

ing from Borneo. The habit seems general, and, according to the above letters, not confined to venomous or non-venomous varieties.

EDWARD F. TAYLOR

St. Augustine's College, Canterbury, January 13

"Sarawak, Borneo, November 11, 1884

"The inclosed cutting from NATURE was sent me by H. Brooke Low, Esq., resident of Rejang, with a desire that I should forward my experience (which was similar to Mr. Evans's) to your paper. A young Dyak youth was walking up the hill towards my house, when a snake sprang out of the bank and fastened itself on the boy's jacket, just under the right arm. Fortunately, its fangs got caught in the cloth, and the boy escaped unhurt. Eventually, the reptile was killed and brought to the house. It measured five feet and some odd inches in length. In examining its fangs I noticed in its mouth the tail of another snake, and, on pulling it out and comparing them, I found it to be a few inches longer than the outside snake, though not quite so thick. I have come to the conclusion that this snake is the *Ophiophagus elaps* of the Straits. The native name for it is 'Ular Kendawang.' It is more deadly, more agile, and more beautifully marked than the 'Ular biliong' mentioned by Mr. Evans. So fascinatingly beautiful is the appearance of this snake, that in Dyak poetry one of their heroes is described as 'Crowned with the cast skin of the Ular Kendawang,' thus attributing to the hero that comeliness, agility, and fearlessness for which the 'Kendawang' is noted. I have reason to believe that the 'Ular biliong,' or axe snake (from the shape of its head), mentioned by Mr. Evans is an *Ophiophagus*, but it is not what is called the 'Elaps.' Its movements are sluggish, and its poison is not nearly so deadly as that of the 'Kendawang.' The distinctive marks of the 'Kendawang' are a reddish head and tail, the red of the tail being about twice the length of the head. The ground colour of the body is generally of a dark gray, but I have seen them of a silver gray, and also dark brown. A light streak of flesh-colour runs down the back, and the edges of it are variegated with vermilion and metallic-green spots, with just enough of white and yellow to make a most pleasing combination of colour. Besides these two, there are two other species belonging to the *Ophiophagus* class. The native names are 'Kengkang mas,' or 'Tinchin mas,' *i.e.* golden-ringed; and 'Matikor,' *i.e.* dead-tailed, and these four species are, I believe, very common throughout the Malay Archipelago.

"M. J. BYWATER,

"S.P.G. Missionary in Sarawak"

The Canadian Geological Survey

A PHRASE used in your condensed report of my remarks after Sir J. H. Lefroy's paper, read on January 13 at the Colonial Institute, may, I fear, be misunderstood by some of my friends in Canada. I am reported speaking of the Geological Survey of that country as "being slowly conducted." My remarks were not intended to imply the slightest reproach. I explained that progress could not be rapid because of the vast extent of the territory and the natural difficulties of many parts of it. I think, indeed, that it is surprising that, having regard to the means at their disposal, the Survey have accomplished so much. I urged that, as it was impossible for the present staff to prospect specially for minerals without abandoning the general work of surveying, which is of the more importance for science, some specialist should be added to it, to whom the former duty should be assigned. I did not use quite so strong a phrase as that I "believed the district north of the St. Lawrence was rich in valuable minerals." My opinion is that, as certain parts are known to be rich, and as there is great uniformity in the geology of the district, it is very probable similar deposits exist in the (very large) unexplored portion.

T. G. BONNEY

23, Denning Road, Hampstead, N.W., January 19

ASTRONOMICAL PHENOMENA FOR THE WEEK

1885, JANUARY 25-31

(AS an experiment we have here adopted for the reckoning of time the civil day, commencing at Greenwich mean midnight, counting the hours on to 24.)

At Greenwich on January 25

Sun rises 7h. 50m.; souths 12h. 12m. 40.9s.; sets 16h. 35m.; Decl. on meridian 13° 50' S.; sidereal time at sunset oh. 55m.

Moon (1 day past First Quarter) rises 11h. 55m.; souths 19h. 29m.; sets 3h. 12m.\*; decl. on meridian 15° 59' N.

Planet	Rises h. m.	Souths h. m.	Sets h. m.	Decl. on meridian
Mercury ...	6 23 ...	10 27 ...	14 31 ...	21 47 S.
Venus ...	6 31 ...	10 29 ...	14 27 ...	22 44 S.
Mars ...	8 6 ...	12 29 ...	16 52 ...	18 54 S.
Jupiter ...	19 6* ...	2 7 ...	9 8 ...	11 10 N.
Saturn ...	12 43 ...	20 46 ...	4 49* ...	21 32 N.

January 26, 16h.—Mercury at greatest elongation from the Sun, 25° W.

Occultations of Stars by the Moon

Jan.	Star	Mag.	Disap.	Reap.	Corresponding angles from vertex to left
			h. m.	h. m.	°
26 ...	B.A.C. 1526 ...	6	19 13	19 49	19 328
27 ...	B.A.C. 1930 ...	6½	20 38	21 30	33 316
29 ...	λ Geminorum ...	3½	2 23	3 21	132 284
30 ...	B.A.C. 3122 ...	6½	20 54	21 59	30 237
31 ...	π Leonis ...	5	17 53	18 35	5 255

Phenomena of Jupiter's Satellites

Jan.	h. m.		Jan.	h. m.	
25 ...	4 1	I. tr. ing.	27 ...	0 47	I. tr. egr.
	6 21	I. tr. egr.		19 8	I. ecl. disap.
	21 40	IV. tr. egr.		21 33	II. ecl. disap.
26 ...	0 40	I. ecl. disap.		21 58	I. occ. reap.
	3 31	I. occ. reap.	28 ...	1 33	II. occ. reap.
	3 52	II. tr. ing.		19 13	I. tr. egr.
	6 47	II. tr. egr.	29 ...	19 54	II. tr. egr.
	7 27	III. ecl. disap.		23 19	III. tr. ing.
	22 28	I. tr. ing.	30 ...	2 54	III. tr. egr.

\* Indicates that the rising is that of the preceding, and the setting that of the following nominal day.

DUST<sup>1</sup>

MY business this evening is to talk about dust: meaning by dust all suspended foreign matter of whatever kind, and including smoke and fog under the one heading. Coming from England I should naturally begin by saying, well, we all know what dust and smoke are; and even in Canada, I suppose, I may venture to say the same, though I am bound to say that your country, at present, shows a remarkable deficiency in this respect. In an English town dust and smoke are the most noticeable features, and are always ready to perform any insanitary or other function that may be expected of them. In this clear atmosphere none of these functions can be properly performed; disease-germs must languish and die, and their sworn foes, the white corpuscles of the human blood, must thrive amain. Let me say, however, that the air here is not so absolutely free from smoke as I had hoped to find it. Compared with an English town it is a splendid contrast; compared with one's ideal it falls short. Your houses may indeed burn anthracite and wood, but your passenger locomotives do not: I can attest from very recent personal experience, in a journey across this continent, that some of your locomotives emit almost as much smoke as a Clyde steamer, and that the journey would have been much pleasanter if they had emitted less. I also see some factory chimneys rising here and there. If you be not warned in time, you will not realise the blessing of fresh and pure air until you have lost it. It is good to have large manufactures, it is better to retain healthy and pure air. But with proper care the two may go together. Once lose ground in this respect, as we have done in

<sup>1</sup> Evening discourse to the British Association at Montreal, on Friday August 29, 1884, by Oliver J. Lodge, Professor of Physics in University College, Liverpool