

are very visible in the British Museum specimen, are quite non-apparent in the Derby Museum specimen. These cross-bands are, in all probability, remnants of the immature plumage, the British Museum specimen being not quite adult. I was, therefore, wrong in using this character ("Cat. Bds.," xv. p. 140) to separate *Dendrexetastes temmincki* from *D. devillii*, which, however, are quite different species, easily distinguishable by other characters. But *D. capitoides* = *D. temmincki* in my decided opinion, as has been stated in the "Catalogue."

P. L. SCLATER.

"The Zoological Record."

IN reference to the note in NATURE of November 21, about the *Zoological Record* for 1894, I must ask to be allowed to say that it is stated in the preface that Prof. Hickson could not undertake a record of Coelenterata. Consequently there has been no failure of contract on his part. Prof. Hickson has been a valued contributor to the *Record* for several years, and his work was always ready at the time agreed on.

Cambridge, November 23. D. SHARP,
Editor of the *Zoological Record*.

THE LONDON UNIVERSITY.

FORTUNE so far has not been too kind towards the efforts made for adding teaching functions to the existing University of London. As already chronicled in NATURE, the answer of the late Government to the request of the deputation to Lord Rosebery from institutions mentioned in the Report of Lord Cowper's Commission was the introduction of Lord Playfair's "University of London Act, 1895," enacting the appointment of a Statutory Commission to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission. Before it had been read a second time, the Government went out of office and the Bill was dropped. From reports which have lately appeared in the press, it would seem that on June 13 a deputation from the members of Convocation hostile to the scheme waited on the Duke of Devonshire and Lord Salisbury, then in Opposition, and were led to believe that these statesmen were not unwilling to support an amending clause to Lord Playfair's Bill, which would entail the scheme, when arranged by the Statutory Commission, being submitted to Convocation for approval in the manner prescribed for a senatorial election, *i.e.* by voting-papers. And by July 1, Sir John Lubbock, in seeking re-election for the University, had pledged himself to oppose the Statutory Commission Bill unless such a clause were inserted, and comes into line with those against whom he voted in the Senate a year previously. Following this, came the Duke of Devonshire's reference on August 15 to the "strong opposition taken by a large and not unimportant section of Convocation" to the scheme of Lord Cowper's Commission, coupled with the announcement that legislation on the subject would not be undertaken in the short session then commencing.

Judged from such incidents, the outlook could not be regarded as reassuring, and with the return of Ministers to town, steps have been taken to bring to the notice of the Government the urgent necessity of dealing with the burning question of a Teaching University for London. On November 21 the delegates represented on the deputation to Lord Rosebery, met at the University of London, and unanimously passed the following resolution:—

"That the Government be requested to introduce, at an early date, a Bill, similar to Lord Playfair's London University Commission Bill, 1895, appointing a Statutory Commission to carry out the recommendations of Lord Cowper's Commission, but with an added clause giving [in accordance with precedent Acts of similar tenor¹] to all Institutions or persons directly affected by any Statute

or Ordinance proposed by the Statutory Commission, a right of appeal to the Privy Council for the disallowance or alteration thereof, previous to such Ordinance being laid before Parliament for confirmation."

The Duke of Devonshire, on Thursday last, received a deputation in support of this resolution, the delegates present representing not only the institutions named in the Report of Lord Cowper's Commission, but also the members of that and of the earlier (Lord Selborne's) Commission on a Teaching University for London, as well as members of the recent Bryce Commission on Secondary Education. The deputation was introduced by Lord Kelvin, and its views were enforced by Prof. Rücker on behalf of the Senate of the University of London: Dr. Allchin for the Royal College of Physicians, Mr. Heath for the Royal College of Surgeons, Sir George Young (University College), Principal Wace (King's College), Dr. Frederick Taylor (Medical Schools), Principal Whitehouse (Nonconformist Theological Colleges), Sir Henry Roscoe (Association for promoting a Professorial University for London), Prof. Silvanus Thompson (Annual Committee of Convocation), and Mr. Anstie (Committee of Graduates).

