

the death of Capt. Hall, but there is every likelihood the matters involved will be made the subject of judicial inquiry in America.

Taking all the circumstances into account, it is astonishing that both divisions of the crew have escaped without the loss of an individual and with so comparatively little hardship. The complete narrative of the *Polaris* Expedition, with the important scientific results obtained, will be looked for with impatient interest.

### NOTES

WE regret exceedingly to announce that Prof. Donati, Director of the Astronomical Observatory in Florence, died of cholera on the 20th inst. at Vienna, where he had arrived only two days previously.

DR. NELATON, the eminent surgeon, died at Paris on the 21st inst. at the age of 66 years.

THE death is also announced at Paris of M. Coste, the well-known naturalist and member of the French Institute, at the age of sixty-six. He first devoted himself chiefly to the study of comparative embryogeny, and his earlier works attracted so much attention that a special professorship was created for him at the College of France. Of late years he had chiefly applied himself to the science of the artificial production of fish, and it was on his recommendation that the Government in 1851 founded the breeding ponds at Huningen for stocking the Rhône with salmon and trout, and which in two years produced 600,000 young fry in that river. As Inspector-general of fluvial and coast fisheries, he also made numerous experiments for the propagation of oysters, but the expectations which had been raised by his theories have not so far been realised by the results obtained. M. Coste was the author of numerous physiological works and reports to the Academy of Sciences.

OUR list is not yet complete. Prof. Czermak, the eminent physiologist, died at Leipzig on Tuesday, the 16th inst.

BY the death of Prof. Barker, M.D., the professorship of Experimental Physics in the Royal College of Science for Ireland, Dublin, has become vacant. The chair is in the gift of the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education, South Kensington. It is of the value of 200*l.* per annum, besides a share in the fees paid by the students.

PROF. HUGHES BENNETT, of Edinburgh, has been elected Corresponding Member of the National Academy of Medicine of France.

THERE will be an election at Magdalen College, Oxford, in October next, to a Fellowship in Natural Science, the holder of which will not be required to take holy orders. In the examination, which will be held in common with Merton College, preference will be given to proficiency in Biology, the College reserving to themselves the power of taking candidates in any other branch of Natural Science, if it shall seem expedient to do so. Candidates must have passed all the examinations required by the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, and must not be in possession of any ecclesiastical benefice, or of any property, Government pension, or office tenable for life or during good behaviour (not being an academical office within the University of Oxford), the clear annual value of which shall exceed 230*l.* They must also produce testimonials of their fitness to become Fellows of the College as a place of religion, learning, and education, and these must be sent to the president on or before Monday, September 29. Candidates for the Fellowship are required to call on the president on Monday, October 6, between the hours of 3 and 5,

or 8 and 9 P.M. The examination will commence on the following day.

IT seems that the projected balloon voyage from New York to Europe is not now likely to take place. An attempt was made to inflate the balloon on the 10th, but it failed, owing to a high wind. The attempt was renewed on the 12th; but a rent appeared and the operation was abandoned. Mr. Wise, the aéronaut, had foreseen this result, owing to the imperfect manner in which the balloon was constructed; and indeed from what has been stated, it would seem Science may be congratulated that an enterprise in which newspaper advertising had so much to do, has been thus liberated from the responsibility of having to answer for a much more serious disaster, which, we repeat, need not be risked at all so far as Science is concerned.

MR. GEORGE SMITH has just discovered the fragments of an ancient Assyrian Canon, from the Babylonian copy of which the much-contested Canon of Berosus was unquestionably derived. The importance of this relic to chronologists can scarcely be over-estimated, and it will form the substance of a paper shortly to be read before the Society of Biblical Archæology by its fortunate discoverer.

A FRENCH translation of Grisebach's "Vegetation der Erde nach ihrer klimatischen Anordnung" is promised, with annotations, by M. P. de Tchihatcheff.

WE understand that Messrs. Macmillan will publish, early in the approaching season, a splendid series of pictures by Mr. Joseph Wolf, illustrative of the "Life and Habits of Wild Animals." The illustrations have been in course of engraving by Messrs. Whymper during the last seven years, and, as they are the last series which will be drawn by Mr. Wolf, either upon wood or upon stone, they will have an especial claim to the attention of all those who are interested in Natural History. The pictures are accompanied by descriptive letterpress by Mr. D. G. Elliot, whose monograph of the pheasants was noticed by us some time ago.

THE *Journal of Botany* states that Dr. Beccari, the Italian traveller and collector, when last heard of, was at the island of Wokam, off the south-west coast of New Guinea; he was to go on to Amboina, and had made large collections of plants and animals, which no doubt will include a number of novelties.

THE *Revue Horticole* states that M. Planchon, the Professor of Botany at Montpellier, has been charged by the French Government with the duty of visiting America to study the ravages of the new vine disease, the *Pemphigus vitifolia*. No change of government seems to lessen the sense of importance of scientific investigation displayed by our neighbours across the Channel.

A TRACT of hematite iron ore has been discovered in Shropshire, and eleven hundred acres have been secured on behalf of certain Staffordshire ironmasters, who will work it as a company. Some specimens contain 57 per cent. of iron. The discovery is of great importance to the iron industry.

THE additions to the Zoological Society's Gardens during the past week include two Indian Antelopes (*Antelope cervicapra*) from India, presented by Mr. G. E. Rogers; an Alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*) from America, presented by Dr. Palin; a Cardinal Grosbeak (*Cardinalis virginianus*), a Red-shouldered Starling (*Agelaius phœniceus*), a Baltimore Hangnest (*Icterus baltimore*), from North America, presented by Mr. Samuel Stubbs; a Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*), British, presented by Dr. Williams; a Rattlesnake (*Crotalus durissus*) from North America, purchased; twelve White-faced Tree Ducks (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) from Brazil; a Manx Shearwater (*Fulmarus anglorum*), British, deposited.