Business, Prof. W. D. Scott, 629; the Beyond that is Within, and Other Addresses, Prof. E. Boutroux, 630
- Pygmies of New Guinea, R. W. Williamson, A. F. R. Wollaston, 556
- Pyknometer, New Form, 355
- Pyrometry: a Practical Treatise, C. R. Darling, 28
- Quartz-mercury Lamp, Variations in Radiation of, A. Tian, 547
- Quaternions, International Association for Promoting Study of, 588
- Rabbit Traps, 416
- Radiation: Advances in the Theory of Radiation: Nobel Lecture at Stockholm, Prof. W. Wien, 146; Meteorological Conditions affecting Nocturnal Radiation, J. R. Sutton, 287; Radiations producing the Photosynthesis of Complex Compounds, &c., D. Berthelot and H. Gaudechon, 573
- Radio-activity: New Laboratory, J. Danne, 69; Correction, 93; Electrolytic Transportation of the Active Deposit of Actinium through Water, Prof. T. Godlewski, 86; Nature of γ Rays excited by β Rays, J. A. Gray, 104; the Radio-active Uraniferous Niobotantalotitanates of the Madagascar Pegmatites, A. Lacroix, 235; the β Particles reflected by Sheets of Matter of different Thicknesses, W. Wilson, 285; Deceleration of β -rays when traversing Matter, J. Danysz, 390; Radio-activity of Mineral Waters of Usson, G. Massol, 625; Radio-active Deposits in Australia, 642; Mobilities of the Radio-active Atom-ions in Gases, S. Ratner, 677
- Radio-chemistry: Chemistry of the Radio-elements, F. Soddy, F.R.S., 291
- Radio-telegraphy, *see* Wireless

- Radium: Atomic Weight of Radium, Dr. O. Hönigschmid, 68; Presence of Radium in some Carcinomatous Tumours, Dr. W. S. Lazarus-Barlow, 76; Decomposition of Sodium Urate by Radium Emanation, P. Mesernitsky, 93; the International Radium Standard, 115; the Origin of Radium: Royal Institution Discourse, Frederick Soddy, F.R.S., 203; the Quantities of Radium and Thorium Emanations contained in the Air of Soils, J. Satterly, 208; Number of β -particles emitted in Transformation of Radium, H. G. Moseley, 415; Radium and the Solar Chromosphere, Dr. Dyson, F.R.S., 541; Researches at the Vienna Radium Institute, 543
- Railway Signal Engineering (Mechanical), L. P. Lewis, 549
- Rain, Electric Charge on, J. A. McClelland and J. J. Nolan, 521
- Rainfall: Rainfall in the British Isles, Dr. H. R. Mill, 198; Rainfall in Britain in April, 224, 247; Rainfall of Jamaica, 1870-1909, Maxwell Hall, 230; June Rainfall, Dr. Mill, 564; Forests and Rainfall, Sir W. Schlich, F.R.S., 662
- Rams, Unicorn, 249
- Rand Geology, Dr. Mallor and others, 87
- Rathite Group, the, R. H. Solly, 443
- Rats: Campaign against Rats, W. Hutton, 399; Effect of Vegetable Diet on the Albino Rat, Prof. Slonaker, 429
- Red Water from a Crater Lake, J. E. Mackenzie and T. M. Finlay, 113; Red Water, H. Warth, 138; Cyril Crossland, 349
- Refraction: Refraktometrisches Hilfsbuch, Prof. W. A. Roth and Dr. F. Eisenlohr, 111; Refraction and Magnetic Rotation of Mixtures, F. Schwes, 625
- Reptiles: Frogs and Snakes from the Abor Foot-hills, Dr. Annandale, 365; Reptiles, Amphibia, Fishes, and Lower Chordata, R. Lydekker, J. T. Cunningham, G. A. Boulenger, F.R.S., and J. A. Thomson, 523

REVIEWS AND OUR BOOKSHELF.

Agriculture and Fisheries:

- Bealby (J. T.), How to Make an Orchard in British Columbia, Dr. F. Cavers, 497
- Davis (Prof. B. M.), Agricultural Education in the Public Schools, Prof. J. R. Ainsworth-Davis, 489
- Dunstan (Dr. W. R., F.R.S.), International Association of Tropical Agriculture: Papers and Reports on Cotton Cultivation, 427
- Eckles (Prof. Clarence H.), Dairy Cattle and Milk Production, 163
- Hehn (Victor), O. Schrader (Editor), and others, Kulturpflanzen und Haustiere in ihrem Uebergang aus Asien nach Griechenland und Italien sowie in das übrige Europa, 164
- Hérubel (Prof. M. A.), B. Miall, Sea Fisheries: their Treasures and Toilers, 1
- King (Dr. F. H.), Farmers of Forty Centuries, or Permanent Agriculture in China, Korea, and Japan, 500
- Kraus (Prof. G.), Boden und Klima auf kleinstem Raum, Dr. E. J. Russell, 186
- Mann (Albert R.), Beginnings in Agriculture, 163
- Maw (P. Trentham), Complete Yield Tables for British Woodlands and the Finance of British Forestry, 319
- Reynolds (Prof. M. H.), Veterinary Studies for Agricultural Students, 58
- Robertson-Scott (J. W.), "Home Counties", Sugar Beet: Some Facts and Some Illusions, 28
- Robinson (J. H.), Principles and Practice of Poultry Culture, 240
- Rutter (W. P.), Wheat-growing in Canada, the United States, and the Argentine, 135

Anthropology:

- Boas (Franz), the Mind of Primitive Man, A. E. Crawley, 161
- Frederici (Dr. G.), Beiträge zur Völker und Sprachenkunde von Deutsch-Neuguinea, 439
- Gaupp (Prof. E.), die äusseren Formen des menschlichen Körpers in ihrem allgemeinen Zustandekommen, Prof. G. Elliot Smith, F.R.S., 37
- Gibson (J. Y.), the Story of the Zulus, 35
- Johnston (Sir Harry, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.), Views and Reviews: from the Outlook of an Anthropologist, 553

- Keith (Prof. A.), Ancient Types of Man, 375
- Kitching (Rev. A. L.), On the Backwaters of the Nile: Studies of Some Child Races of Central Africa, Sir H. H. Johnston, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., 297
- Munro (Dr. Neil G.), Prehistoric Japan, 423
- Radau (H.), H. V. Hilprecht (Editor), the Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania: Cuneiform Texts: Sumerian Hymns and Prayers, 60
- Thurston (E., C.I.E.), Omens and Superstitions of Southern India, 530
- Wace (A. J. B.) and M. S. Thompson, Prehistoric Thessaly, 204
- Williamson (R. W.), Dr. A. C. Haddon, F.R.S., the Mafalu Mountain People of British New Guinea, 556
- Wollaston (A. F. R.), Pygmies and Papuans: the Stone Age To-day in Dutch New Guinea, 556

Biology:

- Abel (O.), A. Brauer, and others, die Abstammungslehre: Zwölf gemeinverständliche Vorträge, 4
- Adamović (Prof. L.), die Pflanzenwelt Dalmatiens, 421
- Alcock (A., C.I.E., F.R.S.), Entomology for Medical Officers, 474
- Alder (Joshua) and A. Hancock, J. Hopkinson, the British Tunicata, 523
- Bigelow (Prof. M. A., and Anna), Applied Biology, 190
- Bastin (S. Leonard), Wonders of Plant Life, 320
- Bather (Dr. F. A.), Guide to the Fossil Invertebrate Animals in the British Museum (Natural History), 345
- Boulger (G. S.), Botany: Chapters on the Study of Plants, 654
- Bull (Charles L.), Under the Roof of the Jungle: a Book of Animal Life in the Guiana Wilds, 396
- Burlend (T. H.), First Book of Zoology, 264
- Campbell (Prof. D. H.), Plant Life and Evolution, 213
- Cavers (Dr. F.), Practical Botany, 5
- Central Committee for the Survey and Study of British Vegetation (Members of), Types of British Vegetation, 212
- Conwentz (H.) and others, Beiträge zur Naturdenkmalpflege, Band iii.: das Plagefenn bei Chorin, A. E. Crawley, 665
- Corke (H. Essenhigh), G. C. Nuttall, Wild Flowers as They Grow: Photographed in Colour Direct from Nature, 213; Dr. F. Cavers, 497
- Coulter (Dr. J. M.), Dr. C. R. Barnes, and Dr. H. C. Cowles, a Text-book of Botany for Colleges and Universities: vol. ii., Ecology, 654
- Curtis (C. H.), Annuals, Hardy and Half-hardy, Dr. F. Cavers, 497
- Dahl (Knut), Ian Baillie, Age and Growth of Salmon and Trout in Norway as Shown by their Scales, 523
- Deegener (Prof. P.), Lebensweise und Organisation: eine Einführung in die Biologie der wirbellosen Tiere, 393
- Dendy (Prof. Arthur, F.R.S.), Outlines of Evolutionary Biology, 393
- Doflein (Prof.), Lehrbuch der Protozoenkunde, 372
- Dykes (W. Rickatson), Irises, Dr. F. Cavers, 497
- Earle (Mrs. C. W.) and Ethel Case, Gardening for the Ignorant, Dr. F. Cavers, 497
- Eaton (Dr. G. F.), Osteology of Pteranodon, 123
- Eggeling (Prof. H. von), der Aufbau der Skeletteile in den freien Gliedmassen der Wirbeltiere: Untersuchungen in urodelen Amphibien, Prof. G. Elliot Smith, F.R.S., 59
- Engler (A.), J. Perkins, Fr. Kränzlin, das Pflanzenreich, 31
- Eriksson (Jacob), der Malvenrost: seine Verbreitung, Natur, und Entwicklungsgeschichte, 397
- Evans (Ernest), an Intermediate Text-book of Botany, 213
- Fabre (J. H.), Bernard Miall, Social Life in the Insect World, 401
- Fowler (Dr. W. W.), the Fauna of British India, edited by Dr. A. E. Shipley, F.R.S., and G. A. K. Marshall: Coleoptera, 267
- Friedenthal (Dr. Hans), Tierhaaratlas, Prof. G. Elliot Smith, F.R.S., 419
- Gilchrist (Prof. J. D. F.), South African Zoology, 166
- Gladstone (Hugh S.), Catalogue of the Vertebrate Fauna of Dumfriesshire, 627
- Grouse Committee of Inquiry: Popular Edition of Report, the Grouse in Health and in Disease, 658

Reviews and Our Bookshelf (*continued*):

- Guenther (Dr. K.), Einführung in die Tropenwelt: Erlebnisse eines Naturforschers auf Ceylon, 421
 Günther (R. T.), Oxford Gardens: based upon Daubeny's Guide, Dr. F. Cavers, 497
 Hampson (Sir George F., Bart.), Catalogue of the Noctuidæ in the British Museum, 374
 Hausrath (Prof. H.), Pflanzengeographische Wandlungen der deutschen Landschaft, 421
 Hensen (Prof. V.), das Leben in Ozean nach Zählungen seiner Bewohner (Plankton-Expedition der Humboldt Stiftung), Dr. W. J. Dakin, 94
 Heron-Allen (E.) and A. Earland, the Recent and Fossil Foraminifera of the Shore-sands at Selsey Bill, Sussex, 290
 Herrick (F. H.), Natural History of the American Lobster, 9
 Herter (C. A.), Biological Aspects of Human Problems, 576
 Hiesemann (M.), Emma S. Buchheim, How to Attract and Protect Wild Birds, 190
 Jaekel (Prof. Otto), die Wirbeltiere, 134
 Johns (the late Rev. C. A.), E. T. Cook, British Trees, including the Finer Shrubs for Garden and Woodland, 30
 Kerr (Prof. J. Graham, F.R.S.), Zoology, 627
 Knipe (Henry R.), Evolution in the Past, 137
 Korschelt (E.), G. Linck, and others, Editors, Handwörterbuch der Naturwissenschaften, 502
 Küster (Prof. E.), die Gallen der Pflanzen, 185
 Langhans (Dr. V. H.), der Grossteich bei Hirschberg in Nordböhmen, 488
 Larken (E. P.), Leisure Hours with Nature, 137
 Leach (J. A.), an Australian Bird Book: a Pocket Book for Field Use, 85
 Lister (Arthur, F.R.S.), Monograph of the Mycetozoa: a Descriptive Catalogue of the Species in the Herbarium of the British Museum, 137
 Livens (H. M.), Earth and her Children, 32
 Lohmann (H.), Ueber das Nannoplankton und die Zentrifugierung kleinster Wasserproben, Dr. W. J. Dakin, 94
 Lones (Dr. T. E.), Aristotle's Researches in Natural Science, 653
 Longstaff (Dr. G. B.), F. Müller, Butterfly-hunting in Many Lands, 291
 Looss (Dr. A.), the Anatomy and Life-history of *Agchylostoma duodenale*, Dub., Part II., 672
 Lotsy (J. P.), Vorträge über botanische Stammesgeschichte: Lehrbuch der Pflanzensystematik, 342
 Lowe (Percy R.), a Naturalist on Desert Islands, 523
 Lydekker (R., F.R.S.), the Ox and its Kindred, 523; the Horse and its Relatives, 627
 Lydekker (R.), J. T. Cunningham, G. A. Boulenger, F.R.S., and J. A. Thomson, Reptiles, Amphibia, Fishes, and Lower Chordata, 523
 Maas (Prof. Otto) and Dr. O. Renner, Einführung in die Biologie, 393
 Masee (George), British Fungi: with a Chapter on Lichens, 30
 Möbius (Prof. M.), Mikroskopisches Praktikum für systematische Botanik: i., Angiospermæ, Dr. F. Cavers, 497
 Morley (Claude), a Revision of the Ichneumonidæ, 627
 Mornet (Prof. D.), les Sciences de la Nature en France au XVIII^e Siècle, 476
 Nathansohn (Prof. A.), Allgemeine Botanik, 654
 Nussbaum (M.), G. Karsten, and M. Weber, Lehrbuch der Biologie für Hochschulen, 264
 Orléans (Duc d') and others, Campagne Arctique de 1907, Prof. A. Herdman, F.R.S., 107
 Peabody (J. E.) and A. E. Hunt, Elementary Plant Biology, Dr. F. Cavers, 497
 Punnett (Prof. R. C.), Mendelism, 215
 Rabaud (É.), le Transformisme et l'Expérience, 501
 Renshaw (Graham), More Animal Romances, 264
 Rignano (Eugenio), Prof. B. C. H. Harvey, Upon the Inheritance of Acquired Characters, 576
 Ross (Dr. H.), die Pflanzengallen (Cecidien) Mittel- und Nord-Europas, 185

- Rusby (Prof. H. H.), a Manual of Structural Botany, Dr. F. Cavers, 497
 Scharff (R. F.), Distribution and Origin of Life in America, 523
 Schleip (Dr. W.), Anleitung zum praktischen Studium niederer Tiere: Protozoa, Cœlenterata, Vermes, Echinodermata, 264
 Schmidt (Dr. Heinrich), Wörterbuch der Biologie, 189
 Schulze (F. E.), Dr. H. Friese, Prof. J. J. Kieffer, Dr. J. E. W. Ihle, das Tierreich, 627
 Sclater (W. L.), History of the Birds of Colorado, 523
 Sedgwick (Rev. S. N.), Moths of the Month and How to Identify Them, 346
 Seward (Prof. A. C., F.R.S.), Links with the Past in the Plant World, 189
 Smith (Geoffrey), Primitive Animals, 31
 Spengel (Geheimer Hofrat Prof.), Friends and Disciples of, Festschrift zum sechzigsten Geburtstage, 580
 Steuer (Prof. A.), Leitfaden der Planktonkunde, 94
 Stevenson-Hamilton (Major J.), Animal Life in Africa, Sir H. H. Johnston, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., 297
 Stonham (C., C.M.G.), Lilian M. Medland, the Birds of the British Islands, 637
 Thompson (H. Stuart), Sub-alpine Plants: Flowers of the Swiss Woods and Meadows, 654
 Timiriazeff (Prof. C. A.), the Life of the Plant, 393
 Tobler-Wolff (Dr. G.) and Prof. F. Tobler, Anleitung zur mikroskopischen Untersuchung von Pflanzenfasern, Dr. F. Cavers, 497
 Usteri (Prof. A.), Flora der Umgebung der Stadt São Paulo in Brasilien, Dr. O. Stapf, F.R.S., 420
 Warming (Prof. Eug.), Metta M. Rehling and Elizabeth M. Thomas, Plant Life: a Text-book of Botany for Schools and Colleges, 213
 West (W.) and Prof. G. S. West, Monograph of the British Desmidiaceæ, 523
 Worgitzky (Dr. G.), Lebensfragen aus der heimischen Pflanzenwelt, Dr. F. Cavers, 497
 Wyss (C. von), Gardens in their Seasons: a Nature Book for Boys and Girls, 320
 Yates (Lucy H.), the Gardener and the Cook, 111
 Zschokke (Prof. F.), die Tiefseefauna der Seen Mitteleuropas, 488

Chemistry:

- Asch (Dr. W.) and Dr. D. Asch, die Silicate in chemischer und technischer Beziehung, Dr. C. H. Desch, 212
 Auld (Dr. S. J. M.), Introduction to Quantitative Analysis, 552
 Beltzer (Prof. F. J. G.) and J. Persoz, les Matières Cellulosiques, 84
 Bugge (Dr. G.), Bücher der Naturwissenschaft (edited by Dr. S. Günther): Chemie und Technik, 398
 Calvet (M. L.), Alcools, Alcool Dénaturé, Dénaturants, 84
 Cohen (Prof. J. B., F.R.S.) and Arthur G. Ruston, Smoke: a Study of Town Air, 139
 Cumming (Dr. A. C.), Practical Chemistry for Medical Students, 291
 Delahaye (H.), Huiles Minérales, 84
 Dunstan (Dr. A. E.) and F. B. Thole, a Text-book of Practical Chemistry for Technical Institutes, 291
 Edmunds (E. W.) and J. B. Hoblyn, the Story of the Five Elements, 60
 Haldane (Dr. J. S., F.R.S.), Methods of Air Analysis, 552
 Hale (A. J.), Practical Chemistry for Engineering Students, 578
 Hampshire (C. H.), Volumetric Analysis for Students of Pharmaceutical and General Chemistry, 552
 Hilditch (Dr. T. P.), a First Year Physical Chemistry, 578
 Jacomet (L.), Matières Tannantes Cuir: Gélamines, Colles, Noirs, Cirages, 85
 Jones (R. Henry), Experimental Domestic Science, 604
 Knox (Dr. J.), Physico-Chemical Calculations, 578
 Lunge (Prof. G., Editor), Dr. C. A. Keane, Technical Methods of Chemical Analysis, 341
 Méker (P.), Soude-Potasse-Sels: Dénaturation des Sels, 84
 Moldenhauer (Dr. W.), Chemisch-technisches Praktikum, 398
 Molinari (Prof. E.), Trattato di Chimica Organica Generale e Applicata all' Industria, 554

Reviews and Our Bookshelf (*continued*):

- Morgan (Prof. W. C.) and J. A. Lyman, *Chemistry: an Elementary Text-book*, 291
- Neave (Dr. G. B.) and Dr. I. M. Heilbron, *Identification of Organic Compounds*, 346
- Ostwald (W.), *Grundlinien der anorganischen Chemie*, 526
- Ostwald (Prof. Wilhelm), Dr. W. W. Taylor, *Outlines of General Chemistry*, 526
- Perkin (Prof. W. H., F.R.S.) and Prof. F. Stanley Kipping, F.R.S., *Organic Chemistry*, 578
- Post (Prof. J.) and Prof. B. Neumann, *Traité Complet d'Analyse Chimique appliquée aux Essais Industriels*, 109, 423
- Pring (Dr. J. N.), *Laboratory Exercises in Physical Chemistry*, 291
- Roberts (E.), *Famous Chemists*, 32
- Scheid (Prof. Karl), *Vorbereitungsbuch für den Experimentalunterricht in Chemie*, 398
- Schwalbe (Prof. C. G.), *die Chemie der Cellulose unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Textil- und Zellstoff-industrien*, 238
- Senter (Dr. G.), *a Text-book of Inorganic Chemistry*, 291
- Soddy (F., F.R.S.), *the Chemistry of the Radio-elements*, 291
- Spencer (Dr. J. F.), *an Experimental Course of Physical Chemistry*, 291, 578
- Stocks (H. B.), *Water Analysis for Sanitary and Technical Purposes*, 552
- Sumner (E. J.), *Chemistry Note-book*, 291
- Thole (F. B.), *Qualitative Organic Analysis*, 552
- Thomas (Prof. V.) and D. Gauthier, *Notions Fondamentales d'Analyse Qualitative*, 578
- Thorpe (Sir Edward, C.B., F.R.S.), *a Dictionary of Applied Chemistry*, 162
- Urban (Prof. G.), *Introduction à l'Étude de la Spectrochimie*, Prof. E. C. C. Baly, F.R.S., 211
- Wedekind (Prof. E.), *Magnetochemie: Beziehungen zwischen magnetischen Eigenschaften und chemischer Natur*, 528
- Weston (F. E.), *Elementary Experimental Chemistry*, 291
- Wilson (F. R. L.) and G. W. Hedley, *a School Chemistry*, 578
- Engineering:**
- Advisory Committee for Aëronautics: Report, 543
- Advisory Committee for Boats and Life-saving Appliances on Ships: Report, 661
- Allen (C. Edgar), *the Modern Locomotive*, 111
- American Institute of Chemical Engineers: Transactions, 549
- Barker (A. H.), *Barker on Heating: the Theory and Practice of Heating and Ventilation*, 628
- Bauer (Dr. G.) and O. Lasche, and others, *Marine Steam Turbines*, 159
- Bedell (Prof. F.) and Dr. C. A. Pierce, *Direct and Alternating Current Manual*, Prof. Gisbert Kapp, 472
- Bloch (Dr. L.), G. Roy, *Principes de la Technique de l'Éclairage*, 3
- Brislee (Dr. F. J.), *an Introduction to the Study of Fuel*, 549
- Chalkley (A. P.), Dr. R. Diesel, *Diesel Engines for Land and Marine Work*, 549
- Eichhorn (Dr. G., Editor); Prof. Dr. J. Zenneck, *Jahrbuch der drahtlosen Telegraphie und Telephonie*, Dr. J. Erskine-Murray, 400
- Faber (Oscar) and P. G. Bowie, *Reinforced Concrete Design*, 501
- Ferguson (Prof. O. J.), *the Elements of Electrical Transmission*, Prof. Gisbert Kapp, 472
- French Government, *Service des Grandes Forces Hydrauliques*, 72
- Garratt (H. A.), *Heat Engines*, 628
- Goodrich (W. F.), *Modern Destructor Practice*, 628
- Hobart (H. M.), *the Design of Static Transformers*, 475
- Hughes (Prof. H. J.) and A. T. Safford, *a Treatise on Hydraulics*, 82
- Korn (Prof. Arthur) and Prof. B. Glatzel, *Handbuch der Phototelegraphie und Telautographie*, 110
- Lewis (L. P.), *Railway Signal Engineering (Mechanical)*, 549
- Marsh (C. F.), *Reinforced Concrete Compression Member Diagram*, 549

- Maxim (Sir Hiram S.), *New System for Preventing Collisions at Sea*, 542
- Meyer (Gustav W.), *Maschinen und Apparate der Starkstromtechnik*, Prof. Gisbert Kapp, 472
- Morrow (Dr. J.), *Steam Turbine Design*, 159
- Morse (Prof. H. W.), *Storage Batteries*, Prof. Gisbert Kapp, 472
- Parsons (Sir Charles A., K.C.B.), *the Steam Turbine: Rede Lecture*, 159
- Pratt (H. Keay), *Boiler Draught*, 215
- Roysds (R.), *the Testing of Motive-power Engines*, 27
- Schon (H. A. E. C. von), *Hydro-electric Practice*, 214
- Wheeler (Engineer-Lieut. S. G., R.N.), *Heat and Steam*, 319
- Geography, Sport and Travel:**
- Black (A. and C., publishers), *Miss S. M. Nicholls, Geographical Pictures (from Photographs)*, 240
- Bosworth (G. F.), *East London*, 346
- Bury (G. Wyman, "Abdullah Mansur"), *the Land of Uz*, 35
- Canziani (Estella), *Costumes, Traditions, and Songs of Savoy*, 289
- Coleman (Prof. A. P., F.R.S.), *the Canadian Rockies: New and Old Trails*, 35
- Durand (Sir Edward, Bart.), *Sporting Reminiscences*, 35
- Evans (H. A.), *Monmouthshire*, 346
- Graham (A. W.), *Siam*, 138
- Kauffmann (O.), *aus Indiens Dschungeln*, 627
- Krümmel (Prof. Dr. O.), *Handbuch der Ozeanographie*, 133
- Lamond (Henry), *the Gentle Art*, 523
- Lloyd (Prof. J. E.), *Carnarvonshire*, 346
- Orléans (Duc d'), *Campagne Arctique de 1907*, Prof. Herdman, F.R.S., 107
- Orr (Capt. C. W. J.), *the Making of Northern Nigeria*, 35
- Paton (A. W.), Dr. A. H. Millar (Editors), *Handbook and Guide to Dundee and District*, 658
- Philips' Comparative Series of Wall Atlases, edited by J. F. Unstead and E. G. R. Taylor, 267
- Prichard (H. Hesketh), *Through Trackless Labrador*, 35
- Quine (Rev. J.), *the Isle of Man*, 346
- Seton (E. Thompson), *the Arctic Prairies: a Canoe Journey in search of Caribou to the Region north of Aylmer Lake*, 317
- Sheldon (Charles), *the Wilderness of the Upper Yukon: a Hunter's Explorations for Wild Sheep in Sub-arctic Mountains*, 83
- Spencer (Prof. Baldwin, C.M.G., F.R.S.) and F. J. Gillen, *Across Australia*, Dr. A. C. Haddon, F.R.S., 608
- Stebbing (E. P.), *Stalks in the Himalaya: Jottings of a Sportsman Naturalist*, 81
- Supan (Prof. A.), *Grundzüge der physischen Erdkunde*, 500
- Geology:**
- Craig (E. H. Cunningham), *Oil-finding: an Introduction to the Geological Study of Petroleum*, 580
- Dunn (Stanley C.), *Notes on the Mineral Deposits of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan*, 323
- Haug (Prof. E.), *Traité de Géologie*, 551
- Heron-Allen (Edw.), *Selsey Bill: Historic and Pre-historic*, 290
- Lemoine (M. Paul), *Géologie du Bassin de Paris*, 56
- Rhodes (J. E. W.), *Micropetrology for Beginners*, 31
- Suess (Prof. Ed.), *E. de Margerie, la Face de la Terre*, 3
- United States Geological Survey: *Water Supply Papers*, 150; *Mineral Resources of the United States*, 617
- Wright (Fred. Eugene), *the Methods of Petrographic-microscopic Research, their Relative Accuracy and Range of Application*, 673
- Mathematics and Physics:**
- Baker (W. M.), *the Calculus for Beginners*, 602
- Barton (Prof. E. H.), *Analytical Mechanics*, 655
- Bates (E. L.) and F. Charlesworth, *Practical Mathematics and Geometry*, 240
- Beck (Conrad) and H. Andrews, *Photographic Lenses: a Simple Treatise*, 5
- Besant (Dr. W. H., F.R.S., and A. S. Ramsey), *a Treatise on Hydromechanics, Part i.: Hydrostatics*, 655
- Board of Education Special Reports: *the Teaching of Mathematics*, 44

