

of Hypnotism, its phenomena and theories. An interesting feature in this discussion was a speech by Mr. Myers, of Cambridge, on the psychological side of hypnotism. Mr. Myers contrasted hypnotism with hysteria, sleep, and somnambulism. The author concluded his remarks with discussing the probable nature of "suggestion." Did the hypnotiser by suggestion merely infuse power or evoke it? Mr. Myers held the view that in some cases there was an actual transmission of power from operator to subject, a kind of telepathy. In other cases the hypnotiser merely taught the subject to start self-suggestion of his own, and he cited the miracles performed at Lourdes as an instance of the latter method. Prof. Benedikt, of Vienna, made some interesting remarks on this subject.

In the Section of Neurology Dr. Ferrier opened a discussion on the treatment, curative and palliative, of intracranial tumours. The discussion was continued by Drs. Dercum, Collins, Sir William Broadbent, and others. Dr. Buzzard introduced a discussion on the influence of micro-organisms and toxins on the production of disease of the cerebral and peripheral nervous system. According to the author micro-organisms in this connection acted in two ways: directly by their actual effect on the nervous tissue, and indirectly through the agency of chemical substances produced by their action on the blood or other tissues of the body. The author mentioned in this connection the so-called infective diseases of the central nervous system. The paper provoked a lively discussion.

The Section of Pharmacology and Therapeutics commenced its business with an address from Dr. Affleck. The lecturer sketched the progress of therapeutics, including under this term balneo-therapeutics. Concerning actual pharmacology not much was said. Dr. Herschell introduced a discussion on the treatment of diseases of the stomach; the Section had the advantage of the presence and opinions of Prof. Ewald, of Berlin, and Dr. Lauder Brunton. Prof. Turck, of Chicago, gave a demonstration of the various methods he employed in the diagnosis and treatment of gastric disorders.

A new feature of this year's meeting was the inclusion of a Section dealing with Medicine in relation to Life Insurance, with Dr. Claud Muirhead as President. The points discussed in their relation to life assurance were cardiac disease, middle-ear disease, and pregnancy.

The Section of Pathology, under the presidency of Prof. Greenfield, proceeded to discuss the nature and treatment of Leucocytosis. The subject was introduced by Dr. Robert Muir. Papers were also read by Dr. Lazarus Barlow on Irritation of Pleura and Pleurisy, and by Dr. Durham on the Agglutinating and Sedimenting Properties of Serum, and their relation to Immunity. Prof. Stockman contributed a paper on the Pathological Effects of Dead Tubercle Bacilli. Many other papers followed, giving rise to considerable discussion.

The Section of Physiology was opened by a lecture by Prof. Rutherford on Tone Sensation. Dr. Waller read a paper on the Action of Anæsthetics on Vegetable and Animal Protoplasm. Dr. Waller seems to have turned his attention from nerve fibres to nerve cells. His paper included the description of some interesting experiments upon the action of alcohol and ether vapour upon the spinal cord of the frog. He further showed that anæsthetics exerted the same paralysing influence upon vegetable as upon animal cells. The paper was illustrated by lantern slides and diagrams. Dr. Weymouth Reid joined in the subsequent discussion. Dr. A. C. Sturrock read a paper on the Selective Affinity of the Tissues, especially as regards the Mammary Gland.

In the Section of Anatomy, Prof. Cunningham opened a discussion on Anatomic Variations, dividing them into two great classes, prospective and retrospective. The former were indicative of changes that might yet become

normal in the history of the species, while the latter were of two kinds: first, simple arrest; and, secondly, development along lines which had once been normal for the species. The address was illustrated by lantern slides of the brains of apes and microcephalic idiots. The President closed the meeting with some remarks on the teaching of anatomy. F. W. TUNNICLIFFE.

PROFESSOR GEORG BAUR.

