PERSEIDS—COMET DANIEL.

ON the night of August 4 several bright Perseids were observed, and this marked return of the shower at so early a date suggests a display exceeding the ordinary richness this year. There is evidence that the shower is pretty strong every ten years, for there were considerable numbers of Perseids seen in 1877, 1887, and 1897. It will be desirable to watch the phenomenon during its ensuing apparition, with special regard to the fact alluded to, and to ascertain the hourly number of Perseids visible throughout the nights of Sunday and Monday, August 11 and 12. The latter date will probably be found to represent the time of maximum. St. Lawrence's Day, August 10, is no longer contemporary with the Perseid display at its best.

The diurnal motion of the radiant, amounting to one degree in a direction to E.N.E., was first definitely observed by the writer in 1877 and announced in NATURE at the time. Every year supplies fresh evidence of the displacement and corroborates the facts described in Monthly Notices, vol. lxii., pp. 161-9.

Daniel's comet has been visible to the naked eye since the first few days of July, and is now sufficiently conspicuous to arrest the immediate attention of anyone who will look towards the eastern sky before the morning twilight becomes too strong. On August 5, at 3 a.m., the nucleus of the comet appeared like a blurred star of $2\frac{1}{2}$ magnitude, and the tail extended westwards over nearly 30° , but it was difficult to assign limits, as it faded gradually away into the tone of the sky. Ephemeris by Dybeck (*Ast. Nach.*, 4794):—

Berlin Mean Midnight.												
1907			R.A.			Dec.		Brightness.				
			h.	m.	s.							
Aug.	10		5	56	56	...	...	+17	23	...	...	17.6
"	14		6	33	1	...	...	+17	15	...	...	19.0
"	18		7	7	6	...	...	+16	47	...	...	20.0
"	22		7	39	2	...	...	+16	4	...	...	21.0
"	26		8	8	58	...	...	+15	11	...	...	20.5
"	30		8	37	12	...	...	+14	9	...	...	20.0
Sept.	1		8	50	45	...	...	+13	35	...	...	19.5
W. F. DENNING.												

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THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

THE seventy-fifth annual meeting of the British Medical Association was held last week at Exeter under the presidency of Dr. Henry Davy, physician to the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital.

The subject of the presidential address was "Science in its Application to National Health." After giving some particulars concerning Exeter and the Royal Devon Hospital, Dr. Davy proceeded to point out that every organ, muscle, and structure in the body required a proper amount of work to keep it healthy. Exercise was therefore very important, and he deplored the present tendency to watch games rather than to participate in them. Physical culture was one of the most pressing questions of the day, and it should not be left to professors of Swedish exercises to lecture on physical culture and to direct the kind of exercise to be employed; in such questions the medical man should be consulted. Schools should have proper playgrounds and gymnasiums, and trainers in physical exercises were as necessary as school teachers. The question of food was another important one, and the "man in the street" should be able to obtain from his medical attendant precise details of the quantity required and of its nature. As regards infective diseases, pyæmia was now almost unknown, thanks to the labours of Lord Lister, typhoid fever was diminishing, and it was now tuberculosis that required to be attacked. Something, it was true, had been done in this direction, but much more remained; are no precautions to be insisted on with regard to disinfection? Are we for ever to allow consumptives to disseminate their infectious expectoration? Are consumptives alone to be allowed to stay in hotels and lodgings without taking precautions?

The address in medicine was delivered by Dr. Hale White, whose subject was "A Plea for Accuracy of

Thought in Medicine." He instanced such terms as "irregular" or "suppressed gout" and "liver out of order" as really being only a cloak for ignorance, which it would be much better to confess. "Selective action" was another mystery, e.g. why does alcohol pick out the anterior tibial nerve and lead the musculo-spiral? Why do beer drinkers get "beer-drinkers' heart" in Munich but not in London? Unreflecting adhesion to authority has a particularly serious effect in keeping back the advent of correct knowledge.

Mr. Butlin discussed the "Contagion of Cancer in Human Beings: Autoinoculation" in his address in surgery. He brought forward a number of cases in which cancer in a part was followed by cancer of the same type in another part in contact with the first, e.g. cancer in one lip followed by cancer in the other lip.

In the section of medicine there was a discussion on the indications for operation in cases of intra-cranial tumour introduced by Dr. Risien Russell. Dr. Gardner Robb read a paper on the recent outbreak of cerebro-spinal fever in Belfast, and Dr. Rivière one on the tubercular treatment of tuberculosis in children.

In the section of pathology there were important discussions on pernicious anæmia and on phagocytosis. In the section of tropical diseases, Prof. Simpson read a paper on anti-malarial sanitation, in which he discussed how recent discoveries have rendered anti-malarial sanitation more precise and less costly than formerly.

In the section of State medicine, Dr. Newsholme delivered an address on the need for coordination of the public medical services. Voluntary effort, as illustrated in the hospitals, and State-aided treatment under the Poor Law, failed entirely to produce an adequate result for the vast sums expended. A coordinated system of State-paid and State-directed medical service would speedily justify itself from an economical standpoint, and must of necessity ally itself with preventive medicine.

Dr. Gilchrist read a paper on the necessity of increasing the degree of immunity against small-pox, and Mr. Garrett Horder one on the new vaccination order. A resolution was passed by the meeting recommending the council of the association to approach the Local Government Board on the subject of the new vaccination order.

The association was received by the civic authorities at the Guildhall, and numerous garden-parties and excursions helped to pass an instructive and pleasant week in the delightful old city.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

MANCHESTER.—Harling fellowships in physics have been awarded to Mr. J. N. Pring and Dr. H. A. Geiger.

The University has made arrangements for a number of public lectures in the autumn which are to be given by leading men of science and others.

Dr. Graham Steell has been appointed by the council of the University of Manchester professor of medicine in the university.

OXFORD.—The Romanes lecture will be delivered by Lord Curzon, Chancellor of the University, in the Sheldonian Theatre, on Saturday, November 1. The subject of the lecture will be "Frontiers."

SHEFFIELD.—Mr. D. H. de Souza has been appointed demonstrator in physiology, and Mr. W. F. G. Swann assistant lecturer and demonstrator in physics.

PROF. VON LEYDEN has resigned the professorship of clinical medicine at the University of Berlin, and Prof. His, of Göttingen, has been appointed to succeed him in the chair.

DR. GEOFFREY MARTIN, a former student of the Merchant Venturers' Technical College, Bristol, has been appointed lecturer and demonstrator in chemistry at University College, Nottingham.

A "PROF. TAIT'S MEMORIAL FUND" of the value of 200l. per annum, for the encouragement of physical research in the University of Edinburgh, has been endowed by Sir John Jackson.