Reviews and Our Bookshelf (*continued*):

- Borchardt (W. G.) and the Rev. A. D. Perrott, *Geometry for Schools*, 602, 655
 Briggs (H.), *the Effects of Errors in Surveying*, 605
 Crawford (Dr. W. J.), *Elementary Graphic Statics*, 655
 Cross (M. I.) and M. J. Cole, *Modern Microscopy*, 525
 De (Rajanikanta), *Intermediate Course of Practical Physics*, 343
 Draper (Dr. C. H.), *Heat and the Principles of Thermodynamics*, 603
 Ebert (Prof. H.), *Lehrbuch der Physik*, 343
 Eder (Prof. J. M.) and Prof. E. Valenta, *Atlas typischer Spektren*, 554
 Forsyth (Dr. A. R., F.R.S.), *Lectures on the Differential Geometry of Curves and Surfaces*, 579
 Fowler (J. S.) and Wm. Marriott, *Our Weather*, 267
 Ghosh (Prof. L. K.), *Plane Trigonometry (for Indian Universities Syllabus)*, 655
 Godfrey (C., M.V.O.) and A. W. Siddons, *Algebra for Beginners*, 602
 Hall (Rev. C. A.), *How to Use the Microscope*, 525
 Hall (H. S.), *a School Algebra*, 602
 Hall (H. S.) and F. H. Stevens, *Examples in Arithmetic*, 602
 Hannington (Major-Gen. J. C.), *Tables of Logarithms and Anti-logarithms (Four Figures) 1 to 10,000*, 318
 Heywood (Prof. H. B.) and Prof. M. Fréchet, *l'Équation de Fredholm et ses Applications*, 499
 Hooton (W. M.) and A. Mathias, *Introductory Course of Mechanics and Physics for Technical Students*, 343
 Houssay (Prof. Frédéric), *Forme, Puissance et Stabilité des Poissons*, 319
 Hun (J. G.) and C. R. MacInnes, *the Elements of Plane and Spherical Trigonometry*, 655
 Jelinek's *Psychrometer-Tafeln: Anhang: Hygrometer-Tafeln von J. M. Pernter*, 5
 Jones (F. T.) and Prof. R. R. Tatnall, *Laboratory Problems in Physics*, 603
 "J. R. B." *Patent Adjustable Curve Ruler*, 477
 Lalesco (Prof. T.), *Introduction à la Théorie des Équations Intégrales*, 499
 Lebon (Ernest), *Savants du Jour: Gabriel Lippmann*, 81
 Loria (Prof. Gino), *Poliedri, Curve e Superficie secondo i metodi della Geometria Descrittiva*, 655
 Love (Prof. A. E. H., F.R.S.), *Some Problems of Geodynamics*, 471
 McDowall (S. A.), *a Laboratory Note-book of Physics*, 317
 Mach (E.), Dr. K. Habart, *Grundriss der Naturlehre für Gymnasien und Realschulen*, 343
 Mair (D. B.), *Junior Mathematics*, 655
 Manilius, H. W. Garrod, Editor, *Manili Astronomicum Liber II*, Dr. J. K. Fotheringham, 239
 Mann (Prof. C. Riborg), *the Teaching of Physics for Purposes of General Education*, 630
 Merchant (Dr. F. W.) and Prof. C. A. Chant, *Ontario High School Physics*, 343; *Ontario High School Laboratory Manual in Physics*, 343
 Milne (Rev. J. J.), *an Elementary Treatise on Cross-ratio Geometry*, 655
 Muir (Dr. T., C.M.G., F.R.S.), *the Theory of Determinants in the Historical Order of Development*, 237
 Nutting (P. G.), *Outlines of Applied Optics*, 603
 Ogley (D. H.), *Elementary Course on Practical Applied Electricity and Magnetism*, 343
 Ordnance Survey, *New Series: Measurement of a Geodetic Base Line at Lossiemouth in 1909, and a Discussion of the Theory of Measurement by Metal Tapes and Wires in Catenary*, 479
 Parker (G. W.), *Elements of Hydrostatics*, 603
 Pearson (Prof. Karl, F.R.S.), *the Grammar of Science: Part i., Physical*, 188
 Reid (Prof. L. W.), *the Elements of the Theory of Algebraic Numbers*, 164
 Rotch (A. Lawrence) and A. H. Palmer, *Charts of the Atmosphere for Aëronauts and Aviators*, 57
 Roth (Prof. W. A.) and Dr. F. Eisenlohr, *Refraktometrisches Hilfsbuch*, 111
 Satterly (Dr. John), *Junior Heat*, 603
 Scheffer (Prof. W.), *Wirkungsweise und Gebrauch des Mikroskops und seiner Hilfsapparate*, 525

- Scott (E. Erskine), *Tables of Logarithms and Anti-logarithms to Five Places*, 318
 Sommerville (Dr. D. M. J.), *Bibliography of Non-Euclidean Geometry: including the Theory of Parallels, the Foundations of Geometry and Space of N Dimensions*, 266
 Swanwick (F. T.), *Elementary Trigonometry*, 655
 Turner (Prof. H. H., F.R.S.), *the Great Star Map*, 398
 Volterra (Vito), E. Rutherford, R. W. Wood, and C. Barus, *Lectures at the Celebration of the Twentieth Anniversary of the Foundation of Clark University*, 528
 Whitehead (Dr. A. N., F.R.S.) and Bertrand Russell, *F.R.S., Principia Mathematica*, 474
 Wilkinson (P.) and F. W. Cook, *Macmillan's Reform Arithmetic*, 655
 Young (J. W. A., Editor), *Monographs on Topics of Modern Mathematics Relevant to the Elementary Field*, J. W. A. Young, 395

Medicine:

- Bahr (P. H.), *Filariasis and Elephantiasis in Fiji*, 487
 Bennett (Sanford), *Exercising in Bed: the Story of an Old Body and Face made Young*, Prof. R. T. Hewlett, 527
 Bradley (Dr. O. C.), *a Guide to the Dissection of the Dog*, 630
 Browning (Dr. Carl H.) and Ivy Mackenzie, with others, *Recent Methods in the Diagnosis and Treatment of Syphilis*, 575
 Bryce (Dr. Alexander), *Modern Theories of Diet and their Bearing upon Practical Dietetics*, 422
 Burdon-Sanderson (the late Lady), and his Nephew and Niece, Sir John Burdon-Sanderson: *a Memoir*, 55
 Byrne (Dr. Joseph), *On the Physiology of the Semi-circular Canals and their Relation to Sea-sickness*, 575
 Chaillon (A.) and L. MacAuliffe, *Morphologie Médicale: Étude des quatre Types Humains*, 237
 Clarke (J. Jackson), *the Cause of Cancer: Part iii. of Protozoa and Disease*, 601
 Crispin (E. S.), *the Prevention and Treatment of Disease in the Tropics*, 575
 Davenport (C. B.), *Heredity in Relation to Eugenics*, 263
 Dell (J. A.), *the Gateways of Knowledge: an Introduction to the Study of the Senses*, 476
 Duggar (Prof. B. M.), *Plant Physiology, with special reference to Plant Production*, 265
 Edridge-Green (Prof. F. W.), *Hunterian Lectures on Colour-vision and Colour-blindness*, 476
 Fürth (Prof. Dr. Otto von), *Probleme der physiologischen und pathologischen Chemie*, 422
 Green (Charles E.), *the Local Incidence of Cancer*, 601
 Halliburton (Prof. W. D., F.R.S.), *Physiology*, 166
 Jones (Dr. D. W. Carmalt), *an Introduction to Therapeutic Inoculation*, 60
 Jordan (W. H.), *Principles of Human Nutrition: a Study in Practical Dietetics*, 422
 Lee (Prof. Fred. S.), *Scientific Features of Modern Medicine*, 575
 Lickley (Dr. J. D.), *the Nervous System*, 575
 Lyster (Dr. R. A.), *Text-book of Hygiene for Teachers*, 604
 Ogden (Prof. H. N.), *Rural Hygiene*, Prof. R. T. Hewlett, 527
 Pakes (W. C. C.), Dr. A. T. Nankivell, *the Science of Hygiene*, 604
 Palladin (Prof. W.), *Pflanzenphysiologie*, 371
 Rischbieth (Dr. H.) and Amy Barrington, Francis Galton *Eugenics Laboratory Memoirs: Treasury of Human Inheritance: Dwarfism*, 375
 Rogers (Prof. L.), *Cholera and its Treatment*, 136
 Ross (H. C.), J. W. Cropper, and E. H. Ross, *Further Researches into Induced Cell-reproduction and Cancer*, 601
 Russell (Rollo), *Preventable Cancer*, 601
 Savage (Dr. William G.), *Milk and the Public Health*, 422
 Shelly (Dr. C. E.) and E. Stenhouse, *Life and Health: with Chapters on First Aid and Home Nursing*, 397
 Shennan (Dr. Theodore), *Post Mortems and Morbid Anatomy*, 477
 Sinclair (Upton), *the Fasting Cure*, Prof. R. T. Hewlett, 527

Reviews and Our Bookshelf (*continued*):

- Stier (Dr. Ewald), Untersuchungen über Linkshändigkeit und die funktionellen Differenzen der Hirnhälften, Prof. G. Elliot Smith, F.R.S., 108
- Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories at Khartoum: Report: A. Medical, 10
- Whetham (W. C. D., F.R.S.) and Catherine D. Whetham, Heredity and Society, 263; an Introduction to Eugenics, 263
- Woodcock (H. de C.), the Doctor and the People, 575
- Technology:**
- Arndt (Prof. Kurt), die Bedeutung der Kolloide für die Technik, 28
- Brearley (Harry), the Heat Treatment of Tool Steel, F. W. Harbord, 501
- Browne (Edith A.), Peeps at Industries: Sugar, 5; Rubber, 554
- Darling (C. R.), Pyrometry: a Practical Treatise on the Measurement of High Temperatures, 29
- Garrett (A. E.), the Advance of Photography, 187
- Harbord (F. W.) and J. W. Hall, the Metallurgy of Steel, Prof. J. O. Arnold, F.R.S., 315
- Hirschwald (Prof. J.), Handbuch der bautechnischen Gesteinsprüfung, 344
- MacDonald (G. W.), Historical Papers on Modern Explosives, 372
- Ridley (H. N., C.M.G., F.R.S.), Spices, 374
- Sindall and Bacon, the Testing of Wood Pulp: a Practical Handbook for the Pulp and Paper Trades, 658
- Smith (Dr. G. F. Herbert), Gem-stones and their Distinctive Characters, 294
- Thompson (Prof. M. de Kay), Applied Electrochemistry, J. Swinburne, 136
- Miscellaneous:**
- Aberhalden (Prof. E., Editor), Fortschritte der naturwissenschaftlichen Forschung, 373
- Bedrock: a new Quarterly Review of Scientific Thought, 144
- Board of Education, Annual Volume of Statistics of Public Education in England and Wales, 675
- Boutroux (Prof. É.), J. Niels, the Beyond that is Within, and Other Addresses, 630
- Brown (G. E.) and A. Mackie, Photographic Copyright, 631
- Gerland (Georg), der Mythos von der Sintflut, 605
- Keltie (Dr. Scott, Editor), the Statesman's Year Book, 1912
- Lay (Ed. J. S.), the Teachers' Book of Constructive Work for Elementary Schools, 528
- McDougall (Wm.), Body and Mind: a History and a Defence of Animism, 396
- Myers (Dr. C. S.), a Text-book of Experimental Psychology, 316
- New Zealand Institute: Transactions and Proceedings, 644
- Poulton (Prof. E. B., F.R.S.), John Viriamu Jones, and other Oxford Memories, 419
- Rimington (Prof. A. Wallace), Colour-Music, 166
- Rowell (Percy E.), Introduction to General Science, with Experiments, 165
- Scott (Prof. W. D.), Increasing Human Efficiency in Business, 629
- Stromeyer (C. E.), Unity in Nature: an Analogy between Music and Life, 86
- Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories at Khartoum: Fourth Report: B, General Science, 10
- Road, the: Past, Present, and Future: Royal Institution Discourse, Right Hon. Sir John H. A. Macdonald, K.C.B., F.R.S., 127
- Röntgen Rays: Distribution of the Scattered Röntgen Radiation, J. A. Crowther, 104; Passage of Homogeneous Röntgen Rays through Gases, E. A. Owen, 104; Attempt to Refract Röntgen Radiation, J. C. Chapman, 313
- Rotating Films, Experiments, C. V. Boys, 493
- Rotatory Power of Camphor dissolved in Carbon Tetrachloride, and the Concentration, A. Faucon, 79
- Rothamsted, 649; Resignation of Director, 142
- Rotifera, New, since 1889, C. F. Rousselet, 77
- Royal Academy and Nature-study, Dr. W. J. S. Lockyer, 244

- Royal Geographical Society: Anniversary Dinner, 300; New Headquarters at Lowther Lodge, 562
- Royal Institution Discourses: the Gyrostatic Compass and Practical Applications of Gyrostats, G. K. B. Elphinstone, 74; the Road, Sir J. H. A. Macdonald, K.C.B., F.R.S., 127; Total Eclipse of the Sun, April, 1911, at Tonga Islands, Dr. W. J. S. Lockyer, 151; the Origin of Radium, F. Solly, F.R.S., 203; Electricity Supply, A. A. C. Swinton, 281; Very High Temperatures, Dr. J. A. Harker, F.R.S., 514; the North Sea, Prof. D'Arcy W. Thompson, C.B., 593; Sir William Herschel, Sir G. H. Darwin, K.C.B., F.R.S., 620, 645; the Use of Pedigrees, W. C. Dampier Whetham, F.R.S., 310; the Gaumont Speaking Kinematograph Films, Prof. Wm. Stirling, 333
- Royal Meteorological Society, Southport Meeting, 302
- Royal Sanitary Institute Congress at York, 483
- Royal Society: the 250th Anniversary, 195, 595, 533; Conversazione, 271; Memorial Volume of Celebration, 566
- Rubber: Rubber and Gutta-percha: Reports of Imperial Institute, 41; Production of Synthetic Rubber, Prof. W. H. Perkin, 402; West Indian Rubber, 484; Peeps at Industries: Rubber, Edith A. Browne, 554
- Rubies, Manufactured, Dr. G. F. H. Smith, 247

- St. Elmo's Fire, J. McV. M., E. Gold, 7
- Salmon and Trout, Age and Growth of, in Norway, as shown by their Scales, Knut Dahl, Ian Baillie, 523
- Sandal Tree, Host-plants of the, Rama Rao, 174
- Sanitation: Congress of the Royal Sanitary Institute at York: Instrument for Testing Variation in Condition of Public Water Supplies, Dr. M. Coplans; Purification of Water, Dr. M. Coplans; Air Pollution by Coal Smoke, A. G. Ruston; Effects of Sewage Contamination of Sea-water, J. E. Purvis and G. Walker, 590
- Sardines, 194; Sardines in Science and Commerce, 271
- Saturn, Observations of, Dr. H. E. Lau, 199
- Savoy: Costumes, Traditions, and Songs of, Estella Canziani, 289
- Science, General: Fourth Report of the Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories, 10; Promotion of Research by the Carnegie Institution, 126; Introduction to General Science with Experiments, Percy E. Rowell, 165; the Grammar of Science, Prof. Karl Pearson, F.R.S., 188; Fortschritte der naturwissenschaftlichen Forschung, Prof. E. Aberhalden and others, 373; South Kensington Science Museum, New Director, 380; les Sciences de la Nature en France au XVIII^e Siècle, Prof. D. Mornet, 476; Handwörterbuch der Naturwissenschaften, 502; — and Reservations, H. Conwentz and others, A. E. Crawley, 665
- Scientific Worthies: Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, D.C.L., O.M., F.R.S., Prof. H. Fairfield Osborn, 367
- Sea: Sea Oscillations on Coast of Sicily, Dr. G. Platania, 68; New System for Preventing Collisions at Sea, Sir H. Maxim, 542; Board of Trade Committee to advise respecting Safety of Life at Sea, 584
- Sea-sickness, Physiology of the Semicircular Canals and their Relation to, Dr. J. Byrne, 575
- Seal, Alaskan Fur-, Dr. F. A. Lucas, 249
- Search-lights for the Mercantile Marine, Dr. Henry Wilde, F.R.S., 338
- Seiches: Temperature Observations in Loch Earn, E. M. Wedderburn, 131; Sea-Seiches, Dr. W. B. Dawson, Kôtarô Honda, 174
- Seismograph applied to Measure Vibrations of Railway Carriages, Prof. Omôri, 174; Choice of a Seismograph, Prof. H. F. Reid, 405
- Seismology: the Upper Rhine, W. Salomon, 14; Dispersion of Seismic Waves due to Friction of Displaced Material, Prince Galitzin, 119; Earthquakes recorded in Italy in 1908, 120; Earthquake in South Africa on February 20, 174; Earthquake recorded on May 6, 248; Earthquake of May 23, F. E. Norris, 377; Messina Earthquake Notices, 383; Periods of Brückner and Earthquakes, F. D. de Ballore, 625; *see also* Earthquakes and Volcanoes
- Selective Media, C. Revis, 586
- Selsey Bill: Historic and Prehistoric, Ed. Heron-Allen,

- 290; Foraminifera of the Shore-sands at Selsey Bill, Sussex, E. Heron-Allen and A. Earland, 290
- Senses, the Gateways of Knowledge: Introduction to the Study of the, J. A. Dell, 476
- Serum for Treatment of Wounds, MM. Leclainche and Vallée, 79
- Sewage Contamination of Sea-water, J. E. Purvis and G. Walker, 590
- Sex-determination: *Dinophilus gyrociliatus*, Dr. C. Shearer, 40
- Sheep: Earthworms and Sheep-rot, Rev. Hilderic Friend, 8; Effect of Desert Life on Ears of New Bighorn Race, J. Grinnell, 405; *see also* Yukon
- Shellfish and Sewage, Prof. Herdman, 645
- Shells: Variation of *Planorbis multififormis*, Dr. H. G. A. Hickling, 131; Land-shells collected in Queensland by S. W. Jackson, C. Hedley, 600
- Ships: Watertight Bulkheads and Board of Trade, 301; Ship of New Type for transporting Submersible Boats (the *Kanguroo*), Messrs. Schneider and Co., 565; Boats and Life-saving Appliances on Ships, 661; *see also* Boats
- Siam: a Handbook of Practical, Commercial, and Political Information, A. W. Graham, 138
- Silica, Expansion of Vitreous, Prof. H. L. Callendar, 286
- Silicates: die Silicate in chemischer und technischer Beziehung, Dr. W. Asch and Dr. D. Asch, Dr. C. H. Desch, 212
- Silver, Electrical Colloidal, precipitated by Electrolytes, G. Rebière, 391
- Skins, Salt Stains on, G. Abt, 574
- Sky, Brightness of the, Dr. H. Diercks, 354
- Sleeping Sickness, 11; Sleeping Sickness Bureau and Tropical Diseases Bureau, 274, 508; Prof. Lanfranchi infected, 351; Transmission of Sleeping Sickness, 402
- Slipper Limpet, *see* Oysters
- Smelt in Rostherne Mere, T. A. Coward, 338
- Smithsonian Expeditions, 674
- Smoke: Smoke Abolition Measures in Manchester, 39; International Smoke Abatement Exhibition, 125; Smoke: a Study of Town Air, Prof. J. B. Cohen, F.R.S., and A. G. Ruston, 139; Smoke Problem, Prof. J. B. Cohen, the Reviewer, 217; Research at Pittsburgh University, 538; Air Pollution by Coal Smoke, A. G. Ruston, 590
- Snake, Circulatory System of the Common Grass-, C. H. O'Donoghue, 259
- Snow, White Sheep slaking Thirst with, 539
- Societies:
- American Philosophical Society, 334
 - Asiatic Society of Bengal, 132, 322, 365, 495
 - British Psychological Society, 338
 - Cambridge Philosophical Society, 52, 208, 312, 467
 - Challenger Society, 259, 521
 - Chemical Society, 118; General Meeting, 248
 - Geological Society, 52, 104, 156, 258, 286, 442, 573
 - Göttingen Royal Society of Sciences, 235, 261, 522
 - Institute of Chemistry, 16
 - Institution of Mining and Metallurgy, 52, 234, 337
 - Institution of Naval Architects, 124
 - Iron and Steel Institute, 278
 - Linnean Society, 77, 104, 234, 286, 416, 467; Anniversary Meeting, 351
 - Linnean Society of New South Wales, 301, 600, 626
 - Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, 78, 131, 260, 287, 338
 - Mathematical Society, 77, 183, 417
 - Mineralogical Society, 77, 443
 - Palæontographical Society, 118
 - Paris Academy of Sciences, 25, 53, 79, 104, 131, 157, 183, 209, 235, 260, 313, 338, 364, 390, 417, 443, 468, 495, 547, 573, 599, 625, 652, 677
 - Physical Society, 286, 337, 415, 466, 546
 - Ray Society, 90
 - Royal Anthropological Institute, 78, 259
 - „ Astronomical Society, 207, 312
 - „ Dublin Society, 156, 494
 - „ Geographical Society, 38, 40, 381; Medal Awards, 119
 - „ Irish Academy, 260, 313, 468, 521
 - „ Meteorological Society, 24, 130, 208, 338, 466
 - „ Microscopical Society, 77, 130, 234, 466
 - Royal Society, 23, 51, 76, 103, 130, 233, 258, 285, 311, 363, 390, 415, 442, 493
 - „ Society of Arts, Albert Medal, 380
 - „ Society of Edinburgh, 52, 78, 131, 364, 468, 547
 - „ Society of Medicine, Opening of New Building, 300
 - „ Society of South Africa, 287, 469, 626, 677
 - „ Society of Victoria, 469
 - „ Zoological Society of Ireland, 302
 - Société helvétique des Sciences naturelles: next Meeting, 403
 - Verband Deutscher Elektrotechniker, 352
 - Zoological Society, 77, 130, 144, 207, 259, 312, 364, 416
- Soil: Experiments on Dry Stony Soil at Clifton-on-Bowmont, Mr. Elliot, 67; Boden und Klima auf kleinstem Raum, Prof. G. Kraus, Dr. E. J. Russell, 186; Protozoa from Sick Soils and Life-cycle of a Monad Flagellate, C. H. Martin, 442; Degradation of Phosphatic Manures, A. Müntz and H. Gaudechon, 599
- Soil-fertility, Dr. R. Greig-Smith, 600; Soil-fertility: Royal Institution Discourse, A. D. Hall, F.R.S., 648
- Solar Halos on May 17, W. P. Haskett-Smith, 322, 348; Solar Halos and Mock Suns, 377
- Solution: Solution of Copper in Water, J. Pionchon, 157; van't Hoff Theory of Solution, A. Colson, 183; Estimates of Sulphates in Solution by a Volumetric Method, A. Bruno and P. T. d'Auzay, 209; Solvate Theory of Solution, Prof. H. C. Jones, 334; Thermal Relations of Solutions, Prof. W. F. Magie, 334; Viscosity of Solutions, C. Chéneveau, 547
- Sootfall of London, S. A. Vasey, Correction, 42
- Sound Phenomena, Anomalous, of Explosions or Volcanic Eruptions, S. Fujiwhara, 146
- Spectra: a Critical Study of Spectral Series, Prof. W. M. Hicks, 52; Ultimate Lines of Vacuum Tube Spectra of Manganese, Lead, Copper, and Lithium, Miss Genevieve V. Morrow, 157; Appearance of New Lines in a Geissler Tube containing Bromine in a Magnetic Field, G. Ribaud, 261; Ultimate Lines and Quantities of Elements producing these Lines in Spectra of the Oxyhydrogen Flame and Spark, Sir W. N. Hartley and H. W. Moss, 285; Changes in Absorption Spectra of "Didymium" Salts, W. C. Ball, 363; Changes in certain Absorption Spectra in different Solvents, T. R. Merton, 363; Mass of Particles emitting the two Spectra of Hydrogen, C. Fabry and H. Buisson, 390; Vacuum Tube Spectra of some Non-metallic Elements and Compounds, Dr. J. H. Pollok, 495; Influence of Self-induction on the Spark Spectra of the Non-metallic Elements, Miss Genevieve V. Morrow, 495; Atlas typischer Spektren, Prof. J. M. Eder and Prof. E. Valenta, 554; Experimental Illustration of Reversal of Bright Line Spectra, Prof. E. P. Harrison, 631
- Spectroscopes, the Principle of Reflection in, Lord Rayleigh, O.M., F.R.S., 167; Spectroscopic Determination of Aqueous Vapour in the Atmosphere, F. E. Fowle, 566
- Spectroscopy, Chemical: Introduction à l'Étude de la Spectrochimie, Prof. G. Urbain, Prof. E. C. C. Baly, F.R.S., 211
- Spices, H. N. Ridley, C.M.G., F.R.S., 374
- Spiders, &c., of Switzerland, Rev. O. Pickard-Cambridge, 77
- Spinning of Flax, Regulations, 536
- Spirals: "Principles of Growth and Beauty," Isaac Bikerstaffe, 587
- Sponge and Alga in Association, R. Kirkpatrick, 353
- Sporting Reminiscences, Sir E. Durand, Bart., 35
- Staining, Method of Examining Tissues by *intra-vitam*, Prof. E. Goldmann, 76
- Standards of Capacity, Paper Condensers and, 16
- Star Catalogues and Charts: New Star Catalogue, T. W. Backhouse, 175; the Great Star Map, Prof. H. H. Turner, F.R.S., 398; Dr. Peters's and Photographic Charts, 433; Astrographic Catalogue, W. E. Cooke and others, 487
- Stars: Tentative Explanation of the "Two Star Streams" in terms of Gravitation, Prof. H. H. Turner, F.R.S., 208; Faint Stars with Large Proper Motions, Herr Kostinsky, 250; Motions of Stars in Plane of Milky Way, H. C. Plummer, 312; Radial Velocity, Prof. W. W. Campbell, 335; Relations between Spectra and other Characteristics of Stars, Prof. H. N. Russell, 335;

