Through the death of Prof. Bauerman one of the few members of the old school, of which his earliest teacher and greatest friend—Dr. Percy—was a type, has been lost to us; one of the most kindly and sympathetic friends to the younger members of his profession has passed away, and a most intimate companion, mentor, and friend has been lost to the writer. Only those who knew him can realise how great a loss is being experienced by his friends, and by the many councils and committees on which he served, and on which his wide experience of men and things rendered him so valuable.

Bauerman, like most great men, died in harness. Even on the day before his death he was occupied in dictating a review on a scientific work, and a few hours before he passed away peacefully in his sleep he was talking of his past labours and of the future work of the younger generation.

GEORGE T. HOLLOWAY.

THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM.

THE Trustees of the British Museum have sent the subjoined correspondence to the *Times*, through Dr. F. G. Kenyon, director and principal librarian of the museum.

House of Commons, December 3, 1909.

Dear Sir Archibald,—At the meeting of the standing committee of the Trustees of the British Museum held on Saturday last at South Kensington, the letters which recently appeared in the *Times* relative to the connection of the Bloomsbury and South Kensington Departments of the British Museum and the relation of their respective Directors were very fully considered. It was unanimously felt that nobody could throw a clearer light upon the matter than yourself; that nobody's voice would be so well listened to; and that nobody's opinion would carry so much weight as your own, if you could be persuaded to give the benefit of your views on the question to your co-Trustees.

I understand that you have recently had occasion to inquire into this matter; may I venture, therefore, to invite you, as one of the Trustees of the British Museum, to be kind enough to inform your co-Trustees of the opinions which you hold upon the subject-matter in question?

If I might venture to suggest, the points upon which it appears to me desirable that we should be informed are (1) whether the Board of Trustees, acting through its standing committee, is in your judgment the best authority for the government of such an institution as the Natural History Departments of the British Museum, and (2) whether, under the existing statutes and rules, the scientific management of the Natural History Museum suffers any detriment from its association with the museum at Bloomsbury.

The Trustees are anxious to be reassured that the management of the Natural History Departments of the British Museum can be usefully, adequately, and properly carried on under the present system, and feel that, as you have recently had the subject before you, and have made special inquiries into it, your judgment upon it would carry special weight.

I may say that, at the meeting of the Trustees on Saturday, November 27, I was instructed by my colleagues to deal with this matter, and I have therefore the less hesitation in approaching you directly upon it.

I beg to remain, yours faithfully,

JAMES W. LOWTHER.

To Sir A. Geikie, F.R.S., Shepherd's Down,
Haslemere.

Shepherd's Down, Haslemere, December 7, 1909.

Dear Mr. Speaker,—In reply to your letter of 3rd inst. I have pleasure in stating, for the information of my co-Trustees of the British Museum, the opinion which I have been led to form on the questions you refer to me. I may say that the agitation on this subject, which has been carried on, fitfully but persistently, in the public Press for many years, supported as it has been by some well-known

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men of science, created in my mind the impression that there was probably some ground for the complaints that had been brought forward. But not until recently have I had occasion to make a careful investigation of the facts of the case. The result of this inquiry has been to convince me that the agitation has no substantial justification, but has arisen from misapprehension or ignorance, and that if the actual state of the matter had been realised no agitation ought ever to have been started.

The allegation so constantly made that the Director of the Natural History Museum is under much more than the merely nominal control of the Director and Principal Librarian at Bloomsbury is without any real foundation. It has probably been suggested by the fact that, as both establishments are administered by one Board of Trustees, the financial business of the whole institution is entrusted to a single accounting officer. In this obviously convenient and economical arrangement the supervision has been assigned to the Director and Principal Librarian, to whom, by Act of Parliament, every other officer of the British Museum is subordinate. But he has no power whatsoever of interference in the scientific work or management of the Natural History Museum. The duties and responsibilities of the Director of the Natural History Departments at South Kensington, as laid down in the statutes and rules, are precisely the same as those of the Director and Principal Librarian in regard to the various departments at Bloomsbury. Each of these officers is charged with the independent control of the museum and staff over which he presides. Thus the subordination of the one Director to the other is, for all practical purposes, non-existent.

I cannot conceive of a scheme which, under a board of managers, could more fully secure liberty of initiation and action in each of the two establishments. Both Directors are in immediate touch with the Board of Trustees. This board is not a bureau of secretaries and clerks in a Government department, but a body of cultivated gentlemen, full of sympathy with the objects of the great institution committed to them, anxious to promote its interests, and ready at all times to seek the best expert advice in matters which may lie beyond their personal cognisance.

It is, of course, not to be expected that any set of regulations, how carefully soever they may have been framed, will provide for every contingency that can arise from the effects of personal idiosyncrasies. In the conduct of any public institution it must be assumed that the duties assigned to the various officers of the staff will be discharged with courtesy, good feeling, and loyalty to the service. Where, unhappily, these fundamental qualities prove deficient, friction is not unlikely to arise; but any instance of it can be dealt with by the governing authority, and should not imply the necessity for a revision of the statutes, still less for a reorganisation of the institution. After a fairly wide experience, I have no hesitation in asserting that I know of no establishment, either in this or any other country, wherein more favourable conditions have been provided for harmonious and effective cooperation in scientific work than have been devised by the Board of Trustees of the British Museum for the administration of the important departments committed to their care.

I remain, yours very faithfully,

ARCH. GEIKIE.

To the Right Honourable the Speaker of the House of Commons.

NOTES.

WE announce with deep regret that Dr. Ludwig Mond, F.R.S., died on Saturday, December 11, at seventy years of age.

WE regret to see the announcement that Sir Alfred Jones, K.C.M.G., who rendered valuable services to science by the share he took in the foundation and endowment of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, died on December 13, at sixty-four years of age.

MR. W. M. TATTERSALL has been appointed keeper of the Manchester Museum in succession to Dr. W. E. Hoyle.