

vouchsafe some rather mysterious information. It would be "very wrong," says the Vice-President of the Council, to bring into force the "enormous voting power" of London on the question of forbidding some scheme of the local authority; and consequently he has put himself into communication with the London School Board, or rather with Sir Richard Temple, its Vice-Chairman, to devise a way out of the difficulty. With the result he seems particularly pleased, but, as the proposal of Sir Richard Temple is not made public, it is lawful to reserve our opinion. Then there is the question of the directing authority. It is not to be the Education Office; it is to be the Science and Art Department. Whether this will create any possible conflict of authorities it is difficult to say; but as these two bodies have the same head—the President and the Vice President of the Council—it may be hoped that the conflicts will not be common or easy.

It is not to be supposed that such a Bill as this, which creates a new rating authority, and therefore threatens the pockets of the ratepayers, will pass into law without a good deal of criticism, or that it will be universally popular. Our correspondent, Mr. Daniel Watney, this morning gives utterance to a protest of which the language is strong, though the arguments are unconvincing. He admits that the old apprenticeship system has broken down, and that some substitute must be found; but anything like a general system of technical instruction, directed by the local authorities and the Science and Art Department, is condemned out of hand. Mr. Watney seems to think that the new proposal would give too much power to Professors, for whom he entertains the contempt of the "practical man." The practical man is commonly little more than an imperfect theorist; and just now, in England, his success in maintaining the commercial supremacy of the country is not such as to invest him with commanding authority. For our part we do not see where the Professors are to come in under Sir William Hart Dyke's Bill; but if they did come in, perhaps it might not be a bad thing for the improvement of our theoretical, and therefore our practical, knowledge. As to the immediate prospects of the Bill, it would seem from its reception on Tuesday night that the House is favourable to it. Mr. Mundella made two objections: one to the delegation of all power of initiation to the localities, and one to the exclusion of all pupils below the sixth standard. The objections stand on different grounds. The former is one of principle, the latter one of detail. It is not likely that the Government will venture, so late in the Session, and at a time when other difficulties have to be met and faced, to propose a sweeping measure for imposing technical instruction by the act of a central Department. The ratepayer must be humoured if his assent is to be won. As to the second objection, we think Mr. Mundella is probably right. The choice lies between retaining all children at school till they have passed the fifth standard, and admitting fifth-standard children to whatever technical classes may be available. It would be unjust to deprive them altogether, after they have left school, of the opportunity of learning whatever can be learnt about their trades.

SCIENTIFIC SERIALS.

Bulletin de la Société des Naturalistes de Moscou, 1887, No. 1.—The *Scaphirhynchus*, being an elaborate comparative anatomical description (in German) of the genus and its species, by N. Iwanow (with two plates).—On the great comet (43) of 1886, by Th. Bredichin (with a plate).—Enumeration of the vascular plants of the Caucasus, by M. Smirnof (in French). In this third paper the author discusses the relative moistness of the air in the Caucasus; he gives most valuable tables from twenty-three Caucasian stations, and shows the dependency of moisture upon the prevailing winds; he then gives tables as to the amount and frequency of rain in different parts of Caucasia, and discusses this climatic factor in comparison with the distribution of rains upon the Mediterranean region generally. This most valuable paper is to be continued.—On calorimetric methods for determining minimal quantities of iron in mineral waters, by E. Kislakovsky.—Comparative discussion of the data collected in Russia as to the epochs of the blooming of plants which are freely growing or cultivated between the 44th and 60th degrees of latitude, by A. Döengingk, being a most valuable paper (in German), containing a list of the times of blooming of 270 different species at Pyatigorsk, Kishineff, Sarepta, Orel,

Moscow, and St. Petersburg. This is followed by a note on the blooming of 225 plants at Pyatigorsk and Elizabetopol in the Caucasus, as also on trees and bushes, endemic and exotic, in the Caucasus, showing the origin of the exotic plants.—On the parasitical pteromalines of the Hessian fly, by Prof. Lindeman. Five parasites, all new species, are described (in German) and figured.—Entomological notes, by the same, on the *Haltica vittula* of Russia, the *Scotylus amygdali* of Transcaucasia, and the *Cleigastra flavipes* from Moscow.—On the tooth-plates of the *Gulnarina*, by Dr. W. Dybowski (in German).—On remains of the *Ursus spelæus* in Transcaucasia, by N. Anutschin (in German).—On the species of *Taraxacum* and *Glycyrrhiza*, and *Alhagi camelorum*, by A. Becker.