- Secondary Oscillations in Radial Velocity Curves, Dr. Schlesinger, 385; Constitution of the Milky Way, Prof. Charlier, 407; Magnitude Observations at Harvard, Prof. Pickering, 486; Occultation of a Star by Jupiter, A. Burnet, 632
- Stars, Double: Spectrum and Orbit of β Scorpii, Dr. Daniel and Dr. Schlesinger, 121; Masses, Dr. Doberck, 511; γ Geminorum a Spectroscopic Binary of Exceptionally Long Period, Mr. Harper, 670
- Stars, Variable: Nova Geminorum No. 2, Various, 42, 94, 121, 131, 176, 200, 207, 208, 209, 250, 277, 329, 364, 384, 408; Supposed Lines of Radium in Spectrum, Dr. H. Giebel, 432; R. Furuhielm, Dr. Ludendorff, 589; Nova or Variable in Perseus, 87, 1911, 175; Parallax of Nova Lacertæ, 1910, Prof. Slocum, 176; Nova Cygni, Prof. E. E. Barnard, 207; Nova Lacertæ, Prof. E. E. Barnard, 207; Origins of Bright Lines in Nova Spectra, Prof. Fowler, 277; Relation between Temporary Stars and the Sun, H. Deslandres, 339; a New Variable, G. Demetresco, 364; Spectrum of P Cygni, Prof. Frost, 384; Permanent Designations of Variable Stars, 408; a Changeable Red Star, WX Cygni, Prof. Barnard, 432; Photometric Observations of Mira, Prof. Bemporad, 541; Observations of New Stars, Prof. E. E. Barnard, 566; Polaris, J. Stebbins, 669
- Statesman's Year Book, 1912, 398
- Statics, Elementary Graphic, Dr. W. J. Crawford, 655
- Statistics: Tables of Statistical Error, Sir R. Ross and W. Stott, 15; Application of Fourier's Series, G. H. Knibbs, 92; Methods of Measuring Association between two Attributes, G. Udny Yule, 406; Measurement of Employment, A. L. Bowley, 667; Systems of Birth Registration, 668
- Steel: Constitution of Steel, Prof. Arnold, 278; Metallurgy of Steel, F. W. Harbord and J. W. Hall, Prof. J. O. Arnold, F.R.S., 315; Heat Treatment of Tool Steel, H. Brearley, F. W. Harbord, 501; Self-demagnetisation, S. W. J. Smith and J. Guild, 546
- Stimuli: Sensibility of the Human Subject to Differences in Rate of, Dr. K. Dunlap, 13
- Stomatograph, W. L. Balls, 24
- Stone and Metal Implements, Transition, O. Bates, 563
- Stones, Precious, *see* Gem
- Stream Lines of Fishes, Prof. F. Houssay, 319
- Streptiptera in India, E. E. Green, "the Reviewer," 632
- Streptococci, Observations on Variability of, in relation to Fermentation Tests, E. W. A. Walker, 442
- Stresses in Spherical Shells, Dr. H. Reissner, 642
- Stromatopora, Nature of, R. Kirkpatrick, 607
- Submerged Forest laid bare in Pembrokeshire, 89
- Sugar: Peeps at Industries: Sugar, Edith A. Browne, 5; Sugar Beet: Some Facts and Some Illusions, by "Home Counties" (J. W. Robertson-Scott), 28; Manufacture of Palm Sugar in Upper Burma, 68
- Sulphur, Fertilising Action of, A. Demolon, 25; Volatility of Sulphur and its Action on Water, F. Jones, 338
- Sulphuric Acid, Simple Process for Purifying to Detect Arsenic, G. Bressanin, 486
- Sun: Cycles of the Sun and Weather, Prof. R. A. Gregory, 147; the Telluric Bands due to Oxygen, Dr. Fortrat, 157; the Radiation Constant, Messrs. Abbott and Fowler, 199; Position of Sun's Axis from Photographs, Dr. F. W. Dyson, F.R.S., and E. W. Maunder, 312; Continuous Spectrum of Metallic Vapours and the Solar Photosphere, M. Gouy, 495; Radium and the Solar Chromosphere, Dr. Dyson, F.R.S., 541; Pressure at the Surface, M. Gouy, 547
- Sun: *Eclipse of April 17*, Abbé Moreux, 93; Dr. Graff, 93; M. Fayet, M. Bigourdan, 147; Dr. Lockyer and F. Maclean, 175; 192; Dr. W. J. S. Lockyer and others, 219; J. Y. Buchanan, F.R.S., 241; Various, 250, 260-261, 277; M. Flammarion, Comte de la Baume Pluvinel, 304; 313; Allen (A. C. and Miss), 355; Various, 541; Prof. Schorr, 670; Halo during the Solar Eclipse of April 17, Dr. Marie C. Stopes, 217; Moon's Diameter, J. J. Landerer, 338, Prof. Hartmann, 408; the Green Coronal Line, A. Perot, 339; Kinematography of the Solar Eclipse, C. Lobo, 364, 541; Effect on Radio-telegraphic Signals, M. Flajolet, 390; Photography, M. Rudaux, 407; Lunar Profile, Dr. Graff, 670; *see also* Electricity
- Sun, *Eclipses*: Total Eclipse of the Sun, April, 1911, as observed at Vavau, Tonga Islands: Royal Institution Discourse, Dr. W. J. S. Lockyer, 151; a Peculiarity in the Shadows Observed during a Partial Eclipse of the Sun, E. Edser, 216; Brazilian Eclipse on October 10, Harold Thomson, 433
- Sun-heat Absorber, the Shuman, A. S. E. Ackermann, 122
- Sun: *Prominences*, Prof. Riccò, 250, 304, 511
- Sun-spots: Sun-spots and Faculae in 1911, Prof. Riccò, 42; Diurnal Inequalities of Barometric Pressure in Years of Sun-spot Maximum and Minimum, Dr. E. Leyst, 564
- Sunshine at Trieste, Dr. E. A. Kielhauser, Dr. E. Gold, 151; Daily Sunshine in Russia, 226
- Surveying, Effects of Errors in, H. Briggs, 605
- Surveys: Colonial Surveys, J. Strauchon and others, 222
- Syphilis, Recent Methods in the Diagnosis and Treatment: the Wassermann Serum Reaction and Ehrlich's Salvarsan, Dr. Carl H. Browning and I. Mackenzie, and others, 575
- Tannins: Chemical Structure, E. Fischer, 303
- Tapeworm, Asexual, from the Musquash, Dr. F. E. Beddard, 416
- Tasmanian Devil Remains near Victoria, J. Mahony, 668
- Teachers' Book of Constructive Work for Elementary Schools, E. J. S. Lay, 528
- Teaching and Method, Prof. Welton, 144
- Technical Institutions, Annual Conference of Association of Teachers in, 358
- Technical Instruction for Ireland, Department of: Summer Courses, 207
- Telegraphy: Handbuch der Phototelegraphie und Telautographie, Profs. A. Korn and B. Glatzel, 110
- Telephone Exchange, New Automatic, 299
- Temperature: Effects of Seasonal Changes on Body Temperature, Prof. S. Simpson, 78; Temperature Oscillations in Loch Earn, E. M. Wedderburn, 131; Very High Temperatures: Royal Institution Discourse, Dr. J. A. Harker, F.R.S., 514; Physical Significance of the Mean Diurnal Curve of Temperature, Dr. J. R. Sutton, 678
- Therapeutics: an Introduction to Therapeutic Inoculation, Dr. D. W. Carmalt Jones, 60; Hypotensive Action of Guanine, MM. Desgrez and Dorléans, 235; Therapeutic Methods based on altering the Activity of the Endocrinal Glands by Physical Means, Ph. Nogier, 261
- Thorium, Transformations of the Active Deposit of, E. Marsden and C. G. Darwin, 285
- Tides of Baltic and Gulf of Finland, R. Witting, 615
- Time Measurement, Prehistoric, in Britain, Dr. McAlldowie, 619
- Titanic*, the Loss of the, 170, 201, 324, 542, 661; Finding of Court of Inquiry, 561; Lord Mersey's Report, 581; Board of Trade Committee to advise on Safety of Life at Sea, &c., 584
- Tobacco Growing in England, G. H. Garrad, 568
- Topaz and Beryl from the Granite of Lundy Island, W. F. P. McLintock and T. C. F. Hall, 443
- Tortoise, Gilbert White's, "Timothy," 587
- Toxic, *see* Poison
- Tow-nets, New Method of Working Vertical, 521
- Trachoma, Susceptibility of the Ape *Macacus inuus* to, C. Nicolle and others, 574
- Trade Resources of the Empire, Royal Commission on, Lewis Harcourt, Colonial Secretary, 172
- Transformer Design, H. M. Hobart, 475
- Transformisme et l'Expérience, le, E. Rabaud, 501
- Trees: British Trees, including the Finer Shrubs, the late Rev. C. A. Johns, E. T. Cook, 30; Trees in Illinois and Insect Pests, 430
- Trematodes from Australian Frogs, Dr. S. J. Johnston, 626
- Triceratops, Skull in British Museum, 509
- Trigonometry: Elementary Trigonometry, F. T. Swanwick, 655; the Elements of Plane and Spherical Trigonometry, J. G. Hun and C. R. MacInnes, 655; Plane Trigonometry (for Indian Universities), Prof. L. K. Ghosh, 655
- Tropical Diseases: Research Fund: Report, 40; Tropical Diseases, 508; Prevention and Treatment of Disease in the Tropics, E. S. Crispin, 575
- Tropical Medicine, London School of, 13; Sir E. Grey, 537; Appeal for Endowment Fund, 509

- Tropical Veterinary Bulletin, 508
 Trypanosomes: Transmission of *Trypanosoma nanum* (Laveran), Dr. H. L. Duke, 51; Relation of Wild Animals to Trypanosomiasis, Capt. A. D. Fraser and Dr. H. L. Duke, 51; Measurement of *Trypanosoma rhodesiense*, Dr. J. W. W. Stephens and Dr. H. B. Fantham, 258; *T. grayi*, 404
 Tuberculosis: Culture of the Koch Bacillus in a definite Chemical Medium, P. Armand-Delille and others, 25; Tuberculosis and Telephones, Dr. Spitta, 38; Tubercular Osteitis, Treatment by High-frequency Discharge, E. Doumer, 157; Delay in Consolidation of a Broken Limb in a Tuberculous Case, A. Robin, 235; Report of the Tuberculosis Committee, 270; Tuberculosis, Heredity, and Environment, Prof. K. Pearson, F.R.S., 427; Heliotherapy applied to Children, Gertrude Austin, 538; Exhibition of Appliances, &c., 613
 Tunicata, British, J. Alder and A. Hancock, J. Hopkinson, 523
 Turbines: Steam Turbine Design, Dr. J. Morrow, 159; Marine Steam Turbines, Dr. G. Bauer and O. Lasche, and others, 159; the Steam Turbine: the Rede Lecture, Sir Charles A. Parsons, K.C.B., 159; the Ljungström Steam Turbine, 175
 Typhoid Fever, Inoculation against, E. Metchnikoff and A. Besredka, 547
 Ultra-violet Rays: Photolytic Decomposition of Smokeless Powder, Picric Acid, &c., by, D. Berthelot and H. Gaudechon, 25; Effects of, on the Eye, Dr. E. K. Martin, 76, Dr. L. Bell, 511; Decomposition of Glycerol by, 314; Action on Starch, J. Bielecki and R. Wurmser, 365; Alleged Ultra-violet Rays from Filament Lamps, A. P. Trotter, 377; Variation of Abiotic Power with Wave-length, Mme. and Victor Henri, 600; Application to Chemical Analysis, M. Landau, 625; Quantitative Study of Absorption, J. Bielecki and V. Henri, 677; see also Meteorology
 United States: National Museum, 405; Mineral Resources and Developments: Bulletins, 617
 Unity in Nature: an Analogy between Music and Life, C. E. Stromeyer, 86
 Universe, Sub-mechanics of the: Prof. Osborne Reynolds's Theory, J. Mackenzie, 175
 Universities: Universities of the Empire: Congress, 385, 477; University Education in Germany, Prof. W. Münch, 518; University Budgets, 623
 Uranium, Atomic Weight of, P. Lebeau, 547; Influence of Uranium Salts on Alcoholic Ferments, E. Kayser, 574
 Uranus, Spectroscopic Discovery of the Rotation of, Prof. P. Lowell, 277, 312
 Uz, the Land of, "Abdullah Mansur," G. Wyman Bury, 35
 Vaunthompsonia, Rev. T. R. R. Stebbing, 77
 Vegetation, Types of British, Members of the Central Committee for the Survey and Study of British Vegetation, 212
 Ventilation: Influence of Ozone, L. Hill and M. Flack, 72
 Veterinary Studies for Agricultural Students, Prof. M. H. Reynolds, 58; Guide to the Dissection of the Dog, Dr. O. C. Bradley, 630
 Vibrations, Forced, Prof. John Perry, F.R.S., 424; J. L. Dunk, 477; J. P. Dalton, 528;
 Views and Reviews, Sir Harry Johnston, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., 553
 Viscosity of Carbon Dioxide, Dr. P. Phillips, 363
 Vitalism, Burdon Sanderson and, Dr. J. S. Haldane, F.R.S., 215
 Vivisection Report, 65
 Volcanoes: of Central Madagascar, A. Lacroix, 25; of New Zealand, Dr. J. M. Bell, 38; the Etna Eruption of September, 1911, Prof. A. Riccò, 149; New Vent in Etna, 303; Destructive Eruption of Chiriqui Peak, near Bocas del Toro, Panama, 171; Warnings of Eruptions in the Philippines, Rev. M. Saderra Masò, 328; Taal Volcano in the Philippines, D. Worcester, 430; Volcanic Eruption in Aleutian Islands, 381; Eruptions of the Asama-Yama (Japan), Prof. F. Omori, Dr. C. Davison, 487
 Vortex Rings in Liquids, A. W. Ackerman, Prof. C. V. Boys, F.R.S., 15
 Wales: National Museum, 350
 Wapiti in Wyoming, 405
 Wasps, Fossorial, of family Scoliidæ, R. E. Turner, 312
 Water: Expansion of Water by Freezing, G. R. M. Temple, 15; U.S. Geological Survey, 150, 486; Hydrogen Peroxide in Rain and Snow, and the Solar Ultra-violet Rays, M. Kernbaum, 175; Report on Research Work: Organisms, Dr. Houston, 225; Water Analysis for Sanitary and Technical Purposes, H. B. Stocks, 552; Artesian Wells of Canterbury, N.Z., Dr. Speight, 644
 Water-lily, North American, Messrs. Miller and Standley, 587
 Water-power: the French "Service des Grandes Forces Hydrauliques," 72; Water-power in the Highlands, A. Newlands, 328
 Wave-problem of Cauchy and Poisson for Finite Depth and slightly Compressible Fluid, F. B. Pidduck, 24
 Weather, see Meteorology
 Weights and Measures Reform Bill for S. Africa, 66
 Whales, Fossil, Prof. F. W. True, 225; Casts of Bones and Flipper Structure, 615
 Whaling, Modern, T. E. Salvesen, 173
 Wheat: Wheat-growing in Canada, the United States, and the Argentine: including Comparisons with other Areas, W. P. Rutter, 135; Rothamsted Experiments, 649
 Wind: Storm of March 4, E. Kitto, 34; Diurnal Variations of Force on Ben Nevis, Prof. J. Hann, 41; New Type of Instrument for continuously recording Direction, Messrs. Negretti and Zambra, 120; Hurricanes and other Tropical Cyclones, Dr. O. L. Fassig, 489
 Wireless Telegraphy: Application to Storm Prediction, M. Flajole, 105; Loss of the *Titanic*, 201; Italian Naval and Military Experiments, 274; International Radio-telegraphic Convention, 352; Jahrbuch der drahtlosen Telegraphie und Telephonie, Prof. Dr. J. Zenneck, Dr. G. Eichhorn, Dr. J. Erskine-Murray, 400; Calibration of Wave-meters, Prof. G. W. O. Howe, 415; International Radio-telegraphic Conference, 483; Efficiency of Generation of High-frequency Oscillations by means of an Induction Coil and Spark Gap, Prof. G. W. O. Howe and J. D. Peattie, 546; Committee to consider Needs of British Army, 585; Bill for Control of Messages in United States, 613
 Wood, Preservation of, E. Pinoy, 53
 Wood Pulp, the Testing of: a Practical Handbook for the Pulp and Paper Trades, Sindall and Bacon, 658
 Wounds: Specific Treatment, MM. Leclainche and Vallée, 79
 X-rays, Conversion of Starch into Dextrin by, H. A. Colwell and Dr. S. Russ, 337
 Yeasts, Conjugation of, 483
 Yukon, the Wilderness of the Upper: a Hunter's Explorations for Wild Sheep, C. Sheldon, 83
 Zebra, Local Races of Burchell's, Major J. S. Hamilton, 364; R. I. Pocock, F.R.S., 399
 Zeolites from Co. Antrim, Dr. G. F. H. Smith and F. N. A. Fleischmann, 77
 Zinc: Strength of Rolled, H. F. Moore, 146; Tempering and Annealing, G. Timoféef, 652
 Zone-plates, Contrast Colours in Use of, W. B. Croft, 581
 Zoological Congress, Ninth International, in 1913, 509
 Zoological Gardens for Edinburgh, 508
 Zoological Nomenclature, Prof. Sydney J. Hickson, F.R.S., 349
 Zoology:
 General: South African Zoology, Prof. J. D. F. Gilchrist, 166; First Book of Zoology, T. H. Burlend, 264; le Transformisme et l'Expérience, E. Rabaud, 501; Clare Island Survey, G. E. H. Barrett-Hamilton, R. F. Scharff, and others, 521; Distribution and Origin of Life in America, R. F. Scharff, 523; Festschrift zum 60-ten Geburtstag des Herrn Geheimen Hofrats, Prof.

Zoology (continued):

- Dr. J. W. Spengel, 580; *Nature and Man in Australia*, Prof. B. Spencer, C.M.G., F.R.S., and F. J. Gillen, Dr. A. C. Haddon, F.R.S., 608; *Zentralblatt für Zoologie*, 614; *Zoology*, Prof. J. G. Kerr, F.R.S., 627; *Smithsonian Expeditions*, 674
- Invertebrate*: *Little Monographs*, Profs. Ziegler and Woltereck, 91; *Clare Island Survey: Decapoda*, G. P. Farran; *Schizopoda and Cumacea*, W. M. Tattersall; *Land and Fresh-water Isopoda*, N. H. Foster; *Platyhelminia*, R. Southern, *all* 260; *Anleitung zum praktischen Studium niederer Tiere*, Dr. W. Schleip, 264; *Fresh-water Fauna of Central Europe*, Prof. F. Zschokke, Dr. V. H. Langhans, 488; *Twenty-three New Species taken by the Scotia*, Dr. W. S. Bruce, 521; *das Tierreich*, Dr. H. Friese, Prof. J. J. Kieffer, Dr. J. E. W. Ihle, 627. *Special: Amphipoda*, *Brackish-water*, from Bremerhaven, Mrs. E. W. Sexton, 259; *Anemones*, *Aged Sea*, Dr. N. Annandale, 607; *Cestoides* found on Tapeworms, *New Genus* of, Dr. F. E. Beddard, 312; *Coleoptera* (the *Fauna of British India*), Dr. W. W. Fowler, 267; *Ctenophora* or *Comb-jellies*, A. G. Mayer, 327; *Echinus*, *Locomotor Function of the Lantern* of, J. F. Gemmill, 51; *Hook-worm (Agchylostoma duodenale)*, *Anatomy and Life-history* of the, Dr. A. Looss, 672; *Hydrocoralline Genus Errina*, 416; *Medusa*, *Fresh-water*, *Limnocooida rhodesiae*, C. L. Boulenger, 275; *Merlia normani* and its Relation to certain Palaeozoic Fossils, R. Kirkpatrick, 502; *Polyplacophora* of Lord Howe and Norfolk Islands, C. Hedley and A. F. B. Hull, 600; *Rotifera* from Devil's Lake in N. Dakota, C. F. Rousselet, 130; *Spirochaets: Systematic Position*, Clifford Dobell, 130; *Tapeworms* of the Genus *Inermicapsifer* from the Hyrax, &c., F. E. Beddard, 207; *Worm, Nerilla antennata*, E. S. Goodrich, 275; *see also Entomology and Insects*
- Vertebrate*: *Die Wirbeltiere: eine Uebersicht über die fossilen und lebenden Formen*, Prof. Otto Jaekel, 134. *Special: Antarctic Fish Fauna: Scotia Collection*, C. T. Regan, 521; *Batrachians*, *Adipolympoid Bodies* in the, P. Kennel, 339; *Dumfriesshire*, *Catalogue of the Vertebrate Fauna* of, Hugh S. Gladstone, 627; *Frogs and Snakes* from the Abor Foot-hills, Dr. N. Annandale, 365; *Hippopotamus*, *Pigmy*, 510; *Mammals*, *Two interesting New*, 144; the *Ox* and its Kindred, R. Lydekker, 523; *Reptiles*, *Amphibia*, *Fishes*, and *Lower Chordata*, R. Lydekker and others, 523; *Salmon and Trout*, *Age and Growth* in Norway, K. Dahl, I. Baillie, 523; *Sheep*, *White*, as *Eaters* of Snow, G. Shiras, 539; *Stag*, *rare*, from Nepal, R. I. Pocock, 207; *Unknown Animal* like a Bear seen in Africa, G. Williams, 615; *see also Birds and Fish*
- Zulus, the *Story* of the, J. Y. Gibson, 35



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"To the solid ground
Of Nature trusts the mind which builds for aye."—WORDSWORTH.

THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 1912.

SEA FISHERIES.

Sea Fisheries: their Treasures and Toilers. By Prof. Marcel A. Hérubel. Translated by Bernard Miall. Pp. 366. (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1912.) Price 10s. 6d. net.

THE English have long understood that the men of the seaboard are not foreigners, but of the same nation as the men of the cities, the mines, and the fields." So writes Prof. Hérubel in the very complimentary preface to this English edition of his "*Pêches Maritimes d'aujourd'hui et d'autrefois.*" He flatters us somewhat. The heroism, the picturesqueness, and the more striking hardships of fishing, these are pretty well known; but there is little enough knowledge of the working, as opposed to the spectacular, conditions of fishing, and of the fisheries as a trade and an employment. Fishing, to most people, is the special affair of someone else. Nor has the large amount of scientific research into fishery problems been adequately popularised. It has presented, as it were, no report to and for the general public. There is no good bridge between the highly technical *Journal of the Marine Biological Association* and learned monographs and trade periodicals on the one side, and unsystematic picture-books about fish and fishing on the other. Sharp controversies affecting the livelihood of more than a hundred thousand sea-going fishermen, who land yearly over ten millions' worth of fish, rouse next to no widespread interest, mainly for the reason that so few people know enough about fishing to hold an opinion.

The description given of a companion volume NO. 2210, VOL. 89]

in the "*Bibliothèque des Amis de la Marine*" applies well to Prof. Hérubel's "*Sea Fisheries*":—"C'est une œuvre d'intelligente et agréable vulgarisation." It is a work, too, which was as needed in England as in France, and although the author wrote primarily of the French fisheries for his fellow-countrymen, he has so much to say about the English industry, and fishing in any case is so international, that he has produced what is certainly the best book up to the present for giving English readers some precise understanding of their own great fisheries. (But not their small fisheries; his remarks on the French small fishermen, merely transferred to England, are very misleading.) Without undue technicality—and it is so much easier to be technical on technical subjects—he is exceedingly systematic and comprehensive. Starting with the oceanography of the North Atlantic and with a brief survey of fish biology, he works out in some detail the cycle of oceanic life from non-living matter through plankton upwards to food-fishes, and arrives at the conclusion that "*fishing-grounds are regions in unstable equilibrium, when [where in the French] there is an encounter of two critical conditions, one biological and the other oceanic*"; or where, in other words, the oceanic conditions, such as meeting currents, with a consequent abundance of plankton, and contiguous breeding-grounds and nurseries, are favourable to fish-life, and where, in addition, the struggle to live amongst fish has a favourable issue for the edible species.

It so happens that these conditions are to be found together only where the sea is not too deep for fishing on the so-called continental plateaux. After considering the effect of fishing on the unstable equilibrium, Prof. Hérubel proceeds to lay down the law on fishery problems and regulations, and it may be said at once that his views on these

subjects are far more questionable than the view which he presents of oceanic life and fishery operations.

In the second section of the book—and it is this which makes the work so unusually complete—he deals with the human side of the industry; with the fishermen as an integral part of it; with social life on the coast, the chief fishing ports, boats and gear, fishermen, profits, and distribution. Here his recommendations rest on a sounder basis. The scandalous toll taken by the middleman and the imperfections of transport cannot but strike any investigator in England no less than in France; nor can the fishing industry become really prosperous for the fishermen producers as well as for its horde of middlemen until its amazing abuses, its fluctuations and consequent gambling on the markets, are taken firmly in hand. All efforts to improve the fisheries must be more than futile so long as neither the fisherman nor the consumer stands to obtain any of the benefit.

