

Messrs. Weil Brothers; two Yellow Snakes (*Chilobothrus inornatus*) from Jamaica, presented by Mr. Chas. B. Masse; a Squirrel Monkey (*Chrysothrix sciurea*) from Demerara, a Military Macaw (*Ara militaris*) from South America, deposited; a Wapiti Deer (*Cervus canadensis*), two Hybrid Paradoxures (between *Paradoxurus leucomystax* and *P. stigmaticus*), born in the Gardens.

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES

THE Geographical Society's *Proceedings* this month are chiefly occupied with the anniversary meeting at the end of May, and everything said and done on that occasion seems to have been carefully recorded. The only paper given is that by Mr. Minchin on Eastern Bolivia and the Gran Chaco, and it is illustrated by one of the best maps which the Society has published for some time. The geographical notes supply intelligence of matters which have not hitherto attracted notice in this country, though one at least is of considerable importance. We allude to the recent exploration of the Beni River by Dr. Heath of Wisconsin, which is a distinct addition to our knowledge of the Amazons' system. When fuller details, including Dr. Heath's observations for latitude and longitude, have come to hand, it will be for the first time possible to fix the precise position of the mouth of the magnificent river, best known as the Madre de Dios, which, until a few years ago, was believed by geographers to be a feeder of the Purus instead of the Madeira. Some information is also given as to the progress of exploration between the Rovuma and Lake Nyassa.

M. ABBÉ DESGODINS, who is well known for the excellent geographical work he has done in Eastern Tibet, contributes to *Les Missions Catholiques* the first part of some interesting notes on the marriage and other domestic customs of the Tibetans.

It may be interesting to mention that in last week's number of the Society of Arts' *Journal* some useful notes are published on gums, resins, and waxes, which Mr. C. G. Warnford Lock has compiled from the journals of recent travellers. Especial prominence is given to india-rubber and the curious fossil resin known as gum copal.

M. ROUX has been intrusted by the Minister of Public Instruction and Fine Arts at Paris with a scientific mission to Tunis, and he has already begun the exploration of the region near the Constantine province of Algeria. He will afterwards undertake topographical and botanical investigations in the country between the Mejerba Valley and Cape Bon peninsula. Under the auspices of the same department M. Lantz is engaged in making natural history collections in some of the unknown parts of Madagascar.

M. BOULANGIER, a French Government engineer, has lately been engaged on a surveying expedition in Indo-China, in connection with the project for a railway. He went by a somewhat circuitous route from the frontier of French Cochinchina across Cambodia to Siam, made an especial study of the basin of the Tonlé-Sap, or Great Lake, which, according to his view, was formerly the head of the Gulf of Siam. The mountains south of Pursat must, therefore, have been an island, but the intervening low country becoming filled up they were joined to the mainland. As the result of his observations, M. Boulangier thinks that the Tonlé-sap will gradually silt up.

WE hear that Mr. Dorward, of the China Inland Mission, returned to Shanghai early in April from a five-months' journey in the province of Hunan. He is the only Protestant missionary who has ever traversed the route by which he returned from Hung-kiang to the neighbourhood of the Tung-ting Lake. Mr. Dorward also paid a flying visit to Kwei-yang-fu, the capital of the Kweichow province.

A PROMINENT paragraph in the *Standard* of last Saturday states that the "Geographical Society has received some interesting details of the fate of the Wybrants [*i.e.* Capt. Phipson-Wybrants] Expedition in Mozambique." We understand that there is absolutely no foundation for this statement, and the only effect of it is to inflict cruel disappointment on the relatives of the deceased members of this unfortunate expedition, regarding whose last days detailed particulars are anxiously awaited. Whether these will ever be known is, we fear, more than doubtful. The expedition was a purely private undertaking on the part of the late Capt. Phipson-Wybrants, and though he was aided with a loan

of instruments, he was in no sense sent out by the Geographical Society.

THE Brazilian Section of the Lisbon Geographical Society, which was established a short time back, has commenced the publication at Rio de Janeiro of a periodical under the title of *Revista Mensal*. Dr. F. Mendes de Almeida is the editor-in-chief.

THE Bengal Asiatic Society have issued as part of their *Journal* Mr. Longworth Dawes' sketch of the Northern Balochi language, containing a grammar, vocabulary, and specimens of the language.

CIVILISATION AND BARBARISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

AT a meeting of the Anthropological Institute on the 28th ult. Sir Bartle Frere gave a lecture treating of the results of contact of civilised with uncivilised races in South Africa. The first part of the lecture dealt with the historical results of such contact in other countries, and the lecturer, after a sketch of the recent history and present condition of the various South African races, maintained that on the whole natives have increased in numbers as well as improved in physique and in intellectual status by contact with Europeans, and that there was also little real reason to doubt an improvement in moral status. The conditions required to raise and improve races like the Kaffirs were (1) a strong imperial government; (2) freedom from slavery and equality before the law. To secure these two requisites it was necessary (3) to determine whether the standard of moral and social progress shall be that of the European or that of the native races; (4) education according to English standards. The general results arrived at in the lecture were summarised in the following propositions:—(1) It is possible for the civilised to destroy by war the savage races, to expel, or repel, or turn them aside in their migrations; (2) proximity of civilised and savage races has led or is leading to the decay and probable extinction of the Bushman race. But this result is doubtful in the case of the Hottentot races, and is certainly not taking place with regard to the Bantu or Kaffir races; (3) the changes consequent on proximity of civilised and uncivilised races are an approximation to the European type of civilisation; (4) the essentials to such approximation are (a) a pax Romana or Anglicana, bringing with it (b) protection of life and property, which involves equality before the law, individual property in land, abolition of slavery, abolition of private rights of making war and of carrying arms without the authority of the supreme ruler; (c) power of local legislation on European principles, with a view to secure education in the arts of civilised life, taxation sufficient for state purposes, restrictions on the use of intoxicating substances, as measures essential to the full attainment of any one of the preceding objects.

INDIGO AND ITS ARTIFICIAL PRODUCTION

MORE than eleven years ago the speaker had the pleasure of bringing before this audience a discovery in synthetic chemistry of great interest and importance, viz. that of the artificial production of alizarine, the colouring substance of madder. To-day it is his privilege to point out the attainment of another equally striking case of synthesis, viz. the artificial formation of indigo. In this last instance, as in the former case, the world is indebted to German science, although to different individuals, for these interesting results, the synthesis of indigo having been achieved by Prof. Adolf Baeyer, the worthy successor of the illustrious Liebig in the University of Munich. Here then we have another proof of the fact that the study of the most intricate problems of organic chemistry, and those which appear to many to be furthest removed from any practical application, are in reality capable of yielding results having an absolute value measured by hundreds of thousands of pounds.

In proof of this assertion, it is only necessary to mention that the value of the indigo imported into this country in the year 1879 reached the enormous sum of close on two millions sterling, whilst the total production of the world is assessed at twice that amount; so that if, as is certainly not impossible, artificial indigo can be prepared at a price which will compete with the native product a wide field is indeed open to its manufacturers.

Lecture delivered at the Royal Institution, Friday, May 27, 1881, by Prof. H. E. Roscoe, LL.D., F.R.S.