BORN on January 4, 1859, at Weisswasser (Bohemia), where for a time his father was Professor of Mathematics, Georg Baur passed his youth in Hessen and Württemberg. He went through the Gymnasium at Stuttgart, and in 1878 entered the University at Munich, taking up especially the study of palæontology, geology, zoology, and mineralogy. In 1880 he went to Leipzig, where he studied under Credner and Leukhart. Two years later he returned to Munich, and there obtained the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. He remained in Munich from 1882 to 1884 as assistant to Prof. von Kupffer, to whom he was much attached, and who in turn honoured him with his friendship. In 1884 Dr. Baur accepted a call to New Haven, Conn., as assistant to Prof. O. C. Marsh. He relinquished this position in 1890 to accept the post of docent at the Clark University of Worcester, Mass. A year later he succeeded, after great difficulties, in getting up an expedition to the Galapagos Islands, leaving in May and returning in October with a valuable collection of the flora and fauna of these interesting islands. In 1892 he went to Chicago University as Assistant Professor of Comparative Osteology and Palæontology, and was made Associate Professor in 1895.

It was in September 1897 that a serious break-down of his health gave the first indication of mental overwork. From the beginning of his career Dr. Baur had been so intensely devoted to his studies and researches, that almost no leisure remained to him for recreation; no fewer than 143 separate papers testify to his industry. A vacation of a few months, mostly spent at one of the Wisconsin lakes, seemed to benefit him. Returning to Chicago in December, the physicians recommended either a sojourn in California or in Germany. The wish to be near his relatives made him decide for his old home, and together with his family he left for Europe, the University generously granting a further leave of absence. The gravity of his illness (paralysis), already suspected in America, was at once recognised at Munich. The disease made such rapid progress, that not many weeks after his return from a short stay in Southern Tyrol his transfer to an asylum was found to be necessary. The end came on June 25.

The family have received many touching expressions of sympathy. At the grave Prof. von Kupffer spoke feelingly, referring to the great talents, the keen perception, the untiring industry of the deceased by which he had created himself an honoured place in anatomy and palæontology. "Though young in years," he said, "Prof. Baur was an authority in many a field. In remembrance of the time we worked together, of the friendship which united us, I lay down in deep sorrow this laurel wreath."

THE BEN NEVIS OBSERVATORIES.

WITH reference to the announcement in NATURE of July 28, intimating that, unless means were provided, the Observatories at Ben Nevis would be closed in October next, we are glad to be able to state that it will not be necessary to take that step this year. The subjoined letter explains how this threatened mis-

fortune to meteorological science has for the present been averted.

Scottish Meteorological Society, 122 George Street, Edinburgh, July 27, 1898.

It was announced last week in your columns that the Ben Nevis Observatories were to be closed in October next for want of funds. It gives me much pleasure to announce now that this will not be the case. I have received a letter from Mr. J. Mackay Bernard, Kippenross, in which he promises to give 500*l.* "in order that the Observatories may be carried on for another year." The record of observations for one whole year will thus be the result of Mr. Bernard's great generosity.

He expresses a hope in his letter that before the end of that year arrangements may have been made for the permanent carrying on of the work by State aid, and his very liberal and prompt action makes the Directors more hopeful than they were that this desirable end may yet be reached. But if the State does not charge itself with the maintenance of these Observatories, then Mr. Bernard's example may perhaps be followed by others, so that the Directors may at least be able to obtain continuous and complete observations for the eleven years of a sun spot period. This would mean the making of an important addition to knowledge by Scotland, and in that aspect Mr. Bernard is patriotic as well as liberal.

In conclusion, allow me to thank you, and the press generally, in the name of the Directors, for the sympathetic attitude which has been taken by the newspapers towards the work carried on by the Scottish Meteorological Society.

ARTHUR MITCHELL, *Hon. Sec.*

The question of the position of the Ben Nevis Observatories came up in the House of Commons on Friday last in connection with the annual vote of 15,300*l.* to the Meteorological Council for meteorological observations. As this sum (nearly 3000*l.* of which is annually expended upon telegraphic reports and storm warnings) is for observations throughout the United Kingdom, Scotland at present receives a proportional part of it, and a grant of 350*l.* is made annually for the two Ben Nevis Observatories—the high level observatory receiving 100*l.* and the low level observatory 250*l.* Mr. Hanbury, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, has undertaken to ascertain whether a larger amount could not be granted to Scotland out of the Parliamentary vote in respect of the observatory on the summit of Ben Nevis, the suggestion being that a grant of 500*l.* a year should be made for five years. In a leading article in Monday's *Times*, the valuable work carried on at the observatory is pointed out, and the hope is expressed that Mr. Hanbury will succeed in effecting such a redistribution of the grant to the Meteorological Council as will provide for its further prosecution and development. The value of the observatory as a meteorological station is beyond question, and something should certainly be done to place its work upon a permanent footing.