It is a point insufficiently recognised by Prof. Hérubel. He has apparently been misled by the magnitude and the huge turnover, the confusing noise and hustle, of the English capitalistic steam fisheries; so much so, indeed, that he insists on his countrymen adopting their methods, though later on in the book he seems to admit that the more co-operative German and Danish methods are even better. "For one step taken by the French the English take fifty and the Germans a hundred." I do not observe (from his bibliography) that he has studied the 1904 report of the evidence given before the House of Lords Committee on the Sea Fisheries Bill. Had he done so, he could hardly have helped moderating his animus against small fishermen and his desire to suppress them altogether; for it was there conclusively shown that immature flat-fish do at certain ages and seasons congregate on the extra-territorial fishing grounds, and that the destruction of them inshore by all the small fishermen put together is an almost negligible factor compared with their wholesale destruction by the great steam fleets. It is impossible to avoid thinking that Prof. Hérubel's inordinate admiration for the steam fishing companies has led him to take sides with them, and to base his recommendations on the incomplete scientific hypotheses which happen to be favourable to their interests.

As soon, in fact, as incomplete scientific investigations are embodied in recommendations and regulations affecting the livelihoods of men, we meet with the question of fictitious accuracy in an acute form. An average, for instance, is not a substantive quantity, and is not used as such in scientific work; it is only valid for purposes of

comparison with other averages similarly obtained. But when it is used in the framing of fishery regulations, its non-substantive character should be plainly realised, the more so since minor legislating bodies are always only too anxious to shelve their responsibilities on their scientific advisers.

Prof. Hérubel affirms that the flounder is adult (*i.e.* can reproduce itself) at $3\frac{1}{8}$ in., the sole at $5\frac{1}{10}$ in., the turbot at $5\frac{1}{2}$ in., &c. The average sole may be adult at $5\frac{1}{10}$ in.; but the average sole is a fiction; soles themselves are adult at somewhere about that size. Or to take a more striking example, Prof. Hérubel states that "400 Iceland herring will fill a barrel, while 800 Channel herring are required"; and that "the herring of one region never show themselves in another region—at all events, not in the form of shoals." Channel herrings do average somewhere between 700 and 800 to a barrel; but as a statement of fact, and not of average, Prof. Hérubel's figures are simply untrue; last winter I could scarcely pack $600\frac{1}{2}$ of Channel herrings into barrels which, this winter, were not properly filled with 900. (It may be worth while to state that a hundred of herrings in Channel ports is 120 fish, and on the barrels a hundred and a half is written $100\frac{1}{2}$.) Suppose, then, it were a question of forbidding fishermen to catch Channel herrings on account of their small average size. Obviously a regulation founded on the average figures would be as remote from actual fact as the much-advertised mean temperature of a certain seaside resort, where excessive heat in summer and withering east winds in the winter combine to produce an *average* temperature that would be delightful to live in if it ever existed there. In a like manner, by using averages and by exchanging terms which are not interchangeable, Prof. Hérubel arrives at the astonishing conclusion that the British fisherman "gains more than *twice as much* as the French fisherman." He does not, of course. He may catch more than twice the worth of fish, but very little of the excess is actually pocketed by himself.

Figures of fictitious accuracy, valid in scientific work, where they are compared one with the other, but not valid in their bearing on human life, are now so much in vogue—not only for framing fishery recommendations—that means should be taken more carefully to define what might be called their human validity. Had Prof. Hérubel done so, his "Sea Fisheries" would have been authoritative throughout instead of authoritative in its presentation, but extremely debatable in some of its recommendations, more especially as regards the small fisheries.

STEPHEN REYNOLDS.

DESIGN IN ILLUMINATION.

Principes de la Technique de l'Éclairage. By Dr. L. Bloch. Translated by G. Roy. Pp. 183. (Grenoble: Jules Rey; Paris: Gauthier-Villars, 1911.) Price 5 francs.

THIS book is a translation of Dr. L. Bloch's "Grundzüge der Beleuchtungstechnik," and although an interval of four years separates the original from the translation, the work was worth doing, as the admirable treatment accorded the subject by Dr. Bloch will secure a prominent place for his treatise in the literature of the subject for a long time to come.

The subject-matter is in strict accordance with the title, a condition not too closely observed in some text-books on illuminating engineering. The author has devoted his attention almost entirely to the development of methods of design of lighting installations from given data, whereby the results in illumination and costs can be predicted with a reasonable degree of certainty.

In the first chapter fundamental quantities and their relations are clearly and accurately dealt with, the idea of luminous flux in particular being elucidated by a material analogy, which will carry conviction to a far larger number of readers than will the hardly worked analogy with magnetic flux. The author uses throughout the photometric notation of the Geneva Congress of 1896.

Methods for the determination of mean spherical intensity from polar curves of intensity are briefly described in the second chapter, including the author's modification of Rousseau's construction, which adapts it for rapid calculation, but the equally convenient graphical method due to Kennelly is not mentioned.

Some general considerations with regard to exterior and interior lighting bring the third chapter to a conclusion, great stress being rightly laid on the importance of mean horizontal illumination as a factor in design.

The real business of the book begins in the fourth chapter. A method is here given by which the integral of the Rousseau curve for a given light source over the lower hemisphere is made to supply material for a table of total luminous flux emitted under any angle from the vertical to the horizontal.

A number of such curves are developed, each from the average polar curve of luminous intensity of a specified type of source, and all being reduced to the same value of mean spherical intensity. With the help of these tables, the cosine law, and some experimental data on reflection coefficients obtained by the author, a complete method of design is elaborated, applicable to most conditions in modern lighting. The author's justification for

his broad generalisations and approximations appears from the comparatively close agreement existing between his observed and calculated values of illumination in examples taken from his practice in the street lighting of Berlin.

Photometry is dismissed at the beginning of the fifth chapter with little more than a description of the Brodhun illumination photometer as used by the author on the Berlin streets. This is followed by a description of a method for reducing to a minimum the number of street observations necessary for the determination of the value of the mean horizontal illumination.

The sixth and last chapter is devoted to indirect lighting, and, in spite of obvious difficulties, it is shown from actual examples that the formulæ and methods already devised are still able in certain cases to give fairly accurate results. It is not easy, however, to follow the author in his contention that the difference in cost between direct and indirect lighting for a given effect achieved may be in many cases of very small moment.

The book is a successful attempt to place the design of illuminating installations in a position comparable with that held by design in other branches of engineering.

THE FACE OF THE EARTH.

La Face de la Terre. By Prof. Ed. Suess. Vol. iii., pt. 2. Pp. xii + 531-956, 2 maps, 124 figs. (Translated under the direction of E. de Margerie.) (Paris: Armand Colin, 1911.) 12 frs.

THE present instalment of the French edition of Prof. Suess's great work includes only the first half of the final volume. It consists of translations of chapters x.-xvi., which deal with the western representatives of the Altiid mountain system of Prof. Suess, and with the Alps, Atlas, and various related mountains, which are all attributed to foldings within areas surrounded by an Altiid framework. The last chapter deals with the North Atlantic area, including Iceland and Greenland.

As the original has already been reviewed in NATURE, it is unnecessary to reconsider the problems dealt with in the work. The chapters have been translated by MM. H. Baulig, Ch. Jacob, and P. Lemoine; the volume is edited by M. de Margerie, who is to be warmly congratulated on the great service he has made to students of Prof. Suess's work by this accurate and scholarly translation, and by the issue of this well-illustrated edition of the book.

The study of the work requires such frequent reference to geological maps, of which the original edition contains so few, that it is difficult to read except in a geological library. M. de Margerie's

edition is, however, so richly illustrated by excellent maps and sections that the book is complete within itself. The German edition of the part here translated is illustrated by one plate and twenty-three figures. To these, M. de Margerie has added three plates and 101 figures, and, as many of them have been redrawn for this edition, they are often clearer than the originals. Moreover, many new additional references have been added and occasional explanatory notes, which are all enclosed within square brackets. Amongst these additions the bibliography of the Caucasus and the footnotes on Algeria are especially useful. Among the most important of the new illustrations is a valuable coloured geological map of the western Atlas. M. de Margerie's edition forms an atlas of diagrammatic sketch maps of the countries discussed. The maps are artistically excellent, but they sometimes follow the current, but inconvenient, practice of translating place names. It is no doubt difficult to decide when the translated form of a proper noun has become so widely used that it would be pedantic not to accept it. Nevertheless, it would be generally convenient if the number of such place-names were restricted as far as possible. Thus, such cases as the use of *Terre de Grant* for Grant Land render the index less useful to foreign students, and the adoption of *François*, instead of *Franz*, for a locality named after the Austrian Emperor tends to conceal the history of the name.

J. W. G.

DARWINISM IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN RESEARCH.

Die Abstammungslehre: Zwölf gemeinverständliche Vorträge über die Deszendenztheorie im Licht der neueren Forschung. By O. Abel, A. Brauer, and others. Pp. iv+489. (Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1911.) Price 11 marks.

THE handsome volume issued by the Society for Natural Science in Munich (*Münchener Verein für Naturkunde*) is a striking proof of the breadth of Darwin's knowledge and of the many-sided character of his researches. The volume contains twelve papers relating to subjects dealt with by Darwin in establishing his theory of evolution; but while Darwin dealt with all of them single-handed, each of the contributions to this volume is the work of an expert. The first paper, an introduction to our present knowledge of evolution, is written by Prof. Richard Hertwig, of Munich, who gives a very clear account of the work and beliefs of Darwin's predecessors, especially of Cuvier's position as regard evolution. The second and third papers are written by Prof. Richard Goldschmidt, of Munich, and relate to

the origin of species in the light of our present knowledge of heredity. In the fourth, by Prof. Richard Semon, the inheritance of acquired characters is discussed; the author thinks these may be inherited, but he employs the term inheritance in a limited sense. In the fifth, Dr. Paul Kammerer, of Vienna, recapitulates the chief facts in support of Darwin derived from experiments in breeding. The position of natural selection as a factor in evolution is the subject of the sixth paper, by Prof. Franz Doflein, of Munich.

Prof. August Brauer, in the seventh paper, gives the evidence arising from our modern knowledge of the geographical distribution of animals; while the additional evidence afforded by modern palæontology by Dr. Edgard Dacqué, of Munich, constitutes the eighth paper. Prof. Abel, of Vienna, writes the ninth paper, and describes the various fossil forms which have been discovered since Darwin's time, and their bearing on our knowledge of the evolution of the higher vertebrates. The bearing of recent discoveries in comparative anatomy on the theory of descent is related by Prof. Otto Maas, of Munich (tenth paper); while Prof. Karl Giesenhagen writes the eleventh, on the evolution of plant forms.

The last and twelfth paper occupies a third of the volume. It is written by Prof. Hermann Klaatsch, of Breslau, and is entitled by him "The Place of Man in Nature." Prof. Klaatsch, who deals with the descent of man, unlike the other contributors to this volume, is not content by a mere statement of the progress made since 1871; he brings forward a new genealogical tree for man and the anthropoid apes. Like Darwin, he regards man as derivative of the same stem as the anthropoid apes, but differs in supposing that man has retained the characters of the common stock to a greater degree than the anthropoids have.

Those who wish to examine a full statement of Prof. Klaatsch's theory of man's origin will find it here. In Prof. Klaatsch's opinion, the modern population of Europe is formed by the mixture of at least two stocks; one of these was evolved in common with the orang and entered Europe through Asia, while another human stock was evolved in common with the gorilla and entered Europe from Africa. In this way he accounts for the two prevailing types of nose among modern Europeans. The prominent or "Grecian" nose he supposes to be derived from the human "gorilloid" stock, while the australoid nose—of which he cites Darwin's nose as an example—came into Europe by the Eastern or "orangoid" stock. It is difficult to believe that Prof. Klaatsch is really quite serious in his contribution to "Die Abstammungslehre."

A. K.

OUR BOOKSHELF.

Jelinek's Psychrometer-Tafeln. Anhang: Hygrometer-Tafeln von J. M. Pernter. Herausgegeben von W. Trabert. Sechste Auflage. Pp. xii+129. (Leipzig: W. Engelmann, 1911.) Price 7 marks.

JELINEK'S psychrometer tables are among the best known of the many humidity tables in use on the Continent. Originally prepared by Jelinek from the earlier tables of Regnault and Wild, the work has been successively re-edited by Hann and by Pernter, and now we have a further revision undertaken by Hofrat Trabert, the present director of the Austrian meteorological service.

The new edition differs from its predecessor mainly in the method of treatment of the wet-bulb readings at temperatures below the freezing-point. The values of the saturation pressure of water vapour used hitherto were those for vapour in equilibrium with supercooled water, although in practice the wet bulb is normally coated with ice. The present edition has been amplified by the addition of a table of saturation pressures of water vapour in equilibrium with ice, taken from the results of Scheel and Heuse, and on this table has been based a new set of tables for finding the vapour pressure and relative humidity from readings of dry and wet bulb thermometers at temperatures below the freezing-point when the wet bulb is covered with ice. The results for higher temperatures have been entirely recalculated, but their general arrangement remains unchanged.

The tables differ from most humidity tables in general use in that allowance is made in them for variations of wind velocity. The figures as printed are applicable to the readings of screened thermometers under conditions of light or moderate wind, but by the application of simple corrections to the wet bulb readings they can be rendered applicable on the one hand to readings in still air, and on the other to readings taken during gales or strong winds, or with an aspirated psychrometer such as the Assmann instrument.

Peeps at Industries: Sugar. By Edith A. Browne. Pp. vii+88. (London: A. and C. Black, 1911.) Price 1s. 6d. net.

THIS little book is the first volume of a series intended to deal with industries in the same way as "Peeps in Many Lands" has dealt with countries. The general get-up is attractive, the illustrations are good, and the reader is never fatigued by having too much serious matter presented to him on any one page. The whole ground is covered, both beet and cane sugar coming within the purview of the author, and the descriptions range from an account of a Demerara estate to a Belgian sugar factory and a London refinery. The style of the book may be judged by the following quotation:—"Sugar is hatched from germs which inhabit the sap of certain plants. In the birth stage it takes the form of tiny grains. I am going to tell you quite simply and briefly the way in which the germs become

solid little grain bodies, and in the course of the story I shall answer many of the questions with which you are now bubbling over; sweep away, I hope, most of the difficulties that are now puzzling you."

We are not sure that the ordinary reader will quite catch the idea the author wishes to convey, but she becomes much more lucid in writing about the social aspects of the industries as distinguished from the more purely technical side. The descriptions of the sugar plantations, of the school for the negroes, and of Georgetown have an air of reality that cannot fail to appeal to the reader, whilst the accounts of the milling and extraction processes are equally attractive. Nor are economic questions left untouched, and although no actual tables of statistics are given—they would indeed have been out of place in a volume of this nature—the author succeeds in conveying the essential facts relating to the economic position. Altogether the little book is one that will give the intelligent child the sort of information he wants about the subject.

Photographic Lenses: A Simple Treatise by Conrad Beck and Herbert Andrews. Seventh edition, completely revised, with index. Pp. 324. (London: R. and J. Beck, Ltd., n.d.) Price 1s. net.

MANY thousands of this volume having been sold in the previous editions, there is but little need to describe its scope. It will be sufficient to say that the authors do not intend in it to give a full explanation of the laws that underlie the construction of photographic lenses, but rather to provide a practical guide for the user of lenses that he may be able to use them to the best advantage. The volume is excellently illustrated with diagrams that make clear the principles of elementary optics, the construction of various objectives, the comparative results of their tests, and also examples of the actual work that they enable the photographer to do. For those who wish to go a little further into the subject there is an appendix on "Equivalent Planes," and a second appendix in which a lens-testing optical bench is described, with the manner of using it. The lenses illustrated and referred to are all of Messrs. Beck's manufacture, but that fact does not, in a practical sense, limit the usefulness of the book. The present edition is brought up to date, especially with regard to recent anastigmats, and it is provided with a very good index.

Practical Botany. By Dr. F. Cavers. Pp. xvi+408. (Cambridge: University Tutorial Press, Ltd., 1911.) Price 4s. 6d.

TAKING a general view, there are four different sections recognisable in this students' practical botany: histology is placed first, then follow physiology of growth and nutrition, physiology of movement, and finally a sketch of practical work on selected cryptogamic types. There is, of course, no reason why teachers should begin with histology; on the contrary, experience points to a

beginning with the seed and germination. Dr. Cavers lays some stress on the second chapter, which is intended to impress a more thorough knowledge of the organic products in plants. Seeing that the real aim of students' courses is rather to teach general methods and provide training than to implant facts, tests for proteins and other complex substances are much less valuable than the more tangible experiments of a physical nature.

Except in this matter, there is no hesitation in recognising that the author presents a remarkably clear and informative series of experiments. There is always satisfaction in experiments requiring simple and natural material, as in the test of a living turnip with beetroot juice, but Dr. Cavers on the whole favours the view that there is a necessity for specially designed apparatus capable of yielding exact measurements, in which connection he directs attention to several instruments designed by Prof. Ganong. An appreciable amount of generally unknown detail is supplied in the life-history of *Pellia* and *Funaria*, and otherwise this section is no mere repetition of available information. Teachers will be well advised to consult the book before drafting their physiological courses, as they are tolerably certain to discover suggestions or new experiments.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

[The Editor does not hold himself responsible for opinions expressed by his correspondents. Neither can he undertake to return, or to correspond with the writers of, rejected manuscripts intended for this or any other part of NATURE. No notice is taken of anonymous communications.]

Heredity.

So long as naturalists persist in using ill-defined terms, the meaning of which they have not clearly thought out, the controversy about the inheritance of so-called "acquired characters" is bound to be sterile and interminable. If it be once granted that organisms are the product of the interaction of two sets of factors—the factors of the inheritance and the factors of the environment—it becomes obvious that not only every organism, but every "character" of an organism, must be the result of both sets of factors. And if by "character" we mean any such resulting structure or property as it appears to our senses, as we see it before us, then it becomes manifest that no character can be due wholly to inheritance or wholly to environment. The very words "acquired character" involve a fatal fallacy—suggesting as they do that one character may be more acquired than another. Since such wholly acquired characters do not exist, it is waste of time to discuss their possible inheritance.

Even Dr. Reid, in his letter in last week's NATURE, does not entirely escape from this logical error when he uses the word inheritance for the transmission of acquisitions (characters) in unicellular organisms. It is a return to the vague, popular use of the term which would inevitably lead us back into the old tangle of inconsistencies. The biologist may define inheritance as the transmission of hereditary factors—it is not ready-made characters which are inherited, but the factors which help to produce them. The transmission in a protozoon of the characters of its parent is no more inheritance in the strict biological

sense than is the transmission of the eggshell and albumen from the fowl to the chick, or of money from father to son.

Variation may be caused by changes in the environment giving rise to "modification," or by changes in the inheritance (the totality of the hereditary factors) giving rise to "mutation." Changes in the inheritance are due to the rearrangement of, addition to, or subtraction from the factors of inheritance. Ultimately these changes must be referred to the environment, and it is only when something from the environment thus alters or enters into the inheritance that mutation can occur.

It follows that if certain observations seem to show that "acquired characters" are transmitted by true inheritance, either they must be capable of some other interpretation, or our premise that every organism is the resultant of two sets of factors must be wrong. No escape from this alternative seems possible.

The dogmatic tone of this letter will, I hope, be forgiven me, as it has been assumed merely for the sake of brevity.

E. S. GOODRICH.

Merton College, Oxford, March 1.

Mars and a Lunar Atmosphere.

IN NATURE, February 22, p. 565, reference is made to an interesting observation by Prof. Luther, of the Düsseldorf Observatory. The note states that he saw the half of the disc of Mars nearest the moon become green just before occultation on December 4, 1911, and he suggests that this may have been due to a lunar atmosphere. The time was 16h. 40m. (Greenwich mean time), and I notice that the moon was full at 14h. 52m. on December 5, so that, at the time of the observation, the unilluminated crescent of the moon towards the planet must have been extremely narrow, so that the illuminated part of the lunar disc must have been quite close to the planet.

Now no refracting telescope is perfectly achromatic, and as one of the residual colours is green, it seems to me possible that this colour may have been due to moonlight imperfectly achromatised. It may also be suggested that the reddish colour of Mars might lead to the focus of the telescope being different for the planet and the moon. Another suggestion is that the colour of the planet might give rise to a complementary tint.

Turning to the date of Prof. Luther's previous observation, October 16, 1902, I find that the moon was full on that very day, and this seemed to link the two observations together, both being associated with a nearly full moon.

But, to my surprise, I found, on consulting the Nautical Almanac table of occultations, that no occultation of Mars, or of any planet, is set down for October 16, 1902, and, on looking up the positions of the moon and of Mars, it is obvious that none could have occurred, as they were distant in R.A. by some nine hours. It is evident then that there is some mistake in the earlier date, unless it is meant to apply to some small stars in Pisces.

I observed with a refractor the disappearance occultation of Mars at the dark limb of a moon rather more than half-full in the early morning of January 29 this year, but saw no trace of any green colour on the disc of the planet.

C. T. WHITMELL.

Hyde Park, Leeds, February 26.

The Teaching of Mathematics.

IN an article entitled "The Teaching of Mathematics" in NATURE of November 30, 1911, considerable space is devoted to a memorandum written by me for

the Department of Public Instruction of New South Wales, to accompany and explain the programmes for the mathematical classes in the high schools recently established in this State. Regret is expressed by the writer of that article that New South Wales "has been frightened by difficulties which were bound to arise in a period of transition, into going back to the old methods instead of boldly remedying the evil by helping all teachers to get the spirit of the new methods."

The point at issue is the treatment of the fundamental theorems of congruence, parallels, and the angle-sum for a triangle, in the course of deductive geometry given to pupils in these high schools. In the programmes, as issued, the teachers are advised to follow Euclid's method (or something of the same nature) in these fundamental theorems. The Board of Education circular, from which we have ventured to differ in this particular alone, recommends that these results be obtained by induction and experiment.

It seems proper that your readers should be aware of the following facts:—

(i.) The course of geometry in question is not meant for children of twelve years of age and under, as the writer of your article seems to assume.

Pupils enter these schools after completing a full course of primary education. Their age at entrance varies from thirteen to thirteen and a half.

(ii.) Before entering the high schools they have had a full year's work at geometry. In this preliminary study the newer methods are fully employed; the results are obtained by induction and experiment, and a great part of what the Board of Education circular recommends is adopted. However, the box of mathematical instruments does not hold sway to the entire exclusion of theoretical work.

(iii.) Although it has been thought advisable to ask for some uniformity of treatment in these early theorems in the deductive course, when this stage is past the fullest amount of freedom is granted.

There is no doubt that experience will show that some modifications in the syllabus are necessary. Some of the points mentioned in your article had already been noted as requiring alteration, and the suggestions which it contains will certainly receive the careful attention of the proper authorities. But the decision with regard to the earlier stages of the geometry course was made only after the fullest consideration. For this reason it is to be regretted that it has been, to some extent at least, misunderstood by the writer of your article.

Sydney, January 10. H. S. CARSLAW.

IN spite of Prof. Carslaw's assurance that pupils on entering secondary schools have reached the age of thirteen or thirteen and a half and have had a full year's work at geometry, the writer of your article feels most strongly that it is extremely unwise to impose on them in their first year at the secondary school a logical treatment of the fundamental theorems of congruence and parallels. Anyone who has had much experience of teaching pupils of that age knows how difficult it is to teach this work and how little impression it makes except on a very small minority; on the other hand, if these theorems are frankly assumed (after the pupils thoroughly understand their meaning) the rest of the geometry usually done in secondary schools can be treated logically, and the vast majority of pupils will get a proper grasp of the ideas of logical geometry. In the latter case the foundations are broad and the structure is firm at every stage; if the fundamental theorems are treated logically, an attempt is made to build on a

narrower base, but in the majority of cases the lower stories of the structure are insecure.

The writer of your article must still regret the attitude taken up by the New South Wales authorities on this point.

R. Y. S.

The Isothermal Layer.

IN reading Dr. Evans's reply to my letter in NATURE of January 25 with regard to the isothermal layer, I was specially interested in his reference to radiation of heat from orbital interplanetary matter as a probable climatic factor, because in *Symon's Meteorological Magazine* of February, 1911, I suggested that the recurrence year after year of warm and cold periods, first directed attention to by the late Dr. Buchan, may be attributable to modifications in a screen of cosmic matter, such, for instance, as that from which the zodiacal light and the Gegenschein are reflected.

I mentioned in a later number of that magazine that my own observations of the light in tropical latitudes, extending over several years, conveyed to me the impression of a ring of cosmical bodies encircling the earth about the zodiac.

For evidence of the isothermal layer at the equator the report of Prof. Borson on the aërological expedition of the Royal Prussian Aëronautical Observatory to East Africa in 1908¹ may be quoted. In this report at least two instances are recorded of balloon ascents near the equator in which the isothermal was reached: on August 30, at a height of 17.3 km., when a temperature of -82.5° C. was registered, and slightly lower temperatures at higher elevations; and on September 5, at 15.4 km., temperature -70.3° C., slight inversions being registered at greater altitudes.

The greater height of the isothermal in equatorial regions may be due to strong convection currents, as Mr. W. H. Dines supposes,² even though the origin of the layer be attributable to reflected heat from interplanetary matter.

CAMPBELL HEPWORTH.

2 Amherst Road, Ealing, W., February 18.

St. Elmo's Fire.

ON Thursday evening, February 22, about 9.20 p.m., whilst traversing a country road which crosses the head of Carr Wood, a well-wooded clough in the neighbourhood of Heywood, near Rochdale, I was fortunate enough to witness a most unique phenomenon. The road in question skirts a hill on the left-hand side, and the opposite side, at this particular place, overlooks a small plateau which runs along the edge of the clough.

During the day we had had much rain. The atmosphere was now very close and heavy, and everything was ominously silent, even the usual breeze having disappeared. Suddenly, without the slightest warning, there appeared an area of faint electric-blue light, almost circular in shape and about 70 yards in diameter, which covered the plateau. The edge of this area was not more than 10 yards from where the observations were made. The whole electric field seemed to be three or four feet above the ground-level, and was in a state of intense agitation. Within the general blue ground there appeared flashes of a more decided blue, very similar in character to forked lightning, but not nearly so distinct.