In the presence of so emphatic an expression of the unanimity not only as to the need for but also the method of the reorganisation of the present University existing among the many institutions and persons interested in the settlement of this grave question, a sympathetic reply might surely have been expected from the official head of the Education Department. This, however, was not to be the case. The Duke, after conceding the representative character of the deputation, made no further reference to the manifold interests represented by the delegates; no reference to the needs of higher education in London; no reference to the widespread recognition of the necessity for a Teaching University without which, in view of the conflicting nature of the interests concerned, little approach towards a united appeal for a Commission with executive and judicial powers for their settlement could have been gained. On the contrary, his reply dwelt on the difficulty of securing the present status of the external students under the scheme of Lord Cowper's Commission, while admitting that the scheme and deputation were at one in insisting that this should be maintained unimpaired; on his desire to obtain, if possible, an expression of opinion on the subject from the external students, and on the differences in opinion which had arisen in Convocation about the scheme. In Convocation the Duke of Devonshire recognised three sections—those who accept the scheme with such modifications as may be made by the Statutory Commission, those who are irreconcilable, since they express the view that if a Teaching University for London is needed it should be founded apart from the existing University, and those who are of opinion that it would not be enough for the amendments they desired introduced in the scheme to go merely as recommendations to the Commissioners when appointed, whence their claim for a veto on the scheme when arranged, to which we may add a fourth, *viz.* the large proportion, nearly one half of the members, who, so far, have not been beguiled by the foregoing three to express any opinion at all. And recognising only these three, he dwelt on the expediency of everything possible being done to conciliate the opposition, if only on the ground that it is extremely desirable that the Bill, if it comes before Parliament, should come before it in a shape which should excite as little opposition as possible.

It is not too much to say that, in tendering this advice, the Duke showed that he had not had time to balance the relative importance of the views laid before him by the deputation from some members of Convocation in the summer, and those which had been so strongly urged by the delegates whom he was addressing. Had it been otherwise, the disparity between the interests involved is

¹ Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877, sec. 46.
Scottish University Act, 1889, sec. 20 (a).

so evident that advice to treat, apparently on a footing of equality, with a section of Convocation would never have been given to the deputation before him—a section of Convocation, be it remembered, which has rejected the conciliatory overtures of the Annual Committee of Convocation,¹ and has made common cause with the irreconcilables in promoting opposition to the scheme.

The Duke's reply has at least made one point clear. We now know that between the institutions concerned with higher education in London, and the realisation of their wishes, there only stands the opposition of a section of the graduates of the present University. Thus no alternative is left but to deal with the question again from this point of view. It must not be forgotten that Convocation, in the manner prescribed by the charter, has twice declared in favour of the scheme of Lord Cowper's Commission. But even were the members of Convocation as unanimous in opposition to the scheme as they are divided in opinion as to what measure of support should be accorded it, is it right or just that the organisation of London's unrivalled facilities for higher education should be delayed at the instance of a body of graduates of a State institution? The precedents are all the other way, as in the case of the Queen's University for Ireland, where the hostile vote of its Convocation was set aside by Lord Beaconsfield's Government, and the University reorganised as the Royal University for Ireland. For what is the position? The University of London, according to the clearly implied opinion, both of Lord Selborne's and Lord Cowper's Commissions, and to the widely-expressed opinion of those outside the University most competent to judge on educational matters, does not perform the duties now required of it. Lord Cowper's Commission, in its Report laid down the lines on which the University may be reorganised, so that it can become a Teaching University for London without interference with its present work. The principles of the proposed reconstruction have been accepted by all concerned, as well as by outside opinion, with a degree of approval no less remarkable for its wide extent than for the contrast it affords with the reception accorded to all previous schemes. But this approval is wholly conditional on the reorganisation being effected by legislative authority as recommended in the Report, a requirement so displeasing to a section of Convocation that to secure its assent to this procedure nothing less is demanded than a right to veto the scheme when arranged by the Statutory Commission, should the "opinion of Convocation as a whole," ascertained by voting-papers, be unfavourable to it. Is it not a truly Gilbertian idea that the graduates of a State-created, State-maintained Examining Board should be put in a position to veto the action of the State itself? The War Office clerks might with about as much reason have insisted that the scheme for the reorganisation of the War Office should be submitted to a *plébiscite* of their body for approval before it appeared in the Orders in Council.

The misconception which gives the name of University to the examining body at Burlington Gardens extends, perhaps not unnaturally, to the Convocation of its graduates, and mischievous expressions such as the "opinion of Convocation as a whole" find a too ready currency. Convocation, if it means anything, means an assemblage for the discussion of matters affecting itself or the body it represents, and, save in the case of the election of members of the Senate, where no useful purpose would be served by the public discussion of the merits of the candidates, decisions arrived at in its meetings are the decisions of the Convocation of the University. Whatever the opinions of members

¹ Vide Report of the Annual Committee presented to Convocation at its meeting on January 22, 1895.

absent from the meetings of the Convocation, they have as much weight, or as little as those of members of Parliament absent from a division, and as the result of the division on Mr. Brodrick's famous motion showed, it is the opinion of the members present, and not that of the House of Commons "as a whole," which determines the fate not only of measures but ministries.