NOTES.

THE *Standard* of Friday last contained the following telegram from its Vienna correspondent:—"On the closing day of the International Congress for Applied Chemistry, an interesting paper was read by Dr. Leo Liliensfeld on the synthesis of albuminous substances. By means of the condensation of phenol and amido-acetic acid with phosphoric oxychloride, the lecturer has succeeded in producing pepton, a substance which, it had hitherto been believed, could be obtained only from organic substances. In order to dispel any doubt as to the possibility of thus making artificial albumen, the lecturer carried out the entire process in the presence of the assembled chemists, and then demonstrated the identity of artificial and natural albumen by means of reactions." This announcement is of great interest to chemists, and we shall give an account of the synthesis next week, when further details will probably be available.

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NEWS has just been received of the death of Prof. James Hall, the veteran State Geologist of Albany, New York.

UPON the recent retirement from the Indian Medical Service of Brigade-Surgeon Lieutenant-Colonel D. D. Cunningham, F.R.S., Professor of Physiology, Medical College, Calcutta, the Government of India have placed on record their high appreciation of the eminent services rendered by him to the State. Dr. Cunningham was appointed to the chair of Physiology in the Medical College at Calcutta in 1879—a post which he continued to occupy till he was compelled to take sick leave last year. By his zeal and devotion to his work he introduced a high standard of efficiency in the teaching of physiology in the College. He was the first professor to demonstrate histological preparations to the students in a systematic way, and also the first to teach them the practical use of the microscope. He twice received the thanks of the Government of India for reports submitted by him in collaboration with the late Dr. Lewis. Dr. Cunningham's most recent investigations have been connected with snake-bite and the discovery of a remedy. In a letter to the Director-General of the Indian Medical Service, the Governor-General writes:—"By the retirement of Dr. Cunningham the Government of India lose the services of one of the most distinguished of the scientific men who have served them, the Indian Medical service one of its most eminent members, and yourself an invaluable adviser. He carries with him on his retirement the warmest thanks of the Government of India for his long and distinguished services."

SOME of the objections to the system of granting indulgences to anti-vaccinationists were pointed out in last week's *NATURE*. Since then the Vaccination Bill has had an eventful history. It came before the House of Lords in Committee on Thursday last, and the second clause—the conscience clause—providing parents with a means of exemption from penalties for the non-vaccination of their children, was rejected. The amended Bill had therefore to go back to the House of Commons, where it was considered on Friday, and a motion to disagree with the Lords' decision to leave out the conscience clause was carried. In consequence of this vote, the Bill again came before the Upper House on Monday, with the result that the conscience clause was reinstated—the Lords reversing on Monday their decision of Thursday last. It may be expedient to pass the Bill in its complete form, but the principle of permitting conscientious anti-vaccinationists to put themselves beyond penalties other than those which their neglect will bring upon them, is unsound and dangerous.

IN view of the proposed alterations in the laws relating to vaccination now contemplated in the Bill before Parliament, the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons of England have reaffirmed the following resolution adopted by them in 1893 and forwarded to the Royal Commission on Vaccination, viz.:—"We, the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, desire to put on record at the present time our opinion of the value of vaccination as a protection against small-pox. We consider the evidence in favour of its life-saving power to be overwhelming, and we believe, from evidence equally strong, that the dangers incidental to the operation, when properly performed, are infinitesimal. Experience has satisfied us that, even when vaccination fails to afford complete exemption from small-pox, it so modifies the severity of the disease as not only to greatly reduce its mortality but to lessen the frequency of blindness, disfigurement, and other grave injuries. We should therefore regard as a national calamity any alteration in the law which now makes vaccination compulsory. We are, moreover, firmly convinced that re-vaccination is an additional safeguard and should be universally practised."