¹ "Results of Investigations of the Royal Prussian Aeronautical Observatory at Lindenburg." Edited by the Director, Doctor Richard Assman.

² "The Vertical Temperature Distribution in the Atmosphere over England, and some remarks on the General and Local Circulation." By W. H. Dines, F.R.S., Phil. Trans. Royal Soc., Series A, 211, page 269.

Sounds of two distinct types accompanied the agitation. The first consisted of whistling sounds, like that of numerous long-lashed whips swishing rapidly through the air, or perhaps that of the whistle of bullets. These sounds seemed to be associated with the general field of fainter blue.

The other sounds consisted of the characteristic crackle of electricity, and these became so numerous as they approached the climax that they resembled a magnified rustle. These cracklings seemed to be associated with forked discharges, and were probably due to the more distinct flashes coming into contact with the bushes which surround the plateau.

The phenomenon lasted about fifteen to twenty seconds, and disappeared as spontaneously as it had arisen.

J. McV. M.

THE phenomenon described above appears to have been the luminous discharge known as St. Elmo's Fire. This takes place usually from pointed objects, and possibly the tree in your correspondent's sketch (not reproduced) played a part in the production of the phenomenon. The colour associated with St. Elmo's Fire depends upon the character of the discharge. It is blue when the earth is kathode and red when the earth is anode.

The discharge is not infrequent in mountainous countries.

E. GOLD.

Hampstead Garden Suburb, N.W.

Earthworms and Sheep-rot.

EVERYONE who is interested in agriculture is aware that liver-fluke or sheep-rot is popularly associated with one or another of our common plants. Halliwell gives "sheep-killing" as a name for "the herb pennywort." In Britten and Holland ("English Plant Names") we find sheep-rot, sheep-bane, and other similar terms, and we are told that such plants as *Pinguicula vulgaris*, L., and *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, L., are known by these popular names because of a supposition that these plants cause the liver-rot in sheep, which disease is often prevalent on wet land where the plants grow. The authors further inform us that "It is now ascertained that the liver-fluke, which always accompanies rot in sheep, exists in one of its stages as a parasite in the bodies of small water snails, which, in wet weather, creep upon the leaves of marsh plants, and are eaten by the sheep with the herbage. It is therefore with some reason that such names as 'Flowkwort,' 'Sheep-killing Penny-grass,' and 'Sheep-rot' have been given to these marsh plants."

Withering ("British Plants") has a similar note. Speaking of *Pinguicula*, he says, "The plant is generally supposed injurious to sheep, occasioning a disease which the farmers call 'rot.' But it may be questionable whether the rot in sheep is so much owing to the vegetables in marshy grounds, as to a flat insect called a fluke (*Fasciola hepatica*), which is found in these wet situations adhering to the stones and plants, and likewise in the livers and biliary ducts of sheep that are affected with the rot. From experiments conducted with accuracy, it appears that neither sheep, cows, horses, goats, nor swine feed upon this plant."

During a recent visit to Cumberland, however, the matter was presented to me in a new light. I was conversing with a farmer on the economy of the earthworm, when my friend protested that they were responsible for rot in sheep. His explanation was as follows. The worms make casts in spring, known in the north as worm-sprouts, just as in the eastern

counties they are called worm-puts. On these fine young plants grow rapidly, proving very attractive to sheep. When the sheep feed on this tender grass they are liable to suffer from fluke, and it is therefore maintained that the fluke, or rot, is in some way due to the earthworm.

It would be interesting to know more about this popular fancy, and to learn whether anything is being done to help farmers to a more correct knowledge of the facts.

HILDERIC FRIEND.

Swadlincote, Burton-on-Trent, February 17.

Meteor-showers.

I AM sure that a great many of your readers who are interested in the subject of meteors have noticed the letters of Mr. John R. Henry which have appeared from time to time in your columns, but I do not recollect having seen any letter from an observer stating either that Mr. Henry's prediction had been fulfilled or that it had failed. If a shower of the thirty-third magnitude is sufficiently marked to enable three secondary maxima to be fixed with accuracy, one of the third magnitude, such as we are promised at the end of this month (February) ought to be very perceptible indeed. But perhaps the word "magnitude" does not refer to the number of the meteors but to their average mass. If so, how is this mass to be ascertained? Mr. Henry gives us no information as to the part of the sky in which these meteors should on each occasion be looked for.

F.R.A.S.

Dublin.

"F.R.A.S." is right in surmising that the magnitude of a shower does not depend upon the number of meteors that may be actually observed, but rather upon the general mass or quantity of matter imported into the atmosphere at the time. This may appear to be a distinction without a difference, but as the number of shooting stars counted by an observer will be influenced by the altitude of the radiant, the clearness of the sky, &c., it is evident that the intensity of the phenomenon cannot be fully measured by such results. It is assumed that the radiant is the same as that usually associated with the time of the year at which the shower occurs.

To determine the absolute mass of a meteor-shower is a somewhat intricate problem, but it is possible to obtain an approximate solution of it by assuming that the portion of the meteor-swarm which enters the atmosphere is moving nearly parallel to the earth's surface, and in being brought to rest puts the surrounding air in motion. There must thus result an atmospheric depression, and given the mean depth and extent of the latter, the mass of the shower may be calculated from purely dynamical principles.

The order of magnitude does not express, as may be supposed, the absolute but rather the relative intensity of a shower, with reference to some other shower which may be regarded as the standard-shower. Thus of the two showers referred to by "F.R.A.S.," one of the thirty-third, and the other at the end of February of the third order of magnitude, the former is of the weakest and the latter of the highest intensity in the whole month. The greater meteoric event, apart from its high intensity, happens to belong to an interesting type or group of meteor-showers, one of which of the tenth order of magnitude occurred in 1908 on September 28, and another of the eighteenth order in 1911, on April 8-9, both occasions being marked by a magnetic and the latter also by a moderate seismic disturbance.

JOHN R. HENRY.

THE AMERICAN LOBSTER.¹

THE work referred to below is "in a measure both a revision and an extension" of Prof. Herrick's well-known memoir on "The American Lobster," published in 1896 in the Bulletin of the United States Fish Commission, from which several figures, including three fine coloured plates of larval stages, are reproduced. By far the larger part of the memoir, however, is concerned with the new knowledge of the natural history of the lobster that has been gained during the past fifteen years from the investigations of the author himself and of many other naturalists on both sides of the Atlantic. As Prof. Herrick remarks, "in all probability there is no marine invertebrate in the world which is now better known," and he has rendered a great service to zoology by bringing together a vast amount of information on the habits and mode of life, the reproduction, development, and growth of the lobster, and on the economic and legislative problems relating to its preservation and artificial propagation. Out of the many points of interest discussed only a few can be selected for comment here.

The European and American lobsters are commonly regarded as distinct species of the genus *Homarus*, but they are very closely related, and, as Prof. Herrick remarks, they "might at first sight be considered as geographical varieties" of a single species. The only structural character which is given as distinguishing the two is the form of the rostrum, which in European lobsters is smooth on the underside, while in American specimens it usually bears a pair of small spines. According to Prof. Herrick, "either one, two, or three spines of inconstant size may be present," and he implies that they may occasionally be absent altogether in American lobsters. Slight differences are said to exist in the larvæ of the two forms, although the author scarcely seems to be justified in stating that the European lobster is hatched "in a stage nearly comparable to the second larva of the American lobster." Even if this were so, however, it would be by no means conclusive as to their specific distinctness, since other cases are known among Crustacea of species (e.g. the prawn *Palaemonetes varians*) which differ in their mode of development in different parts of their geographical range. As a mere matter of nomenclature the question is, of course, only of

interest to the systematist, but in view of the temptation to fill in gaps in our knowledge of the bionomics of either form by data drawn from the other, it may be of more than merely academic interest to determine as exactly as possible the degree of affinity between them.

Prof. Herrick states of the European lobster that its range in the Mediterranean is limited on the east by the Adriatic Sea, and this agrees with statements in other works of authority. If it be correct, however, it is curious that the species should have been so well known to Aristotle, whose natural history studies were mainly carried on, as Prof. D'Arcy Thompson has recently told us, on the island of Mitylene.

A detailed account is given of the structure and

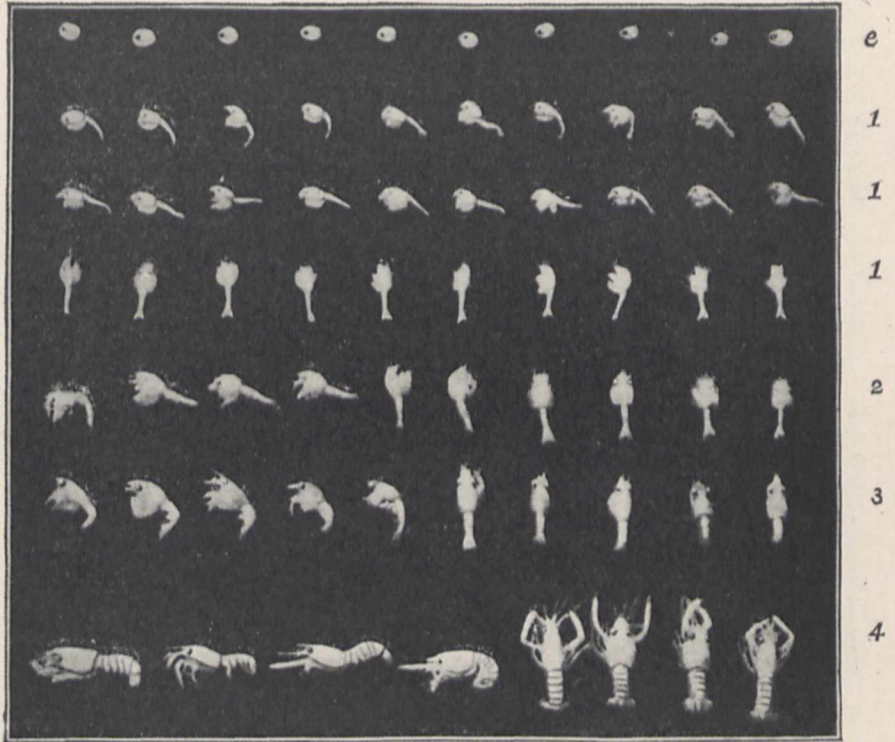


FIG. 1.—Growth stages of young lobsters: e, embryo at hatching (July); 1 (first line), first larva, not free from first moult; 1 (second and third line), first free larval stage; 2, second larva; 3, third larva; 4, fourth stage.

development of the great claws and of the process of autotomy and regeneration as affecting them. An interesting little piece of mechanism is described in the interlocking processes which strengthen the articulations between the basal segments of the limb. In the young lobster, in which the articulation between the second and third segments is movable, processes of this kind are developed on the adjacent margins of these segments. In later stages, however, the second and third segments become soldered together, the junction forming the "breaking plane" at which autotomy takes place, and a new process grows out from the third segment to interlock with one on the first. A full description is given of the torsion of the great claws by which the movable finger comes to lie on the inner side instead of on the upper and outer side as it does in the

¹ "Natural History of the American Lobster." By F. H. Herrick. Bulletin of the Bureau of Fisheries, vol. xxix., pp. 149-408, pls. xxvii-xxlvii. (Washington, 1911.)

two following pairs of legs. The observation of this torsion, however, is not quite novel, for it was briefly but accurately described by Boas in his well-known (but apparently little read) "Studier over Decapodernes Slægtskabsforhold" (Vidensk. Selsk. Skrifter, Kjøbenhavn, 1880). The periodic arrangement of the teeth on the fingers of the great claws is described, and it is shown to arise in a very simple way by the successive appearance of new sets of teeth between those already existing. Reference is made to Stahr's fantastic opinion "that the æsthetic sense of this self-admiring crustacean is aroused as its eye wanders over the dentate margin of its 'hand.'"

The habits and reactions of the larvæ are dealt with at some length, and many interesting facts are recorded in connection with their swimming movements, food (and occasional cannibalism), colour, and power of colour-change. Even their psychology is not neglected, for it is stated that the "instinct of fear" becomes apparent only at

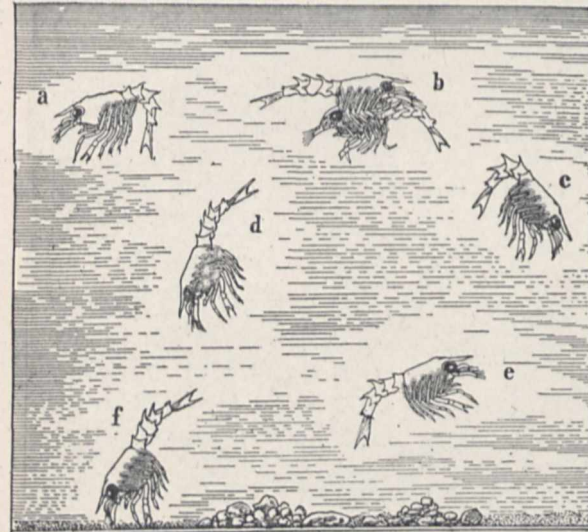


FIG. 2.—Swimming attitudes of young lobsters in the first free stages: *a*, body bent in usual quadrant form; *b*, lobster swimming astride the carcase of another and devouring it; *c*, thoracic legs directed forward; *d*, rising position occasionally assumed; *e*, "floating" position; *f*, too weak to rise.

the fourth stage, when the little lobster prepares to give up its free-swimming life and to seek shelter on the bottom.

Prof. Herrick's remarks on the subjects of protective legislation and artificial hatching of lobsters are worthy of close attention. He strongly advocates the view that a minimum size-limit, such as most lobster-fishing countries have adopted, is ineffective on account of the fact that the smaller lobsters, which alone are protected, are vastly less fertile than the larger individuals. Some striking statistics are given to show the futility of artificial hatching unless the young lobsters are reared through the critical pelagic stages before they are set free.

As is usual with publications of the United States Government departments, the style of printing and illustration forms a pleasing contrast to that of most official publications in this country.

W. T. C.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN THE SUDAN.¹

IN reviewing the third report of the Wellcome Research Laboratories (NATURE, June 24, 1909), we suggested that it would be advisable to separate the purely medical subjects from those dealing with agricultural or economic questions and matters of general scientific interest. This has been effected in the fourth report, and we now have two volumes, A, Medical, B, General Science, but the change is accompanied by at least one drawback, viz., that each of the separate volumes is now as large as its parent, and in addition we have a still bulkier review of the literature.

If we may unburden ourself at once of initial criticism, it is that these volumes are too bulky.



Copyright. From Fourth Report Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories, Khartoum.

FIG. 1.—Sharpened teeth as practised by the Nyam-nyam.

This, we believe, is not entirely due to the number of subjects included, but in part to the diffuse style in which many of the articles are written, and the desire to impart elementary information—a praiseworthy desire, but one we think perhaps out of place in reports dealing with researches. The articles would, in our opinion, be improved by severe pruning. We suspect that there are certain considerations which prevent this, but for

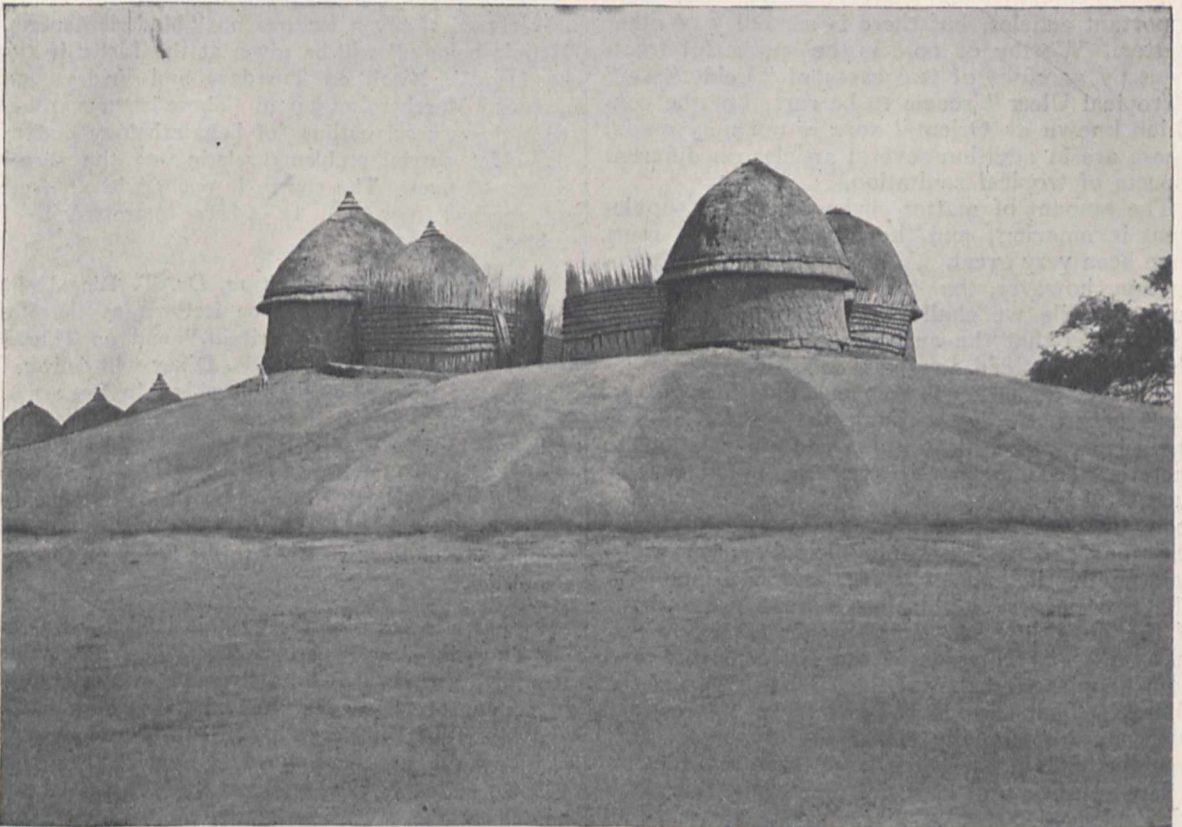
¹ Fourth Report of the Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories at the Gordon Memorial College, Khartoum, Dr. Andrew Balfour, Director. Vol. A, Medical, pp. 404+xxiii plates+118 figs. Price 21s. net. Vol. B, General Science, pp. 333. Price 18s. net. Supplement to the Fourth Report, pp. 448. Price 15s. net. (London: Published for the Department of Education, Sudan Government, Khartoum, by Baillière, Tindall and Cox, 1911.)

the scientific reader, not to mention the reviewer, the gain would be appreciable. The amount of literature put forth is so great that conciseness should be aimed at in the interests of all. Again, although we must express our admiration for the immense amount of labour involved in preparing the reviews of recent advances in tropical medicine, yet we feel certain that this is not the function of the overworked staff of the laboratory, and that they should spare themselves the drudgery and mental effort involved in producing such a work.

In Vol. A, Medical, the first article deals with a question of the first importance, viz., the extent to which sleeping-sickness prevails in the southern portions of the Bahr-el-Ghazal, and the measures

Gl. morsitans is free from danger to man remains yet to be definitely proved. In this article we do not see it expressly stated that the thick blood film method was employed for diagnosis, but its great utility and convenience can hardly be denied.

The second article likewise deals with trypanosomiasis, but in regard to animals. Four species occur in the country, viz. *T. brucei*, *T. evansi*, *T. nanum*, and *T. vivax*, but a consideration of the question as to whether these names represent the species present or not involves us in the very difficult problem of trypanosome identification. We cannot enter here into this question, but we would add a word of caution as to the measurement-curve method introduced by Sir David



C. G. SELIGMANN.

From Fourth Report Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories, Khartoum

FIG 2.—Dwelling of Shilluk King, Fashoda.

taken to prevent its spread. So far cases have not been detected north of Wandī in the Lado, and in the coloured map this is represented as the distribution of *Glossina palpalis*, but this fly exists also on the bank of the Nile at Kajo-Kaje, south of Rejaf, as was shown later. Inspection posts have been established, clearing operations instituted, and the authorities are keenly on the alert. Whether *Gl. morsitans* in connection with sleeping-sickness is a negligible factor is open to considerable doubt: that it is not so in Rhodesia and Nyasaland, in parts of which we have cases of sleeping-sickness in absence of *Gl. palpalis*, is now established. In these places there appears to be a new species of human trypanosome; whether in the absence of this particular trypanosome,

Bruce. The number of trypanosomes counted in one of the curves given is certainly too small, only 150, and as a matter of fact the chart (1910) given of *T. brucei*, though it resembles the earlier chart, bears not the slightest resemblance to the latest chart of this species published by Sir David Bruce.

The director contributes a lengthy paper on spirochaetes in fowls, which is exceedingly prevalent, and marshals his evidence in favour of the view that the spirochaete breaks up into granules in the internal organs. His paper on fallacies and puzzles in blood examination will perhaps do some good in preventing the finding of any bits of stained matter in a blood film being recorded as new parasites by those desirous of fame; for in these days the editorial waste-paper basket is not

as large as it used to be, and the publication of rubbishy papers is all too common. Yet, on the other hand, we fear the conscientious tyro will be overwhelmed with all the pitfalls recorded, and perhaps it is not enough emphasised that known parasites when present are easily recognised, and even each new parasite as it is discovered has such definite characters that, as a rule, the question of its parasitic nature is not a very difficult matter.

The existence of kala-azar in the eastern Sudan is a serious condition, for the disease may assume epidemic proportions. Unfortunately, at present little can be effectively done, as the mode of transmission is unknown, nor is treatment of much avail.

We have noted some of the longer and more important articles, but there is a medley of other matter. Worthy of note is the successful treatment by vaccines of two cases of "Veldt Sore." "Tropical Ulcer" seems to be rare, but the condition known as Oriental sore is not uncommon. There are in addition several articles on different aspects of tropical sanitation.

The amount of matter reviewed in the supplement is amazing, and the labour involved must have been very great. We gather from the introduction, however, that this will be its last appearance. While we shall regret its disappearance, yet we feel that the authors are quite right and absolutely justified in their decision.

Volume B, General Science, like Volume A, deals with a medley of subjects: water and soil analysis, research into gum and its relation to bacteria, entomology—it may be noted that a successful larvicidal fish has not yet been found—economic ornithology, poisonous snakes and scorpions, plant pests, municipal engineering, gold-mining in ancient times, and anthropology. The two papers on this last subject are perhaps of the most interest to the general reader, viz. that on tribal customs of the Nyam Nyam and Gour peoples, and that of the Divine Kings of the Shilluk. They are both extremely interesting, but may occasionally shock the hypersensitive. Our illustrations are taken from these two papers.

The volumes are, as usual, profusely illustrated with coloured plates, maps, and text figures, and there are complete indices.

We must express our astonishment at the amount of work done. We feel that the authors give too much of themselves, and that they are overtaxed. Undoubtedly the staff should be increased, and each member be allowed to devote himself to special subjects. It is quite impossible, if the best results are to be got, for a person to be a "factotum."

NOTES.

WE are glad to learn that the preparation of a Life of Lord Lister is contemplated. We are asked to say that any letters of scientific interest forwarded to Mr. R. J. Godlee, 19 Wimpole Street, London, W., will be gratefully received for this purpose. If desired, the letters will be returned, after being copied.

NO. 2210, VOL. 89]

It is announced in *The Times* that the Amsterdam General Radium Company has purchased the entire present stock of radium of the Austrian Government.

LIEUT.-COLONEL D. PRAIN, F.R.S., director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, has been elected a foreign member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, in succession to the late Sir Joseph Hooker.

AN interesting collection of photographs by Mr. G. R. Ballance, of St. Moritz, Switzerland, illustrating the scenery on the frontier of Switzerland, France, and Italy, is on view at the Royal Photographic Society's house, 35 Russell Square, W.C. The exhibition is open free to the public, on presentation of visiting card, until April 20.

A SERIES of seven lectures on "Modern Aspects of Helminthology" will be given at the Lister Institute by Dr. W. Nicoll on Tuesdays and Fridays, commencing March 19, at 5 p.m. These lectures will deal with the general outlines of helminthology and with the chief special problems relating to the parasitic worms of man. The course is open, without fee, to all medical men and to others interested in the subject.

ON Tuesday next, March 12, Dr. T. Rice Holmes will begin a course of three lectures at the Royal Institution on "Ancient Britain," and on Thursday afternoon, March 21, Dr. F. A. Dixey will deliver the first of two lectures on "Dimorphism in Butterflies." The Friday evening discourse on March 15 will be delivered by Mr. Frederick Soddy, on "The Origin of Radium"; on March 22 by Prof. d'Arcy W. Thomson, on "The North Sea and its Fisheries"; and on March 29 by Sir J. J. Thomson, on "Results of the Application of Positive Rays to the Study of Chemical Problems."

AN extra meeting of the Chemical Society was held on Thursday last, February 29, when Sir William Ramsay, K.C.B., F.R.S., delivered a memorial lecture in honour of Henri Moissan, who was born in 1852 and died in February, 1907. In introducing the lecturer, the president, Prof. Percy F. Frankland, F.R.S., stated it was fitting that the lecture held in honour of the discoverer of the most active element should be given by the discoverer of the most inert element. Sir William Ramsay referred to Moissan's early researches on the products of reduction of the oxides of the iron group and to his work on the oxides of manganese, nickel, and cobalt, and on the chromous salts. Moissan's numerous experiments on the compounds of fluorine, a series of researches which culminated in the discovery of elementary fluorine and, finally, of its isolation, and the apparatus used in this work, were described, and reference was made to the researches which led to the discovery of the method of preparing artificial diamonds.