The necessity for a Teaching University has now become a "London question" of the first importance, and is becoming recognised as such by the metropolitan press. Matters obviously cannot be allowed to remain in their present position, and in the fact that he has still to be convinced an incentive will no doubt be found by those in charge of this matter to see that the misconceptions under which the Lord President labours are as far as possible removed. That the true inwardness of the proposal to make Convocation the arbiter in this great question is gaining public recognition cannot be doubted when "the small group whose views are represented by Sir John Lubbock, Dr. Collins, and Dr. Napier" is plainly told by the *Morning Leader* that its attitude is that of Demetrius the silversmith, and by the *Star* that "no Statutory Commission could for a moment accept such a position" as that proposed for it under the postal veto scheme. The following paragraph from *The Times* is so much to the point that we gladly give it further publicity:—

"We are sorry to see that the Duke of Devonshire speaks almost with bated breath of the reference of the question to a Statutory Commission. It would be 'a somewhat strong proceeding,' he says, to interfere in this way with the rights conferred on the Convocation of the University of London by the charter now in force. We cannot help feeling that this is a rather strange objection in the mouth of a statesman who has taken a leading part in the Liberal legislation of the past quarter of a century. Was it not by Statutory Commissions that sweeping reforms were introduced in the educational system and even the proprietary rights of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and their constituent colleges? Does the Duke of Devonshire imagine that those reforms would ever have been carried through if it had been left to the Convocation of Oxford or to the Convocation of Cambridge to give or withhold its sanction? On what ground, rational or sentimental, is an immunity from the reforming hand of Parliament claimed for the University of London which was denied to the historic and national foundations of Oxford and Cambridge? Indeed, the Convocation of the University of London has itself accepted in general terms the principle of the plan embodied in the Report of the Cowper Commission; but the Duke of Devonshire is probably right in refusing to take this as an absolutely final expression of opinion. The Duke, however, goes further than this. He appears to insist that some additional means should be devised for ascertaining the views of those whom he calls the 'external students.' If unanimity, or anything approaching to it, is to be sought for as the result of this inquiry before the reforms unanimously demanded by the friends of higher education in London are initiated, the establishment of a Teaching University here, for which educational reformers have been struggling for years, will be substantially relegated to the next generation. This is a lame and impotent conclusion from which we should have thought the practical and positive temper of the Duke of Devonshire would recoil. The Parliamentary difficulties in the way of passing a Bill that meets with any strenuous resistance need not be insisted upon. The present Government, supported by an immense majority, and including so many distinguished statesmen, will find it no hopeless task to overcome such difficulties, especially as the Opposition are committed by Lord Playfair's Bill

to this very settlement of the question. But the problem will never be solved if the party of resistance are encouraged by being told that the acquiescence of the country graduates is indispensable, and that a measure brought in by the strongest Administration of the century cannot be passed if a handful of malcontents oppose it."

With such expressions of opinion as these before us we cannot doubt but that London will yet be roused to a sense of what it will lose if advantage is not taken of the present golden opportunity.

HENRY SEEBOHM.

THE death of Henry Seebohm was announced in one of the "leading dailies" last week, as that of a member of an eminent firm of steel-manufacturers. Steel-manufacturer Seebohm was, no doubt, and his steel was good; but his name will be remembered as that of an acute and hard-working naturalist long after the quality of his steel is forgotten.