No. 2.—Comparative anatomical inquiry into the structure of the cord of fishes and its cuticular envelopes, by W. Lvoff (with three plates). A most elaborate inquiry into, preceded by an historical sketch of the literature of, the subject (summed up in German).—A study on the palæontological history of the Ungulate in America and Europe, by Mary Pavlow (in French). After having summed up the ideas developed on this subject by MM. Cope, Wortman, and Schlosser, the author studies the group of *Condylathra*, and shows that its separate members may have been predecessors of some orders of Mammalia; that it is a mixed group containing species which have the characters of Ungulate as well as of Unguiculate; and that it may be considered as standing at the head of the genetic tree of the Ungulate and Carnivores. Madame Pavlow shows, moreover, that the *Condylathra* have also representatives in Europe.—Notes on the remains of man and *Ursus spelæus* in Transcaucasia, by N. Anutschin.—The Hessian fly (*Cecidomyia destructor*) in Russia, by Prof. Lindeman (in German), being an elaborate paper on the history of its spreading, its habits and devastations, and its development (to be continued).

SOCIETIES AND ACADEMIES.

LONDON.

Entomological Society, July 6.—Dr. D. Sharp, President, in the chair.—Mr. McLachlan remarked that at the meeting of the Society in October 1886 he exhibited a quantity of the so-called "jumping seeds" from Mexico, containing larvæ of *Carpocapsa saltitans*, Westw. The seeds had long ceased to "jump," which proved that the larvæ were either dead, had become quiescent, or had pupated; about a fortnight ago he opened one of the seeds, and found therein a living pupa. On the 4th inst. a moth (exhibited) was produced.—The President, on behalf of the Rev. H. S. Gorham, exhibited the following Coleoptera, lately taken in the New Forest: *Anoploclera sexguttata*, Fab., wholly black variety; *Grammoptera analis*, Fab.; *Colydium elongatum*, Fab.; and a specimen of *Tachinus elongatus*, Gyll., with brownish-red elytra.—Mr. S. Stevens exhibited a specimen of *Orsodaena humeralis*, Latr. (*lineola*, Panz., var.), taken by him at Norwood; he also exhibited a specimen of the same beetle taken by him fifty years ago in Coombe Wood; during the interval he had never seen it alive.—Mr. G. T. Porritt exhibited, on behalf of Mr. N. F. Dobrée, of Beverley, a series of about thirty specimens of a *Teniocampa* he had received from Hampshire, which had previously been referred to as a red form of *T. gracilis*. Mr. Dobrée was inclined to think they were not that species, but *T. stabilis*.—Mr. A. C. Horner exhibited the following species of Coleoptera from the neighbourhood of Tonbridge:—*Compsochilus palpalis*, Esp. (5); *Acrognathus mandibularis*, Gyll. (4); *Homalota atrata*, Mann., *H. vilis*, Er., and *H. difficilis*, Bris.; *Calodera rubens*, Er.; and *Oxytelus fulvipes*, Er. He also exhibited a *Rhizophagus* from Sherwood Forest, which appeared to belong to a new species; and several specimens of *Holopodina polyperi*, Först., also from Sherwood Forest, where he had found it in company with, and probably parasitic on, *Cis vestitus*.—Mr. Elisha exhibited two larvæ of *Zelleria hepariella*, Stn. Mr. Stainton remarked that as the greater part of the larvæ of *Zelleria* were attached to the Oleaceæ, it seemed strange that certain species had recently been found on Saxifrage.—Mr. Slater read a paper on the presence of tannin in certain insects, and its influence on their colours. He mentioned the fact that tannin was certainly present in the tissues of the leaf-wood- and bark-eating species, but not in the tissues of the carnivorous beetles, and that black colour on the elytra of certain beetles appeared to be produced by the action of iron on tannin. A