THE biology class of the University of Colorado sent Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, O.M., F.R.S., greetings on his birthday on January 8. The February 2 issue of *Silver and Gold*, a newspaper published three times a week by the associated students of the Uni-

versity, publishes the reply received from Dr. Wallace, in which he says:—"From the day when I first saw a Bee-orchis (*Ophrys apifera*) in ignorant astonishment, to my first view of the great forests of the Amazon; thence to the Malay Archipelago, where every fresh island with its marvellous novelties and beauties was an additional delight, nature has afforded me an ever-increasing rapture, and the attempt to solve some of her myriad problems an ever-growing sense of mystery and awe. And now, in my wild garden and greenhouse, the endless diversities of plant life renew my enjoyments; and the ever-changing pageants of the seasons impress me more than ever in my earlier days. I sincerely wish you all some of the delight in the mere contemplation of nature's mysteries and beauties which I have enjoyed, and still enjoy."

THE Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia will celebrate the centenary of its foundation on March 19, 20, and 21. An important feature of the celebration will be the publication of three commemorative volumes: an index to the scientific contents of the entire series of Proceedings and Journal, now amounting to eighty-five volumes; a detailed history of the academy by the recording secretary, Dr. Edward J. Nolan, of which the Short History contributed by him to the "Philadelphia Founders' Week Memorial Volume" in 1909 may be regarded as a Prodrum; and a quarto volume of liberally illustrated memoirs by members and correspondents. A sufficient number of contributions have been received to guarantee the success of the latter publication, and the general committee has reason to believe that the entire celebration will be an adequate recognition of the honourable record of the society as one of the most efficient agencies in the cultivation of the natural sciences in America during the past hundred years.

A MEETING was held at the Mansion House on February 28 in support of the London School of Tropical Medicine. Mr. Harcourt, Secretary of State for the Colonies, was the principal speaker. He said that in the last seven years the School has received from the Tropical Diseases Research Fund 13,000*l.* for special work in protozoology and entomology, for which separate laboratories in new buildings have recently been provided. The School has managed to save 5000*l.* as the nucleus of an endowment fund, but at least another 20,000*l.* is required to put it on a sound financial basis. It is also desired to raise 10,000*l.* for the provision of additional laboratories and residential quarters. Mr. Harcourt said it may, possibly, be asked why the Government does not itself find the necessary funds. The keepers of the national purse, he pointed out, have not been niggardly in their practical assistance to the work. The Treasury has contributed, and is contributing, for the last five years 1000*l.* per annum to the Sleeping Sickness Bureau; for five years, 1000*l.* per annum to the Entomological Research Fund; for three years, 5000*l.* per annum to Sir D. Bruce's expedition to Nyasaland to inquire into sleeping sickness; and from 1904-7, 500*l.* per annum; and from

1908 onwards, 1000*l.* per annum to the Tropical Diseases Research Fund; this amounts to 8000*l.* a year, in addition to capital donations. In addition, approximately 50,000*l.* has been spent during the last five years in investigation and suppression of sleeping sickness in Uganda.

THE Committee on Science and the Arts of the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, made the following awards of the Elliott Cresson medal on February 7:—Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, Washington, D.C., in recognition of the value of his solution of the problem of the electrical transmission of articulate speech; Dr. S. W. Stratton, Washington, D.C., in recognition of his distinguished and directive work in physical science and metrology, and its application in the arts and industries; Dr. A. A. Michelson, Chicago, Ill., in recognition of his original and fruitful investigations in the field of physical optics; Dr. A. Noble, New York, in recognition of his distinguished achievements in the field of civil engineering; Dr. Elihu Thomson, Swampscott, Mass., in recognition of his leading and distinguished work in the industrial applications of electricity; Dr. E. W. Morley, West Hartford, Conn., in recognition of his important contributions to chemical science, and particularly of his accurate determinations of fundamental magnitudes; Dr. J. F. A. Von Baeyer, Munich, in recognition of the many important results of his extended research in organic chemistry and of his discovery of synthetic processes of great industrial value; Sir William Crookes, O.M., F.R.S., in recognition of his important discoveries in inorganic and analytical chemistry, and of his pioneer work on the discharge of electricity through gases; and Sir Henry E. Roscoe, F.R.S., in recognition of his extended and important researches in the domains of inorganic, physical, and industrial chemistry.

DR. KNIGHT DUNLAP contributes to the current number of *The Psychological Review* an account of some interesting experiments upon the sensibility of the human subject to differences in the rate of succession of stimuli in two regular series of stimuli. One of these regular series is constant, the other is varied, and the two series are presented successively, the subject having to judge which has the faster rate. The rate-threshold thus reached is compared by Dr. Dunlap with the time-threshold, *i.e.* the subject's sensibility to differences in the length of a single interval of time. As might be expected, he finds that the sensibility for rate differences is considerably more acute than that for time differences, at least under the conditions of his experiments. The writer concludes that the rate judgment is not essentially based upon a judgment of individual time intervals. His paper is especially valuable as a record of experimental methods and for careful details of the instruments employed.

FROM Mr. W. Junk, of Berlin, we have received a "Bibliographica Coleopterologica," containing nearly 4000 entries of works and papers devoted solely or partially to beetles. The actual catalogue is preceded by a useful introduction on the faunistic literature of the subject.

CONSIDERABLE interest attaches to the description by Miss D. M. A. Bate in the January number of *The Geological Magazine* of the dentition and other remains of a large mouse (rat, we should have preferred to call it) discovered by herself in a cave on the west coast of Crete. The new species (*Mus catreus*) considerably exceeds the brown rat in size, and may be compared in this respect to the great Gambian rat (*Cricetomys gambianus*); it consequently forms a second instance of a relatively gigantic rodent in the Pleistocene of the Mediterranean islands.

THE fourth number of "Behaviour Monographs," published by Messrs. Holt and Co. at Cambridge, Boston, Mass., is devoted to an account of the ecology of the pond-snails of the genus *Physa*, by Miss Jean Dawson. From their omnivorous habits, these snails are valuable as purifiers of the ponds in which they dwell. Their own mucus serves to assist in procuring food, since it entraps microscopic organisms of all kinds, which are then devoured by the snails, together with the mucus itself. The rudimentary eyes apparently afford no assistance in procuring food, but the head and fore part of the foot are sensitive to food-stimulus.

A NEW Polypodium from the Panama regions, described by Mr. R. Mason in an extract from the Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections (vol. lvi., No. 24), is remarkable, because the pinnæ of the sterile fronds are entire, while those of the fertile fronds are toothed or lobed and bear the sori apparently at the tips of the teeth. Another striking feature is the variation in the fronds, due to differences in the pinnæ, which in some cases are entire or once forked, in others much branched; it is suggested that the branching is correlated with injury to the apex of the fronds, which are normally of indeterminate growth.

IN connection with afforestation on the Thirlmere estate in the Lake district, Mr. A. B. Edwards contributes to the Transactions of the Royal Scottish Arboricultural Society (vol. xxvi., part i.) an article containing some useful hints on planting at high altitudes. Three-year-old seedlings were generally selected, and planted in prepared pits. Larch formed the main bulk of the plants, but where shelter was required a belt or intermixture of Scots, Austrian, and Corsican pines has been adopted. For higher elevations fir or spruce is recommended, notably the Menzies spruce. In support of a favourable anticipation of the financial success of operations, the author quotes figures from a plantation in the same district.

THE Upper Rhine, from Basle to Mainz, is one of the chief seismic districts of Central Europe, about 400 earthquakes being recorded there between 1800 and 1895. Of the latest earthquake, that of November 16, 1911, a popular account by W. Salomon is given in *Naturwissenschaftliche Wochenschrift* for February 11. Judging from the area of greatest intensity, there would appear to be two epicentres, one near Lake Constance, the other, from forty to fifty miles farther north, in the neighbourhood of Balingen, Ebingen, and Hechingen. From

the frequency of after-shocks in the latter district, and from their absence from the former, however, there appears to be some doubt whether the shock belongs to the class of twin-earthquakes.

IN Heft 5 of the *Mitteilungen aus den Deutschen Schutzgebieten*, the region of the upper basin of the Mungo River, in the Cameroon protectorate, is fully described from the geographical viewpoint by Dr. F. Thorbecke. He deals specially with the higher country round the volcano of Manenguba, which rises to an altitude of more than 2000 metres, and considers it to consist essentially of a crystalline block overlaid by basaltic or trachytic sheets of lava. This seems to have been slowly raised, subsequent faulting and volcanic action having also played an important part in producing the present surface forms. Meteorological observations for 1910 from stations in the Cameroons, Togo, and New Guinea are also contained in this volume.

THE Canadian Naval Service Act having been passed in May, 1910, the Department of Naval Service was forthwith organised with branches dealing with naval matters, fishery protection, tidal and current surveys, hydrographic survey, and wireless telegraphy. Reports on all these for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1911, have been published, and contain many points of interest. The tidal work has been previously mentioned in noticing the tidal tables which have recently been published. Hydrographic surveys were carried out on the Great Lakes, on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, and in Hudson Bay and elsewhere. Not many details are given of methods and results, but it is stated that the local attraction of compasses reputed to exist in Hudson Bay was not substantiated. Thirty-two radio-telegraphic stations exist, and a scheme has been prepared for the establishment of a system of such stations on the Great Lakes.

IN the November (1911) number of the *Geographische Zeitschrift* Prof. Penck gives a most instructive critical comparison of the three principal German atlases—these three, the hand-atlases of Stieler, Debes, and Andree, are generally considered to stand in the foremost rank of modern topography—and the discussion of the differences between them. He notes the increasing use of the most suitable projections in place of the very limited selection formerly employed, the careful choice of scale, and greatly improved character of the representation of relief. Contour lines or layers of colour might in some cases be utilised, and the great scarcity of physical maps in most atlases, which devote their pages primarily to the distribution of man and his works on the earth's surface, is a matter which calls for consideration. In spite of much recent progress, there is always room for improvement, and there is ample scope for the scientific study of cartography; the same may be said of cartography in this country, where, however, there is much more to be done before an ideal standard is reached.

A HEAVY gale was experienced in all parts of England on March 4 and the following night, when at

Dover the wind attained the velocity of 71 miles an hour. For a long time past cyclonic disturbances have arrived in proximity to our coasts from the Atlantic with considerable frequency, but, due to the persistent high barometer over western Europe, the incoming storm systems have followed a track to the northward, skirting our western and northern coasts. The storm area which arrived on March 4 completely traversed the British Isles, and probably subsequent disturbances arriving will for a time now follow a similar path. In connection with the disturbance, a severe squall, accompanied by thunder and lightning, passed over Kew at 4.30 p.m. on March 4, when the wind attained the velocity of 60 miles an hour, and a similar squall passed over South Kensington at 4.40 p.m., the wind velocity recording 42 miles an hour. At Dover a squall, with the wind blowing 68 miles an hour, was experienced at 4 p.m., and a corresponding disturbance passed over Valencia, in Ireland, at 7.40 a.m., which gives a rate of travel of rather less than 50 miles an hour.

THE past winter, comprised in the three months December, January, and February, proves to be one of the warmest experienced of recent years, notwithstanding the severe frost which occurred at the close of January and at the beginning of February. A summary of the weather for the thirteen weeks ended March 2, issued by the Meteorological Office, shows that the mean temperature for the winter was in excess of the average over the entire kingdom; the greatest excess occurred in the east and south-east of England and in the Midland counties. The aggregate rainfall for the winter was largely in excess of the average over the whole of the British Isles, except in the north of Scotland, where the deficiency amounted to 2.95 in. The greatest excess was 5.3 in., in the south-east and south-west of England. In the Midland counties the excess was 4.3 in., and in the south of Ireland 4.5 in. The rainy days were also in excess of the average everywhere, except in the north of Ireland. The duration of bright sunshine was deficient, except in the north of Scotland, but the difference from the normal was nowhere very large. At Greenwich the mean temperature was above the average in each of the three winter months, the excess being respectively 5°, 2°, and 4°; the mean for the whole period was 42.5°, which is 3° above the normal. There has only been one winter as warm in the last thirty-five years, the mean for the three months being 43.5° in the winter of 1898-9. The rainfall was also in excess of the average in each of the three months, the aggregate excess being 3.3 in. The duration of bright sunshine was in good agreement with the normal.

IN the December (1911) number of the *Annals of Tropical Medicine and Parasitology*, issued by the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, some novel "Tables of Statistical Error" are given by Sir Ronald Ross and Mr. Walter Stott. The tables show, for a given true percentage, how many observations must be made in order that the odds may be $m : 1$ that the observed percentage lies within given limits. The limits taken are ± 1 , ± 2 , ± 3 , ± 4 , ± 5 , or ± 6 per

cent., the odds 99999 : 1, 9999 : 1, 999 : 1, 99 : 1, 9 : 1, and 1 : 1, and the percentages are tabulated by steps of a unit. As the calculation appears to have been made, however, on the usual basis of a normal distribution, it is not clear what meaning can be attributed to the figures given for very low percentages, where the number of observations is not nearly sufficient to justify such an assumption. The tables, which are obtainable as a separate publication, should do much to lessen the publication of results based on quite inadequate statistical data, and thus serve a very useful purpose, but the point to which we have directed attention should have received more attention in the explanatory introduction.

MR. G. R. M. TEMPLE sends us from York a copy of a photograph, here reproduced, which illustrates very clearly the result of the expansion of water by freezing during the recent severe frost. The bottle was filled with clean water and tightly corked; when the water had frozen a stem of ice about 4½ in. in length was found to be projecting from the neck of the bottle, as shown in the illustration. This stem represented, of course, the increase of volume undergone by the water in passing from the liquid to the solid state. The bottle must have been cracked while solidification was going on, otherwise the water would have escaped.



Protuding stem of ice formed by the freezing of water in a bottle.

THE illustrated article by Prof. E. F. Northrup on a photographic study of vortex rings in liquids, published in our issue of February 1 last (vol. lxxxviii., p. 463), has prompted Mr. A. W. Ackermann to send a description of some experiments performed by him twenty years ago in the production of vortex rings in liquids. He took a cubical vaseline tin of 8.5 cm. edge, cut a hole in the lid 1 cm. in diameter, filled the tin with a solution of permanganate of potash, and placed the tin in a bath 6 ft. long. By means of a long stick impulses were given to the top or end of the tin, and the vortex rings were ejected at pleasure and studied. At Mr. Ackermann's suggestion, Prof. C. V. Boys, F.R.S., was asked if he had investigated the matter. He reminds us that the late Prof. Guthrie had a large glass trough made in the early eighties of the last century for experiments on liquid vortex rings. In the centre of one end there was a "gun" with a thick sheet india-rubber back. The gun was filled with a solution of rosaniline. Dr. Guthrie's trough was used later by Sir Arthur Rücker, F.R.S., while professor of physics at the Royal College of Science, London. Prof. Boys goes on to inform us that he would have expected that a trough wider than 12 cm., as described in Prof. Northrup's article, certainly not less than 30 cm. or a

foot, would be greatly preferable, and equally that a gun with a larger muzzle than that employed would have been better.

THE annual general meeting of the Institute of Chemistry was held on March 1, Dr. George Beilby, F.R.S., the president, occupying the chair. During the course of his address the president said the fund for new buildings for the institute has reached 8500*l.*, but 15,000*l.* is considered necessary for erecting a building suitable for the work of the institute. Touching on the difficulties which confront public analysts and private practitioners, he referred to the attempts made on the part of certain local authorities to lower the status of the professional chemist by offering appointments at ridiculous remuneration. Enlightened municipal bodies realise that the proper administration of statutes, such as the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, cannot be expected unless they attract to their appointments men of competence and integrity, who can hold their own as responsible representative officers of their authorities. The Act is as much a statute against fraud as in the interests of public health, and it must be understood that the public analyst is in no way subject to the control of the medical officer of health. Prof. R. Meldola, F.R.S., was elected as president for the ensuing year, and the following as vice-presidents:—Dr. G. T. Beilby, F.R.S., Dr. F. Clowes, Dr. G. McGowan, Sir Alexander Pedler, F.R.S., Dr. J. M. Thomson, F.R.S., and Sir William Tilden, F.R.S.

THE Bulletin of the Bureau of Standards for December 15, 1911, contains an account of an investigation carried out by Mr. F. W. Grover on the effect of temperature and frequency on the capacity and phase difference of a number of commercial paraffined paper condensers. The alternating currents used were supplied by special generators designed for the Bureau. Bridge methods were used, balance being indicated by a vibration galvanometer. The phase differences found range from 6' to 22° of arc. The change of capacity with frequency is large for low frequencies, and decreases as the frequency increases. The temperature coefficient of capacity is generally positive and of the order 1 per cent., but in some cases may be negative. The absorption appears to be represented with a fair degree of accuracy by Von Schweidler's extension of Pellat's theory that the dielectric displacement on the application of an electric field attains instantly a certain fraction of its final value, and then increases exponentially to its final value. Three exponential terms appear to be necessary to represent the observations. It follows from these results that paper condensers cannot serve as standards of capacity, and should not be used in any work in which a constant capacity is required.

COMMENTING on the fatal accident to Mr. Graham Gilmour, *Engineering* for March 1 considers that if the trussing of his machine was after the usual pattern in this type of machine, the provision for horizontal strength would not be very great, and

failure would most likely be in this direction. The essential lesson in this and previous accidents appears to be that it is high time that the question of the strength of monoplane wings was gone into in a public manner, and that it is due to the public that the makers should demonstrate that they have a reasonable factor of safety, both vertically and horizontally, otherwise the monoplane in its present state will be put down as a machine in which safety has been so far sacrificed to the craze for "records" that it is not fit for practical flight.

THERE have been several proposals within the past few years to construct internal-combustion air-compressors on the free-piston system, and one which has been made and tested by Signor Giuseppe Matricardi, of Pallanza, Lago Maggiore, Italy, is described in *Engineering* for March 1. A heavy piston is propelled from one end of a cylinder to the other end by the explosion of a gaseous mixture behind it. During its motion it expels air in front of it through a port, and thence through a non-return valve into a reservoir. Near the end of its travel the piston overruns the port, and compresses into the end of the cylinder a fresh charge, which is exploded in its turn, shooting back the piston to the other end. In its passage the piston compresses and discharges into a reservoir the air in front of it, as before. It is said that a good efficiency and large output have been secured in the small machine already tested, but actual figures are reserved until a larger compressor, now under construction, is ready and tested by independent engineers.

WE are indebted to Messrs. Cassell for a copy of the first part of a new issue of Kearton's "British Birds' Nests." The fact that bitterns nested last year in Norfolk is recorded.

THE first part of "The Nature Book," which is described in a subtitle as a popular description by pen and camera of the delights and beauties of the open air, has been published by Messrs. Cassell and Co., Ltd. The work is to be completed in thirty-six fortnightly parts, at 7*d.* net each. It is profusely illustrated from photographs and a series of coloured plates.

THE report of the ninth meeting of the International Meteorological Committee, held at Berlin in September, 1910, and of the sixth meeting of the Commission for Terrestrial Magnetism and Atmospheric Electricity, which preceded it, has just been published as a Blue-book (Meteorological Office, No. 208, price 3*s.*).

THE "Classified List of Smithsonian Publications available for Distribution, January, 1912," has been received from Washington. Applicants for these publications are requested to state the grounds of their requests, as the Smithsonian Institution is able to supply papers only as an aid to the researches in which applicants are especially interested. The papers included in the list are distributed gratis, except in some cases, where a small charge is made.

OUR ASTRONOMICAL COLUMN.

BRILLIANT WHITE SPOTS ON MARS.—In No. 10, vol. xix., of *Popular Astronomy* Mr. L. J. Wilson, who observes Mars with an 11-inch reflector, cites several occasions during October and November, 1911, when his observations at Nashville, Tenn., revealed the presence of very conspicuous and brilliant white spots on the planet's disc; such spots were seen, on October 14, in the region following Hesperia. Comparing his recent observations with those made during 1909, Mr. Wilson concludes that the frequent formation of such spots is an unusual feature of the present apparition.

COMETARY PHENOMENA.—A discussion of cometary phenomena is published by Prof. Karl Böhlín in an abstract from the *Naturwissenschaftlichen Rundschau*. Prof. Böhlín deals with such matters as the orbits, the brightness and structure of the different parts of comets, the facts revealed by spectroscopic analysis, and the peculiar fluctuations of the form and brightness of the tails of various comets. Of general interest will be found the tables he gives showing the variation of all these features in a large number of well-known comets which have appeared since the seventeenth century.

THE ANTARCTIC CAMPAIGN.

AT the present time it is not unlikely that the south pole has been reached by both Captain Scott and Captain Amundsen, who are leading respectively British and Norwegian Antarctic expeditions. The accomplishment of this athletic feat is one that the public take an intense interest in, and not least of all at the present time because there are two competitors in the polar race, which adds zest from the sportsman's point of view. Any journey in Antarctic regions must also add something to our knowledge of the Antarctic regions, and any additional knowledge is of scientific value. But the two expeditions are of much greater interest to the scientific community from the point of view of the work they will do outside this journey to the pole, for, so far as the polar journey is concerned, Captain Scott intends to follow over his own track and Sir Ernest Shackleton's, except for the last hundred miles, and Captain Amundsen may, after tracking in a south-westerly direction across the surface of the Ross Barrier, also follow Sir Ernest Shackleton's track up the Beardmore Glacier, and thence to the pole, practically in the same line as Captain Scott. The only additional topographical information therefore gained by these journeys is in the possible track of Amundsen from the vicinity of Edward Land to the Beardmore Glacier, and the same track that both Scott and Amundsen are likely to take over the last hundred miles to the pole, which, we fairly well know from Shackleton's observations, must be situated at an altitude of something like 10,000 ft. on the inland ice of Antarctica. We hope that Scott and Amundsen will meet each other, and, mutually helping one another, reach the pole with honours divided.

Mr. Mossman reports that great reticence was shown by the members of the Norwegian expedition while in Buenos Aires with regard to Amundsen's southern journey, but that he was to leave for the south not later than September, and that he hoped to reach the plateau by another way than the Beardmore Glacier, and emerge somewhere in the neighbourhood of Alexander Land, a region already visited by Amundsen on board the *Belgica*. The accomplishment of a journey along this route would be not only a triumph of physical endurance, and good organisa-

tion of food supply and equipment, but would also add immensely to our knowledge of Antarctica.

If the pole is attained by either or both of these explorers, the thanks of the scientific world are due to them for having once and for all settled the matter, and thus helping the public to understand that serious south polar exploration is not to reach a certain mathematical point before somebody else, but rather to carry on systematic investigations within the greatest unknown area on the surface of our globe, an area that occupies about five and a half million square miles—i.e. almost as great as the area of Europe and Australia combined.

It was Scott's intention to land a party not only at McMurdo Sound, but also on Edward Land. After Scott and his party were landed at McMurdo Sound, Lieutenant Pennell received command of the ship, and took Lieutenant Campbell's party with him, consisting of six, all told. The party was, however, unable to land at Edward Land, "owing to the perpendicular ice cliffs." This being so, an attempt was made to land them "as far west of Robertson Bay as possible," and make discoveries in that direction, but "from Smith Inlet to Robertson Bay there was not a single spot where a party could land—all sheer ice cliffs." Campbell and his party therefore landed at Cape Adare. After landing the party Pennell cruised to the west of Cape North, and discovered new land westward in two places. In the meantime, Scott and his party had finished setting up their camp, and Scott had begun a journey to the south that was probably preliminary to his great effort to reach the pole. Beyond this we have very little information, but since the return of the *Terra Nova* to New Zealand we understand that the ship was chartered by the New Zealand Government in order to carry out some hydrographic operations in the vicinity of New Zealand during the winter months. These hydrographic observations, made under the auspices of the New Zealand Government, are sure to be of the greatest possible scientific value; and now the *Terra Nova* has sailed once more for the south, and no word will be heard of her for another month or so. It is understood, however, that Lieutenant Pennell takes news to Captain Scott that sufficient funds have been acquired to enable him to stay out for another season, so that if reaching the pole is disposed of, the expedition should have a most excellent opportunity of carrying out explorations and various observations which will be of the highest possible scientific value.

Amundsen's party has, according to information received, succeeded in landing on the Ross Barrier in longitude 162° W., about fifty miles west of Edward Land, at a place he has named Bay of Whales. The news of the discovery of the Norwegian expedition at this point by Lieutenant Pennell came as a great surprise to all in Britain, but from the scientific point of view it cannot but add to the value of Scott's observations as well as Amundsen's, and, as I have said, from the sportive point of view it adds zest. Moreover, every mile Amundsen and his party travel over to the east of Beardmore Glacier will be new, and any observations taken at the Norwegian base station will be entirely new and of great value.

The *Fram*, which has carried two successful expeditions to the Arctic regions, made a long voyage out to the Ross Barrier from Madeira without calling at any intermediate port, and again from the Ross Barrier she made a second extensive voyage without calling at any port until she reached Buenos Aires. During the past southern winter she has crossed the Atlantic twice from Buenos Aires to Africa, and has taken observations at sixty stations. In order to

get a clear idea of the past work and future programme, I quote from information that Mr. Roald Amundsen has been good enough to send me which has been furnished to him by Captain Nilsen, the commander of the *Fram* :—

"We left Buenos Aires," says Captain Nilsen, "on June 8, 1911, exactly one year after our departure from Hørtén (Norway), on our first oceanographic voyage to the northern part of the South Atlantic. The pilot accompanied us to Montevideo, where we stopped until Sunday morning, June 11, on account of a 'pamperos' (south-westerly wind very violent), when we continued our way in the Atlantic Ocean in good order. The weather hindered us from beginning the sounding before June 17, but from that day everything went on all right. We commenced first with sounding, taking also water samples and temperatures down to 2000 metres; but this took us eight hours, and as during this time we had to stop with fixed sails, one-third of the twenty-four hours passed. Time being short, as we would have to leave Buenos Aires about October 1, we could only get on a short distance in the Atlantic if we had to continue this work, and it was necessary, therefore, to abandon sounding altogether, and we took observations down to 1000 metres only. We sailed from the La Plata River in a line approximately straight towards 9° E. longitude and about 21° S. latitude; we arrived here on July 22, and sailed towards St. Helena, which we passed on the evening of July 29. We continued to South Trinidad, which we passed very close to on August 12. On August 25 we finished the oceanographic observations in about 25° S. latitude and 40° W. longitude. All in all, we have had sixty stations, and have collected 891 water samples, which will probably be sent home by the *Kronprinzessin Viktoria*. We have also about 200 bottles of plankton.