Henry Seebohm was one of a family of Quakers of Scandinavian origin, as the name shows, but settled for several generations in England. He was born in 1832, at Bradford in Yorkshire, and educated at the Quakers' school in York. His father, who was a practical man and thought everybody should begin at the beginning, started him in life as a grocer's shop-boy, in order that he might be taught to tie up paper-parcels properly. After many vicissitudes in business, Seebohm settled down as a maker of pot-steel at Rotherham, and in due time achieved a handsome competence. From his earliest days devoted to natural history and especially to ornithology, Seebohm spent all his leisure in the study of birds, and made short excursions into different parts of Europe in order to obtain personal acquaintance with some of the rarer species. It was not, however, until about twenty years ago that his business pursuits permitted him to devote much time to scientific work. In 1875, in company with his friend Mr. J. Harvie Brown, he made his first great excursion to the valley of the Lower Petchora in North-east Russia. Of the remarkable ornithological discoveries effected on this occasion an account was first published in *The Ibis* for 1876. But a complete and most attractive narrative of the whole journey was subsequently prepared by Seebohm, and issued in 1880 under the title of "Siberia in Europe." In 1877 a longer and more adventurous journey was carried out into the Far East. On this occasion Seebohm visited the valley of the Yencay, and in 1882 published his "Siberia in Asia" as a pendant to his former volume.

After this Seebohm commenced to put together the facts that he had accumulated, and the conclusions that he had arrived at on his much-loved subject of British birds. The first volume of his "History of British Birds and their Eggs" was issued in 1882. In 1885 the subject was concluded by the issue of the third and fourth volumes. It may be truly said that no other book of the sort has been prepared on the base of such wide and varied experiences. Having acquired from a brother ornithologist a special collection of wading-birds, Seebohm next turned his attention to this branch of ornithology, which had also particular attractions for him in connection with the migrant habits of this order, and in 1888 issued a beautifully illustrated quarto work "On the Geographical Distribution of Plovers, Sandpipers, and Snipes," which was, in fact, a complete "Monograph" of the birds of the order Limicolæ. He also wrote two treatises on the "Classification of Birds," the last of which was only published in the present year.

Seebohm was a most liberal contributor to the bird-collections of the British Museum, and from time to time

made many very handsome contributions to them. He would purchase and present without the slightest hesitation any specimens that came into the market, if he thought there would be a difficulty in their acquirement by the Museum. He gave to the Museum the whole of his unrivalled series of eggs, and had it arranged along with the rest of the collection of these objects under his own personal supervision. He was also the compiler of the fifth volume of the great catalogue of birds published by the Trustees, which was issued in 1881. This related principally to the thrushes—a group with which Seebohm was specially familiar. In fact, he has long had in preparation a complete monograph of this group of birds, with coloured illustrations of every species, but has unfortunately left it unfinished at his decease.

Seebohm was elected a Fellow of the Zoological Society and of the British Ornithologists' Union in 1873, and from that date onwards was a leading spirit in the conduct of both these Societies, and a constant contributor to their publications. He was never elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, though put up as a candidate, and very strongly supported. Unfortunately occult influences interfered with his attainment of this honour. Seebohm, though one of the kindest natures possible, was occasionally a severe critic, and gave offence to sensitive individuals by stating the truth too plainly. The loss of an only son some years ago was a sad blow to Henry Seebohm; but he recovered this shock to a great degree, and returned to his usual pursuits. His last and fatal illness was consequent, as he believed, on an attack of influenza, which took place last spring. He died on the 26th ult., at his residence in South Kensington, where he had got together a splendid ornithological library and an almost unrivalled collection of British birds, leaving a vacuum in the ranks of living naturalists which it will be very difficult to fill.

NOTES.

THE first meeting of the General Committee formed for the purpose of establishing a memorial to the late Prof. Huxley was held on Wednesday, November 27, when it was resolved—"That the memorial do take the form of a statue to be placed in the Museum of Natural History, and a medal in connection with the Royal College of Science; and that the surplus be devoted to the furtherance of biological science, in some manner to be hereafter determined by the Committee, dependent upon the amount collected."

It will be remembered by our mathematical readers that a Committee, including the names of many eminent mathematicians in both hemispheres, was formed in 1893 to obtain funds for a memorial to the renowned master of geometry—Lobatchefsky. The report of the Committee on what has been done in the matter has just been issued. The total sum received up to May last was 9071 roubles (£1417), and when all expenses had been paid the amount available for the memorial was 8840 roubles (£1381). This sum enables the Committee to carry out the double intention of founding an international prize for geometrical works, especially for those belonging to non-Euclidean geometry, and also to erect a bust of Lobatchefsky. Six thousand roubles have been put by to found the prize, which will consist of 500 roubles (nearly £80), to be given every third year for the best geometrical works or memoirs. The memoirs may be written in Russian, French, German, English, Italian, or Latin, and must be sent to the Physico-Mathematical Society at Kazan, at least a year before the adjudication of the prize. The first prize will be awarded on October 22 (November 3, new style), 1897. The sum remaining over and