"We returned to Buenos Aires at midnight on September 1. During the whole time the weather has been fair, and our course was fixed according to the winds; we sailed eastward to Africa by almost steady northerly and north-westerly winds that lasted exactly four weeks, and during this time the motor was at a complete standstill. In order to cover as even distances as possible, we sailed at a rate of 4 to 5 knots. As we had to take in the sails at each station, they got so worn that they scarcely kept together at last; and I had no mind to use our second set of sails, that ought to be in tip-top order when we got into the 'roaring forties.'

"The voyage has in every respect been a good one for the *Fram*; her motor has been thoroughly examined and cleaned during the long rest, the rigging looked after, all iron has been cleaned for rust, and the vessel has been painted all over; the *Fram* looks finer now than she did when she was new. The stores have been arranged, registered, and cleaned, and the sailmaker, Rønne, has been sewing sails, &c., from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., and several alterations and modifications have been made by the chief engineer, Lundbeck, who is a man and an engineer of the first order."

This is the chief information received from Captain Amundsen.

It seems almost a pity that a vessel so well fitted for oceanographical research as the *Fram* is, in higher latitudes, worked north instead of south of 40° S., for with the exception of the *Scotia's* hydrographical observations south of 40° S., little has been done in oceanographical research in high southern latitudes in the Atlantic Ocean, whereas north of that latitude the *Challenger* and subsequent expeditions have done much to add to our knowledge of those seas.

Some important observations have, however, been made south of 40° S. by the *Deutschland*.

The *Fram* is not expected to carry out any oceanographical research in her circumpolar voyage—she will only just have enough time to fetch the landing party, and again regret must be expressed that time has not been allowed to carry out such researches in those high southern latitudes by an ice-protected ship. Nothing is yet decided as to 1912, but Mr. Roald

Amundsen does not think it likely that the *Fram* will proceed across the North Polar Basin before 1913, as that depends on the funds available.

Four other expeditions are also carrying on researches in the south polar regions, namely, an Australian one under Dr. Douglas Mawson, a German one under Lieutenant Dr. Filchner, a Japanese one under Lieutenant Shirasé, and last, but not least, the Argentine expedition, which sailed for the South Orkneys to continue the meteorological and magnetic work initiated by the Scottish expedition at Scotia Bay in 1903, and continued by the Oficina Meteorologica Argentina since 1904 at an annual cost of about 6000*l.* With regard to the Japanese expedition, practically no news has reached Europe, and, indeed, notice that the expedition left Sydney on November 19, 1911, came as rather a surprise, as it was thought that after being so hopelessly late in the previous season they would not for the present attempt further work. Whatever are the aims of the present Japanese expedition, the writer has reason to believe that we may expect Japan to take a very prominent part in Antarctic exploration of a purely scientific kind before many years are past. The work of the German expedition lies in the Weddell Sea in longitudes west of Coat's Land, Dr. Filchner having generally agreed with the writer that the region to the east of this should be left for the proposed Scottish expedition. If, however, the Germans fail on account of conditions of ice or other difficulties to carry on their work to the west of this longitude, it is quite understood that they are to be free to work to the eastward. So far as the writer is concerned, he is of opinion that it is not in the interests of science that an expedition actually in the field should be hampered in any way by reserving an area for another expedition which has not so far succeeded in raising all the necessary funds. The area of the unknown Antarctic regions is so vast that there is plenty of room for all-comers, and more especially so if there is a division of labour in the work.

There are two prominent theories of the structure of Antarctic lands. Filchner bases the plan of his expedition upon the theory held by himself, Dr. Penck, Dr. Otto Nordenskjöld, Sir George Darwin, and others, that there are two Antarctic land masses which are divided from each other by a channel possibly covered by a continuation of the Ross Barrier running across from the Ross Sea to the Weddell Sea, thus dividing Graham Land from the rest of the land. The other prominent theory, which has for long been held by Sir John Murray, and is supported by Sir Ernest Shackleton, Dr. Mawson, and myself, is that there is one great Antarctic continental land mass with no such division across it. A third theory, held by Dr. Nansen, is that the Antarctic land is composed of an archipelago of islands. In a paper¹ delivered to Der Schweizerischen Naturforschenden Gesellschaft at Basel in 1910, I summarised my reasons for holding the view that there was one great Antarctic continent.

Having a definite theory of the structure of the Antarctic continent, Filchner sets out to test the accuracy of it. His confidence augurs well for the success of the German expedition. "Morgen früh 10 Uhr (also am 10 December) gehen wir," says he, "in See nach dem Eis mit rein südlichem Kurs bis zum Auftreffen auf die Eisbarre und folgen ihrem nördlichen Rande, dann so lange östlich, bis wir sie durchqueren können." This confident assurance reaches us from South Georgia, from which place

¹ "Über die Fortsetzung des antarctischen Festlands zwischen Enderbyland, Coatsland und Grahamland, sowie das Vorhandensein im Morrellsland." Von Herrn Dr. William S. Bruce, Direktor der Scottish Oceanographical Laboratory.

I have had word from Lieutenant Dr. Filchner and Dr. Heim, geologist to the expedition. They inform me that they have so far had a successful voyage, having landed at St. Paul's Rocks, and having already taken as many as eighty soundings. Several of them appear to have been taken in the neighbourhood of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Group, and these will form a most important contribution to the study of former Antarctic continental connections with South America. "Storm and stress of weather hindered every attempt at landing on the South Sandwich Group," and in this connection it is interesting to note that this heavy weather was previously predicted by Mr. R. C. Mossman at Buenos Aires.

Prof. Penck, who has been good enough to furnish me with much useful information, says:—"Reaching the pole does not form a special feature of the programme." He also writes saying that Filchner will establish a station to the west of Coat's Land, and will not leave the Antarctic regions until the summer of 1913-14.

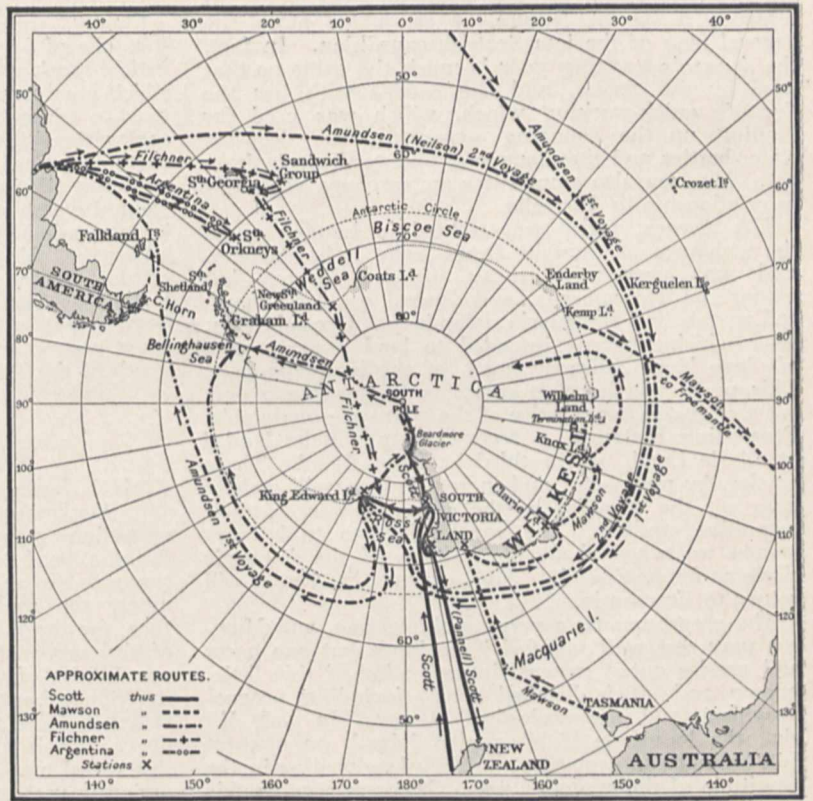
A most important line of sixteen soundings³ has been taken from Monte Video to South Georgia and the South Sandwich Group which confirms the existence of deep water of 2500 fathoms which the writer supposed existed there⁴ between 35° S., 52° S., and 21° and 55° W. Filchner extends this 3000-fathoms water to a point west of South Georgia, where he obtained a sounding of 3064 fathoms. This sounding, along with one of 2358 fathoms and a second of 2413 fathoms Filchner considers to the west of South Georgia, precludes the possibility of a "rise" (unterseeische Verbindung) between South Georgia and the South Sandwich Group, but another sounding of 1787 fathoms between Lieskow Island and South Georgia seems to confirm, to my mind, the existence of such a rise. Close to Candlemas Island 478 fathoms was obtained, and depths of 1144 and 1757 fathoms were obtained close to the group, just as the *Scotia* sounded in 1745 fathoms 15 miles off the South Orkneys.

Although the deeper water from the north dips rather further south than it was previously supposed to do, the suggestion that there is no "rise" is worth consideration as leading to the possibility of the Sandwich Group being cut off from the South American-Graham Land connection, and indicates the great importance of more soundings to the south of South Georgia. Quite extensive and interesting geological excursions were made in South Georgia, which were facilitated by Captain Larsen lending the German expedition his 500-ton yacht *Undine*. The Germans have found that South Georgia is a folded mountain range, probably part of the Faltengebirge of the South American Andes and Graham Land. The tuffs found by Gunnar Andersen in 1902 are found to be old Mesozoic and young Palæozoic tuffs. Dr. König found an ammonite in

the slate of Possessions Bay. Bad weather prevented pendulum observations, but earth magnetic elements were determined.

It took from November 1 to 14 to go from South Georgia to the South Sandwich Group. A course was first steered to Lieskow Island; the *Deutschland* then passed Candlemas Island, and left the group at Zavadowskij Island. Some of these islands are extinct, and others active, volcanoes. The rocks appeared to be basaltic. Volcanic sand containing basaltic fragments was secured by sounding.

Meteorological and other observations were made, and it is especially interesting to note that for the first time in Antarctic regions *ballons-sondes*, as used by the Prince of Monaco in Spitsbergen, were employed, since in South Georgia sixty-five of these balloons were released. These were traced to a height of 9 kilometres, or 29,528 ft., and should give



valuable information regarding the higher atmosphere in the south polar regions.

Whether Filchner succeeds in pushing far to the south to the west of Coat's Land, where he believes he will be able to land on a barrier similar to and continuous with the Ross Barrier, depends on the state of the ice in the Weddell Sea, and Mossman unfortunately predicts a series of bad ice years. If Filchner meets the pack as Ross met it in 1842-43, and as the Scottish expeditions met it in 1892-93 and in 1902-03, in which latter season also Nordenskjöld's ship, the *Antarctic*, was crushed and lost, he will not attain a high latitude to the west of Coat's Land, but if he has an open summer, as Morrell and Weddell had in 1822-23, he will get far south, and will fall in with land somewhere about 75° S., if the supposed rift valley from the Ross Sea does not exist. Filchner will also in all probability then be able to prove the

³ *Zeitschrift der Gesell. f. Erdkunde zu Berlin*, 1912, No. 2.

⁴ "Bathymetrical Survey of South Atlantic Ocean and Weddell Sea." By Wm. S. Bruce. With Map and Illustrations. *Scot. Geog. Mag.*, August, 1905.

existence or non-existence of New South Greenland, discovered by Captain Johnson in 1821-22, and revisited and described by Morrell in 1822-23—the summer Weddell attained the high latitude of $74^{\circ} 15'$ S. in those longitudes. If Filchner falls in with New South Greenland it will almost preclude the possibility of the existence of the suggested ice-covered strait cutting across Antarctica from the Ross to the Weddell Sea.

Altogether, the German expedition has most interesting and fascinating problems to solve, and with such a good ship—the *Deutschland*—with such excellent equipment and staff, and so competent a leader, should not fail to bring us back much valuable information.

The Australian expedition, under the able leadership of Dr. Douglas Mawson, is on quite a different plan from any of the others in the field, and in that it will do not only a considerable amount of hydrographical work, but will also make deep-sea biological research a special feature, it resembles more the general plan of the late Scottish expedition. In fact, the *Aurora's* trawling gear is much the same as that used by the *Scotia*, and she carries with her the *Scotia's* quick-working winch, which was used for hauling up the sounding apparatus, the deep-sea water-bottles and thermometers, and vertical plankton net. Mawson also emphasises meteorology, especially in relationship to Australia.

The *Aurora*, which was refitted in London under the guidance of Captain Davis—who is her master, and was previously master of the *Nimrod*—left Hobart on December 2, and pushed south-eastward, calling at the Macquarie Islands on December 21, after which Mawson intended to land a party west of Cape North, directly north of the magnetic pole. This party will hope to complete the magnetic data yet wanting in the vicinity of the south magnetic pole. Proceeding eastward, a second party will be landed at Clarie Land, and a third at Knox Land. These parties, by man, dog, and motor sledges, will seek to map out the coastline to the east and west of their respective stations. The voyage is then to be prolonged westward about the latitude of the Antarctic circle as far as Enderby Land, whence the *Aurora* will return to Fremantle.

The programme is a very ambitious one, and Mawson may rest well satisfied if he lands but one party and carries out a general investigation of this little-known and much disputed coast, including oceanographical and meteorological survey. In 70° E., viz., the longitude of Kerguelen Island, an attempt will be made to penetrate southward as well as in the longitude of the magnetic pole. Mawson regards this part of the Antarctic continent to which his efforts are to be directed as by far the most important portion of Antarctica yet to be explored. He points out that "along the whole 2000 miles of coast between Cape Adare and Gaussberg a landing has been made once only, and then but for a few hours, by d'Urville's expedition in 1840. Only a few vessels have ever come within sight of this coast, and practically none since the days of d'Urville and Wilkes."

Mr. Alfred Reid tells me that lack of coal may render it necessary for the *Aurora* to put into Kerguelen for ballast on her return to Fremantle under canvas. In April the *Aurora* will again go south with a number of Australian men of science in order to carry out dredging and sounding in seas between Australia and Antarctica, and in December the *Aurora* will proceed south once more to pick up Dr. Mawson and his colleagues at the three stations.

Mawson carries with him an aeroplane and certificated air pilot, and has, like Filchner, an installation

of wireless telegraphy. The expedition, which carries a crew and staff of fifty persons, is well supported by the Australian and British Governments and by private enterprise.

Mawson is a geologist of the first order and a trained magnetic observer, and with Shackleton's expedition gained an intimate insight into the geology of Antarctica and its relationship to Australasian geology. He is an enthusiast, and his plans are original and well thought out. Mawson is well supported by Captain Davis and an excellent scientific staff, and thus the Australian expedition is sure of a scientific success, and more especially so since the expedition is not hampered by taking part in the race to the pole.

As I have already stated, little is known of the plans and prospects of the Japanese expedition, but it is to be hoped that they will be rewarded with a rich harvest of scientific results that will encourage future efforts on the part of Japan.

Finally, success is assured for the enterprising Republic of Argentina, with meteorological and magnetic work at the first-class station at Scotia Bay, which now commences work for the tenth consecutive year—a triumph without equal in the annals of polar exploration. Every year the Argentines send out a party of trained meteorologists and magneticians, who winter at Scotia Bay, frozen in and cut off completely from the rest of the world for twelve months, and it is interesting to note that the leaders of this work, under the able directorship of Mr. Walter J. Davis, of the Oficina Meteorologica Argentina, have been trained at Ben Nevis Observatory, which the British Government persistently refuses to support for no other reason apparently than that it happens to lie north of the Tweed.

WILLIAM S. BRUCE.

FISHERIES OF BENGAL.

THE Journal of the Royal Society of Arts of December 22, 1911, contains a full report of a paper on the fisheries of Bengal, by Dr. J. T. Jenkins, read before the society on November 14. In response to an invitation from the Indian Government, the author proceeded to India in October, 1908, for the purpose of undertaking, during a period of eighteen months, a practical investigation into the possibilities of the fisheries of the Bay of Bengal and the Sandarbans. He was provided with a trawling steamer, the *Golden Crown*, which was unfortunately not so efficient as she might have been; and with this vessel trawling was carried on for a considerable period in various parts of the bay, work being carried on night and day. As a rule, four hauls were made *per diem*, and it was found, despite the monsoon, that trawling can be carried on at all seasons of the year. The results fully confirmed the anticipations which had previously been made by Lieut.-Col. Alcock and others as to the richness of the fishery, large supplies of the food-fishes most esteemed in the Calcutta market, as well as others, being obtained.

Even the coarser kinds would find a ready sale among the poorer classes of Bengalis, while in the case of uneatable species like sharks and swordfishes the liver and fins could be utilised.

As to the practicability of bringing the catches in good condition to market, it was found that, if stored in ice, the fish would keep perfectly well for a certain time. In the event of the fishery being worked commercially, it is recommended that Diamond Harbour, which is much lower down the Hughli than Calcutta, with which it is connected by railway, should be selected as a base for trawling.

The collections included a large series of fishes and invertebrates, which have been handed over to the Indian Museum to be worked out.

Only a short time could be devoted to the fisheries of the Sandarbans, that vast area in the Ganges delta which includes large rivers and pestiferous creeks where fish-life is impossible, but such observations as could be made indicate that here too profitable fisheries could be established, for it is to the Sandarbans that the hilsa (Indian shad), one of the most esteemed of Calcutta food-fishes, resorts for the purpose of spawning.

As a preliminary to the development of the rich fisheries of Bengal, it is recommended that a Fisheries Department should be established by the Indian Government without delay. R. L.

DISINTEGRATING BACTERIA AND OTHER ORGANIC CELLS.

BACTERIAL toxins may be broadly divided into two varieties. In one of these the toxin is excreted into the medium on which the organisms are cultivated, and in the other type the toxin is retained within and forms an integral part of the living bacterial cell.

It is now generally recognised that the disease-producing effects of pathogenic micro-organisms are almost entirely due to the toxins, whether intracellular or extracellular, which they secrete. For immunising purposes or for the preparation of anti-sera, the toxin which is excreted may be obtained from the culture medium by filtration through a porous porcelain filter, such as the Pasteur-Chamberland, the organisms being retained by the filter and the toxin passing through. The diphtheria and tetanus bacillus are examples of this type.

The majority of micro-organisms, however, do not excrete their toxin, at least to any extent, and among those that retain it within the cell are typhoid, cholera, plague, glanders, *B. coli*, *B. streptococci*, *B. staphylococci*, &c. In these cases some method of rupturing the cell-wall, so that the contents may escape, has been found to be desirable. This allows of not only the use of the toxin as such, but also renders it possible to investigate the chemical composition and properties of the bacterial proteins and other cell constituents.

The apparatus to be described fulfils the required conditions, and causes the cell-wall to be ruptured so that the contents are obtained unaltered. It is necessary that there should be no appreciable rise of temperature during the operation, apart even from any extraneous cooling arrangement, or else chemical change would occur; the apparatus therefore must be so far as possible frictionless. Every organism must come under the grinding action, so that either no whole cells remain or their number is reduced to a minimum. The containing vessel in which the grinding action takes place must be so effectually sealed that, during the process of disintegration, no cells have any opportunity of escaping. This applies particularly when pathogenic organisms are being dealt with. The apparatus as designed is made in two forms; in one (Fig. 1) it is mounted between horizontal centres, and in the other (Fig. 2) between vertical centres. In the former the grinding action is controlled by gravity, and in the latter by electro-magnetic means.

The appliance consists essentially of a phosphor bronze or steel pot or vessel, A, in which a number of steel balls, B, are allowed to revolve. The steel balls accurately fit the inside of the containing vessel, so that as the machine rotates they are in contact

over nearly one-half of their circumference with the inside of the vessel. A metal cage, C, is made of such a shape that its prongs lie between the balls, so that the latter cannot collide one with another when the machine is rotating. Mounted at the centre of the metal vessel is a steel cone, D, which is of such a size that it keeps the balls in their proper position in close contact with the periphery of the containing vessel. This cone is an important part of the apparatus as upon it depends the pressure that may be exerted on the balls; and, further, as the result of its use the balls themselves have freedom to slip

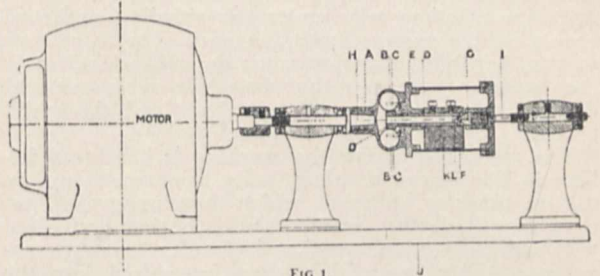


FIG. 1.

if any additional strain is thrown on them, or if any undue amount of material comes under their action. The containing vessel is closed by a metal cap, E, which screws down, hermetically sealing the vessel. A groove is made in the top of the containing vessel into which a lip on this screw cap loosely fits. Sufficient space remains between the two, as shown in the figure, to allow of some bacterial agent being placed therein, thus effectually preventing the escape of whole bacteria or ground material from the containing vessel. Over the whole of this a cylindrical cap, F, is placed, and in the top of this cap a metal cone, G,

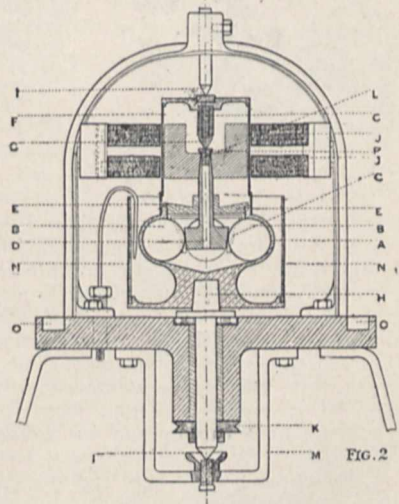


FIG. 2.

is fitted, which presses by means of a spring on to the top of the steel cone, D. The steel cone is itself hollow, and is closed by a small metal cap, L. A lead or steel weight, K, is fitted on to the steel spindle, D, and is clamped on any desired position along it.

The apparatus is mounted on a cone, H, and runs between this cone and the centre, I. It may be conveniently connected directly up to a motor, as shown in the illustration, or may be driven by a belt from any suitable source of power by putting a grooved pulley on to the left-hand end of the spindle.

The grinding action takes place between the steel

balls contained in the metal vessel and the interior surface of the same. It is evident that if the weight, K, were not on the central cone, as shown, or unless some similar method were adopted to control the cone to prevent it from rotating, no grinding action would result; the central cone, in fact, must either remain still or be allowed to rotate at a slower speed than the containing vessel. The metal weight, K, is of such size that on the whole machine being driven at a suitable speed the action of gravity results in the steel cone remaining still, and so a grinding action takes place between the steel balls and the inside surface of the containing vessel. To bring the bacterial or other cells under the grinding action of the balls, the speed of rotation should be from 1000 to 1500 revolutions per minute; centrifugal action is then sufficient to ensure that the whole of the material does actually come between the balls and the metal vessel.

The method of using the machine is briefly as follows:—The bacteria, after being removed from the culture tubes or plates on which they are grown, are centrifuged; the semi-fluid mass is then emulsified with saline solution, so that it is of a creamy consistency. This material is then introduced into the container by means of a pipette through the hollow centre of the steel cone. This ensures that no parts

The effect of disintegrating yeast cells for ten and fifteen minutes is seen in Figs. 4 and 5 respectively, Fig. 3 showing the cells before the commencement of the process. It is interesting to note that in Fig. 5 the cell contents have taken up the stain which was used in making the microscopical preparation, whereas the cell envelopes remain unstained and show as clear areas, thus demonstrating that the cell contents have been completely expressed.

J. E. BARNARD.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

CAMBRIDGE.—Mr. E. A. Newell Arber, of Trinity College, has been approved by the general board of studies for the degree of doctor of science.

The general board of studies has issued an important report on advanced students, of which there are at present two classes: (1) those who qualify for a degree by submitting a dissertation approved by a degree committee of a special board, and (2) those who qualify for a degree by reaching a certain specified standard in a tripos examination. The board points out that there is considerable variation in the standard required of advanced students in the various tripos examinations.

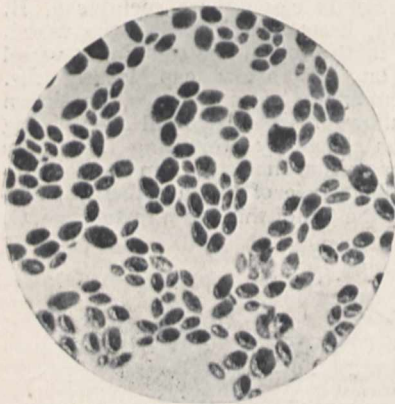


FIG. 3

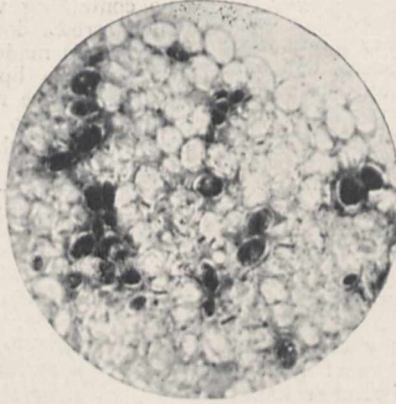


FIG. 4.



FIG. 5.

of the machine are disturbed more than is absolutely necessary either before or after grinding. The machine is then run for a longer or shorter period, depending on the amount of material to be dealt with, and the ground material is then pipetted off through the central steel cone. As the balls are themselves free to rotate, the amount of friction is negligible, but any rise of temperature may be prevented by allowing a small stream of carbonic acid gas from a cylinder of liquid carbonic acid to impinge on to the side of the vessel; alternatively an ether spray, such as is used for section-cutting purposes, may be used, and will be found quite efficient.

The vertical type of machine (Fig. 2) is exactly similar in all essential details, except that the central steel cone is controlled by means of electromagnets. On the top of the cone a mass of soft iron is fixed, and this is kept from rotating by means of the electromagnets, J. The only constructional difference is that the containing cylinder, F, is made of vulcanite, so that it is perfectly diamagnetic. The chief advantage of this design over the one previously described is that it can be completely covered by a glass bell-jar while in action. A bactericidal agent may be placed in the groove O, and the bottom edge of a bell-jar allowed to dip into it.

NO. 2210, VOL. 89]

The number of advanced students of the latter class admitted to courses of study in the fourteen years from 1896 to 1909 inclusive was 101. In the same period eight applications were refused. Of the 101 admitted, 35 reached the standard required in their respective tripos examinations; 18 were rejected; 48 did not present themselves for examination. These statistics point to the conclusion that a good many students are admitted to the status of advanced students who have no real claim to the distinction which such admission may be held to confer.

After full consideration of the working of the present regulations, the general board has come to the conclusion that it is desirable that advanced students should no longer be admitted to courses of advanced study, but that they should be admitted to courses of research only.

With this end in view, the board proposes that the class of affiliated students should be enlarged, and that affiliated students should not only be permitted to proceed to a degree after residing in the University for six terms, but in the case of certain tripos examinations should be also admitted to the second part without necessarily having fulfilled the ordinary condition of having previously passed in the first part of the tripos or in some other tripos.

OXFORD.—On Wednesday, February 28, Mr. W. Bateson, F.R.S., honorary fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, and director of the John Innes Horticultural Institution, delivered the annual Herbert Spencer lecture at Oxford, the subject being "Biological Fact and the Structure of Society." Man, he said, is an animal guided by natural laws. It is only lately that accurate inquiry has been started into the actual meaning of heredity, but it is now becoming recognised that parents cannot pass on factors that they do not themselves possess, and that the conditions of life are less important than genetic qualities. Still, even now our knowledge is not sufficient to warrant public interference with the ordinary practices of society. "We should probably be no better off if marriages were made at Westminster instead of in heaven." In one respect, however, the course is clear—segregation of the feeble-minded and hopelessly unfit is absolutely necessary. On the other hand, the existence of a physical defect such as cataract is not incompatible with a useful life and profitable work. There are many kinds of men, but the conditions are so complex that complete classification is impracticable. Two classes, however, may be distinguished—those who can take an interest in science and those who cannot; public men belong, as a rule, to the latter class. In law all men are equal, but science is juster than the law. A high birth-rate is not an unmixed blessing; it produced, for example, the misery of the "forties." It is incumbent on the State to see that no one goes without food, but a motive must be kept for individual effort. Classes are essential, and a necessary condition of progress is that every individual should be got into his right class. Present social conditions are too unstable to last, and Mr. Bateson doubts whether many wish that they should. It is to be hoped that the new order, whatever shape it may take, will grow up not in subservience to nostrums, but under the guidance of scientific fact.

WE learn from *Science* that the plans of Mr. George M. Pullman for the establishment of a manual training school at Pullman, Ill., are assuming definite form. Prof. L. G. Weld, formerly professor of mathematics and Dean of the University of Iowa, has been despatched on a tour of America and Europe to collect data to guide the board of trustees in the construction of the buildings and the arrangement of the curriculum. Building operations, it is expected, will be commenced next year. A site of forty acres has been purchased at a cost of 20,000*l.* A fund of 200,000*l.* was bequeathed by Mr. Pullman at his death in 1897 for founding the institution. This fund was invested in securities, which have increased in value until now there is about 500,000*l.* at the disposal of the governors for the school.

THE general and departmental reports for the session 1910-11 of the Bradford Technical College show a steady increase in the number of students in attendance. In view of the advanced nature of much of the work in the day courses, the committee has decided to follow the practice usual in connection with university colleges, and appoint external examiners, who will be associated with the college staff in the final diploma examination and the examinations for the technological scholarships. An extensive research has been carried out in the chemistry department, with the help of students, on the production of some new sulphur bases and their utilisation as sources of colouring matters. The work in the evening classes, it is satisfactory to note, is organised mainly in systematic courses of instruction, in which the tech-

nical subject is associated with the underlying sciences. Laboratory work, wherever possible, supplements class work. The courses occupy three evenings per week, and extend over three, four, or five years. The various laboratories of the engineering department continue to carry out tests and investigations for local firms and for trade purposes. The value of the experience gained in this way and the opportunity afforded of bringing the department into constant touch with the trade are greatly appreciated.

THE first issue of the Johns Hopkins University Circular for the present year is devoted to the report of the president of the University for the year 1910-11. President Ira Remsen says that the principal event of the year was the work that culminated in the raising of the sum required to secure the contribution of 50,000*l.* by the General Education Board towards the endowment of the University. In the offer of the General Education Board it was stipulated that "a supplementary sum of not less than 150,000*l.* shall be contributed to the University on or before December 31, 1910." The work of collecting this money was actively undertaken in October, 1910, and was so successful that on December 31 the desired amount had been contributed in cash or promised. Indeed, the amount contributed was greater than that stipulated by the General Education Board. Up to the present, including the amount contributed by the General Education Board, the University has available, in consequence of this effort, about 240,000*l.* Of this sum, 100,000*l.*, according to the conditions of the gift, must be reserved as endowment. It is hoped that additional contributions will be made so that the sum of 400,000*l.* may be available for several pressing needs. The greater part of the volume, which runs to 109 pages, is made up of reports on the instruction in the chief branches of study and reports by various administrative officers of the University.

SOCIETIES AND ACADEMIES.

LONDON.

Royal Society, February 15.—Sir Archibald Geikie, K.C.B., president, in the chair.—Dr. T. Graham Brown: An alleged specific instance of the transmission of acquired characters—investigation and criticism. An examination of the "Brown-Séquard phenomenon" in guinea-pigs—usually considered to be a classical instance of the alleged transmission of an acquired character—throws much doubt upon its value in this controversy. The phenomenon is not an acquired peculiarity produced *de novo* on division of a great sciatic nerve. It is due to the raised excitability of a mechanism—that of the scratch-reflex—already present; and this raised excitability is probably due to the removal of an inhibiting influence by section of the nerve. The phenomenon, therefore, cannot be considered as transmissible as an acquirement *per se*. If anything is transmitted as an acquired character, it must be the state of raised excitability of the scratch-reflex. The presence of the phenomenon in the offspring observed by Brown-Séquard may be admitted, but this may be explained otherwise than by assuming a transmission of acquired characteristics. That the alternative explanation—the presence in the offspring is due to a production of the state by injury to the toes and feet inflicted by the parent—is true is rendered possible, and indeed highly probable, by certain parallel evidence submitted in this paper.—W. B. Alexander: Further experiments on the cross-breeding of two races of the moth, *Acidalia virgularia*. This paper

deals with the descendants of some of the moths of this species reared by Messrs. Prout and Bacot, who read a paper on their results to the Royal Society on February 25, 1909. They did not arrive at any definite conclusions in regard to the process of heredity followed. The author agrees with them in finding that *Acidalia virgularia* and its variety *canteneraria* are not two Mendelian forms of the species, though he finds that one of the differences between the two forms, namely, the presence of black speckling on the wings of *A. virgularia*, is inherited according to Mendel's law.—F. H. A. Marshall: The effects of castration and ovariectomy upon sheep. (1) The development of horns in the males of a breed of sheep in which well-marked secondary sexual differentiation occurs (as manifested especially by presence or absence of horns) depends upon a stimulus arising in the testes, and this stimulus is essential not merely for the initiation of the horn-growth, but for its continuance, the horns ceasing to grow whenever the testes are removed. (2) The removal of the ovaries from young ewes belonging to such a breed does not lead to the development of horns or definitely male characters, except possibly in a very minor degree.—Dr. T. L. Lewellyn: The causes and prevention of miners' nystagmus. Miners' nystagmus is an occupational neurosis confined to coal miners. It is characterised by a rotatory oscillation of the eyes, and produces a disability which is marked and prolonged in severe cases. One thousand six hundred and eighteen cases received compensation in the United Kingdom in 1911. Pathologically the complaint appears to be a condition of imperfect centripetal impulses (imperfect fixation, disturbance of equilibrium, &c.), the intimate connection between the centres governing the associated movements of the eyes being lost, and inordinate movements ensuing. The principal preventive measures indicated are improvement of illumination, elimination of unfit workers by medical examination, and employment of coal-cutters in thin seams.—W. Lawrence Balls: The stomatograph. The stomatograph is a self-recording instrument adapted from Mr. Francis Darwin's porometer (see NATURE, August 10, 1911). A five days' record of the opening and closing of the stomata of the cotton plant in Egypt is given, showing the stomata wide open during bright sunshine. The author has elsewhere shown that during this part of the day no growth occurs, and there is evidence that the apparent waste of water then occurring is of importance as keeping the leaves cool, since when transpiration is artificially checked the leaves are rapidly injured or even killed by the high temperature.—G. A. Buckmaster and J. A. Gardner: The composition of the blood gases during the respiration of oxygen. A number of analyses were made of the blood of cats respiring (1) air, (2) oxygen for periods of one to two hours. The average composition in c.c. per 100 c.c. of arterial blood for cats breathing air was as follows (mean of thirteen experiments):—Total gas, 53'76; CO₂, 38'43; O₂, 14'22; N, 1'12. The percentage saturation of hæmoglobin with oxygen was 83. For cats breathing oxygen the mean values by thirteen experiments were as follows:—Total gas, 53'79; CO₂, 38'65; O₂, 14'93; N, 0'16. The average percentage saturation of hæmoglobin with oxygen was 89'6. From their experiments the authors conclude that the inhalation of oxygen does not materially augment either the quantity of this gas or the quantity of carbon-dioxide in the blood.

February 22.—Sir Archibald Geikie, K.C.B., president, in the chair.—Prof. H. L. Callendar: Bakerian lecture on the variation of the specific heat of water, investigated by the continuous

mixture method. A single formula has been found to represent the variation of the specific heat s according to the continuous electric and mixture methods over the range 0° to 100° C. The formula is as follows:—

$$s = 0.98536 + 0.504/(t + 20) + 0.0084(t/100) + 0.0090(t/100)^2,$$

in terms of the specific heat at 20° C. taken as unity, and in terms of the scale of the temperature t deduced from the platinum scale ϕt by means of the standard difference-formula,

$$t - \phi t = 1.50t(t - 100) \times 10^{-4}.$$

The same formula for the specific heat also represents the most probable reduction of Regnault's experiments over the range 110° to 190° C.—Dr. C. Chree: Short index to reports of physical observations—electric, magnetic, meteorological, seismological—made at Kew Observatory.—R. T. Lattey and H. T. Tizard: The velocities of ions in dried gases. The authors have determined the velocities of positive and negative ions in dried hydrogen and carbon dioxide.—Prof. T. H. Laby and P. W. Burbidge: The observation by means of a string electrometer of fluctuations in the ionisation produced by γ -rays.—F. B. Pidduck: The wave-problem of Cauchy and Poisson for finite depth and slightly compressible fluid. The paper is in some respects a completion of a former one on the propagation of a disturbance in a fluid under gravity. The solution of the two-dimensional Cauchy-Poisson problem for finite depth is worked out numerically, the effect of limiting the depth being very considerable.

Royal Meteorological Society, February 21.—Dr. H. N. Dickson, president, in the chair.—J. Fairgrieve: The thunderstorms of May 31, 1911. The author dealt with the thunderstorm which visited the London district on Derby Day, and especially with the movement of the rain which accompanied the storm. Having obtained information from nearly 700 observers as to the time of rainfall or absence of rain, he has been able to prepare an interesting series of maps for each quarter of an hour from 12.30 to 8.45 p.m., showing the areas over which rain was actually falling.—R. G. K. Lempert: The thunderstorm of July 29, 1911. This storm was of the line-squall type. The author has been able to trace the spread of the phenomenon across the British Isles, and he showed by a map of isochronous lines that it first struck the extreme end of Cornwall about 2 p.m. on July 29, and passed across Shetland at 3 p.m. next day. He pointed out that the disturbance may be regarded as the displacement of an easterly by a southerly current, but the process of displacement was an unusually complicated one. The general sequence of events seems to have been somewhat as follows: a moderate east wind is interrupted suddenly by a squall from the south. After the squall has passed the wind returns temporarily to an easterly direction, to be again interrupted by another squall from the south. This process may repeat itself several times. A period of several hours of light and variable wind, during which easterly directions predominate, supervenes, and finally the wind settles down to a steady southerly or south-westerly wind of moderate force. In many cases the squalls were not accompanied by rainfall. What appears to have struck observers most forcibly was the way in which huge quantities of dust were whirled up by the wind. Accounts from Cardiff state that dust was brought from the south side of the Bristol Channel by the squall winds, which did much structural damage.—S. Skinner: The "Drosometer," an instrument for measuring the amount of dew.

PARIS.

Academy of Sciences, February 19.—**M. Lippmann** in the chair.—**L. Guignard**: Notice on the life and work of Edouard Bornet.—**A. Lacroix**: The volcanoes of Central Madagascar. The Ankaratra massif. The products of the Ankaratra volcanoes cover an area of not less than 4000 square kilometres. The petrographical constitution has been investigated, and is found to be much more complex than that sketched by Baron.—**A. Müntz** and **E. Lainé**: The quantity of water and frequency of watering as depending on the physical properties of soils. It is very essential that any irrigation scheme should be preceded by a careful study of the soils on which the water is to be placed. Cases are cited in which, owing to the lack of permeability of the soil, irrigation has been actually harmful to the land.—**M. du Ligondès**: The condensation of the solar nebula in the Laplace hypothesis. The enormous condensation necessary, according to the Laplace hypothesis, to the formation of Neptune has been pointed out by Fouché; the author shows that there is also a discontinuity in the condensation between Jupiter and Mars.—**Billon-Dagnerre**: The fusion of pure quartz. A description of the electric furnace used for fusing quartz, and obtaining a clear, transparent product.—**P. Th. Muller** and **Mlle. V. Guerdjikoff**: Refraction and magnetic rotation of mixtures. H. Becquerel has shown that for pure substances there is a connection between the refractive index and the magnetic rotation; for solutions, however, there would appear to be no general relation between these two magnitudes.—**Paul Joye** and **Charles Garnier**: Contribution to the study of neodymium compounds. The different spectra given by neodymium hydroxide heated to temperatures between 300° and 700° C. are shown to correspond to the formation of definite hydrates.—**A. Portevin** and **G. Arnou**: The effects of reheating aluminium bronzes. Measurements are given of the alteration of hardness produced, and photographs reproduced showing the change in the structure of the alloys.—**Daniel Berthelot** and **Henry Gaudechon**: The photolytic decomposition of smokeless powder, of picric acid, and of ammonium picrate by the ultra-violet rays. The gas in which the smokeless powder is exposed to the rays is shown to have an influence on the nature and amount of the gaseous decomposition products.—**H. Masson**: The principal constituents of essence of labdanum. Two ketones were isolated from this oil, 1:5:5-trimethyl-6-hexanone and acetophenone; the latter substance has not been previously noticed as a constituent of an essential oil.—**A. Prunet**: The Japanese chestnut at the experimental station at Lindois (Clarente). Experiments have been carried out on the disease-resisting properties of various chestnuts, and the Japanese chestnut (*Castanea japonica*) has been found to be the most suitable tree to replace the chestnuts destroyed by the *maladie de Vencre*.—**A. Demolon**: The fertilising action of sulphur. Sulphur has been shown by direct experiment to be beneficial to plant growth, especially Cruciferae. It appears to exert a favourable action upon the development of chlorophyll, since during drought the plants on the plots treated with sulphur did not turn as yellow as the untreated control plots.—**Em. Bourquelot** and **Mlle. A. Fichtenholz**: The identification of the glucoside from the leaves of *Kalmia latifolia* with asebotine. Eykman in 1883 gave the name asebotine to a glucoside extracted from the leaves of *Andromeda japonica*; the glucoside extracted from the leaves of *Kalmia latifolia* is shown to be identical with asebotine.—**Michel-Cohendy**: Experiments on life without micro-organisms. Although normally provided with a rich microbial flora, the chicken can live absolutely with-

out micro-organisms, and this aseptic life does not prejudice growth or development in any way. According to these experiments, the theory of the necessary connection between the animal and its bacteria, a principle which has been given as a well-established biological law, is not in accord with facts.—**P. Armand-Delille**, **A. Mayer**, **G. Schaeffer**, and **E. Terroine**: The culture of the Koch bacillus in a definite chemical medium. A formula is given for a culture medium containing definite chemical compounds only. On such a medium it is found that the tubercle bacillus develops perfectly, rapidly, and abundantly, retaining all its morphological and biological characters.—**A. Moutier**: The measurement of the arterial elasticity in clinical practice. The measurement of arterial elasticity cannot be carried out with an apparatus using circular compression, only those using localised compression giving correct results. Bloch's sphygmometer is the best instrument at present available.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Expédition Antarctique Française (1903-1905), Commandée par le Dr. Jean Charcot. Hydrographie Physique du Globe. By Lieuts. A. Matha and J. J. Rey. Pp. vi+619. (Paris: Gauthier-Villars.)

Botany, or the Modern Study of Plants. By Dr. M. Stopes. Pp. 94. Heredity. By J. A. S. Watson. Pp. 94. The Science of the Stars. By E. W. Maunder. Pp. 95. The Principles of Electricity. By N. R. Campbell. Pp. 91. Organic Chemistry. By Prof. J. B. Cohen, F.R.S. Pp. 96. Each in "The People's Books." (London and Edinburgh: T. C. and E. C. Jack.) 6d. net each.

Colour-music: the Art of Mobile Colour. By Prof. A. W. Rimington. Pp. xx+185. (London: Hutchinson and Co.) 6s.

Butterfly-hunting in Many Lands: Notes of a Field Naturalist. By Dr. G. B. Longstaff. Pp. xviii+728. (London: Longmans and Co.) 21s. net.

Types of Ore Deposits. Edited by H. F. Bain. Pp. 378. (San Francisco: Mining and Scientific Press; London: The Mining Magazine.) 8s. 6d. net.

Graphical Solution of Fault Problems. By C. F. Tolman, jun. Pp. 43. (San Francisco: Mining and Scientific Press; London: The Mining Magazine.) 4s. 6d. net.

The Seven Follies of Science. By J. Phin. Third edition. Pp. ix+231. (London: Constable and Co., Ltd.) 5s. net.

Direct and Alternating Current Manual. By Drs. F. Bedell and C. A. Pierce. Second edition. Pp. xiii+360. (London: Constable and Co., Ltd.) 8s. net.

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DIARY OF SOCIETIES.

THURSDAY, MARCH 7.

ROYAL SOCIETY, at 4.30.—(1) On the Devitrification of Silica Glass; (2) The Volatility of Metals of the Platinum Group: Sir William Crookes, O.M., For. Sec. R.S.—A Critical Study of Spectral Series. II.—The Principal and Sharp Sequences and the Atomic Volume Term: Prof. W. M. Hicks, F.R.S.—An Optical Load-extension Indicator, together with some Diagrams obtained therewith: Prof. W. E. Dalby.—(3) The Transmission of Cathode Rays through Matter; (4) The Velocity of the Secondary Cathode Particles ejected by the Characteristic Röntgen Rays: R. Whiddington.—On the Voltage Effect in Selenium: E. E. Fournier d'Albe.

LINNEAN SOCIETY, at 8.—Internodes of Calamites: Prof. Percy Groom.—Coloured Drawings of Barbados Plants: Miss Ethel M. Phillips.—On *Psynophyllum majus*, sp. n., from the Lower Carboniferous Rocks of Newfoundland, together with a Revision of the Genus and Remarks on its Affinities: E. A. Newell Arber.—Historic Doubts about *Vaukthompsonia*: Rev. T. R. R. Stebbing.—Living Specimens of Cactoid Euphorbias from South Africa: Dr. Otto Stapf.

INSTITUTION OF ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS, at 8.—Taxes for Electrical Energy, with Particular Reference to Domestic Tariffs: W. W. Lachie.

FRIDAY, MARCH 8.

ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY, at 5.—The Long-period Variable RT Cygni: A. N. Brown.—The Constitution of the Solar Corona. II.—Coronium: I. W. Nicholson.—On a Device for Facilitating Harmonic Analysis and Synthesis: E. W. Brown.—The Nebula η 150 Cassiopeiae: Dorothea Roberts.—The Real Paths of 420 Fireballs and Shooting Stars Observed in the British Isles 1897-1911: W. F. Denning.—Erreurs systématiques et probables dans les mesures d'Étoiles Doubles: R. Jonckheere.—Occultation of B.A.C. 1189 and of Mars: Cambridge Observatory.—Position of Comet Beljawsky (1912): Cambridge Observatory.—On Librations in Planetary and Satellite Systems: E. W. Brown.—The Effect of Atmospheric Dispersion on the Greenwich Photographs of Eros: Royal Observatory, Greenwich.—Probable Papers: A Determination of the Frequency Law of Stellar Motions: A. S. Eddington.—A Tentative Explanation of the "Two Star Streams" in Terms of Gravitation: H. H. Turner.

MALACOLOGICAL SOCIETY, at 8.—The Distribution and Habits of *Alopia*, a Subgenus of *Clausilia*: Rev. A. H. Cooke.—A Synopsis of the Recent and Tertiary Freshwater Mollusca of the Californian Province. Part I., Pelecypoda and Pulmonata: H. Hannibal.—Note on the Existence of Two Editions of Féruccat's Tableaux Systématiques: Major M. Conolly. Note on *Pleurotoma bipartita*, Smith: E. A. Smith.

PHYSICAL SOCIETY, at 8.—Exhibition of a "Method of Making Capillary Filaments": H. S. Souttar.—The Intensity at Points near the Principal

Focus of an Object Glass with Symmetrical Aberration: J. Walker.—The Equipment of the Spectroscopic Laboratory of the Imperial College of Science: Prof. A. Fowler, F.R.S.

SATURDAY, MARCH 9.

ROYAL INSTITUTION, at 3.—Molecular Physics: Sir J. J. Thomson, F.R.S.

MONDAY, MARCH 11.

ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS, at 8.—The Loom and Spindle: Past, Present and Future: Luther Hooper.

ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, at 8.30.—Some New Zealand Volcanoes: Dr. J. Mackintosh Bell.

TUESDAY, MARCH 12.

ROYAL INSTITUTION, at 3.—Ancient Britain: Dr. T. R. Holmes.

MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY, at 5.30.—On the Zeolites from Killyflugh and White Head, County Antrim: Dr. G. F. Herbert Smith and F. N. A. Fleischmann.—On Quartz-twins: J. Drugman.—Note on the Optical Properties of Mercuric Iodide: T. V. Barker.—Notes on the Minerals and Mineral Localities of Shropshire: Arthur Russell.

SOCIETY OF DYERS AND COLOURISTS, at 8.—A Note on the Analysis of Weighted Silk: F. J. Farrell and Dr. J. N. Goldsmith.—Paper Yarn: Its Production and Uses: W. P. Dreaper.

INSTITUTION OF CIVIL ENGINEERS, at 8.—Further Discussion: (1) Roller and Ball Bearings; (2) The Testing of Anti-friction Bearing Metals: Prof. J. Goodman.—Probable Papers: The Main Drainage of Glasgow: A. E. McDonald and G. M. Taylor.—The Construction of the Glasgow Main Drainage Works: W. C. Easton.—Glasgow Main Drainage: The Mechanical Equipment of the Western Works and of the Kinning Park Pumping Station: D. H. Morton.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13.

GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, at 8.—On the Glacial Origin of the Clay with Flints of Buckinghamshire and on a Former Course of the Thames: Dr. R. I. Sherlock and A. H. Noble.—Some New Lower Carboniferous Gasteropoda: Mrs. Jane Longstaff.

ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS, at 8.—Greek Sculpture: Prof. E. A. Gardner.

THURSDAY, MARCH 14.

ROYAL SOCIETY, at 4.30.—Probable Papers: The Effects of Ultra-Violet Rays upon the Eye: Dr. E. K. Martin.—On the Presence of Radium in some Carcinomatous Tumours: Dr. W. S. Lazarus-Barlow.—An Improved Method for Opsonic Index Estimations involving the Separation of Red and White Human Blood Corpuscles: C. Russ.—The Electrical Conductivity of Bacteria, and the Rate of Inhibition of Bacteria by Electric Currents: Prof. W. M. Thornton.—A Critical Study of Experimental Fever: E. C. Hort and W. J. Penfold.—Certain Results of Drying Non-Sporing Bacteria in a Charcoal Liquid Air Vacuum: S. G. Shattock and L. S. Dudgeon.

ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS, at 4.30.—The Indian Census for 1911: E. A. Gait.

MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY, at 5.30.—The Cubic Surface as a Degenerate Quartic: G. T. Bennett.

INSTITUTION OF ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS, at 8.

FRIDAY, MARCH 15.

ROYAL INSTITUTION, at 9.—The Origin of Radium: F. Soddy, F.R.S.

INSTITUTION OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERS, at 8.—The Diesel Oil Engine, and its Industrial Importance particularly for Great Britain: Dr. Rudolf Diesel.

INSTITUTION OF CIVIL ENGINEERS, at 8.—The Heat Value of Fuels: A. E. Gladwyn.

SATURDAY, MARCH 16.

ROYAL INSTITUTION, at 3.—Molecular Physics: Sir J. J. Thomson, F.R.S.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

Sea Fisheries. By Stephen Reynolds	1
Design in Illumination	3
The Face of the Earth. By J. W. G.	3
Darwinism in the Light of Modern Research. By A. K.	4
Our Book Shelf	5
Letters to the Editor:—	
Heredity.—Dr. E. S. Goodrich, F.R.S.	6
Mars and a Lunar Atmosphere.—C. T. Whitmell	6
The Teaching of Mathematics.—Prof. H. S. Carslaw; R. Y. S.	6
The Isothermal Layer.—Commander Campbell Hepworth	7
St. Elmo's Fire.—J. McV. M.; E. Gold	7
Earthworms and Sheep-rot.—Rev. Hilderic Friend	8
Meteor-showers.—F.R.A.S.; John R. Henry	8
The American Lobster. (Illustrated.) By W. T. C.	9
Scientific Research in the Sudan. (Illustrated).	10
Notes. (Illustrated).	12
Our Astronomical Column:—	
Brilliant White Spots on Mars	17
Cometary Phenomena	17
The Antarctic Campaign. (With Map.) By Dr. William S. Bruce	17
Fisheries of Bengal. By R. L.	20
Disintegrating Bacteria and Other Organic Cells. (Illustrated.) By J. E. Barnard	21
University and Educational Intelligence	22
Societies and Academies	23
Books Received	25
Diary of Societies	26