

Institution's work. Among the subjects of those which have lately been sent to us may be mentioned: "Orchids," "Stegosaurus," "Whetstones," "American History," "Fashions," "Gerenuk Gazelle," "Printing for the Blind," "Relics of the Grinnell Expedition," "Spectroscopic Determination of Minerals," "Gypsum," and "Printing Ink." Some of these deal with publications, others with accessions to the collection or with special exhibitions. Newspaper editors are at liberty to make what use they please of these articles, condensing or embroidering at their fancy. But the result, it is doubtless hoped, is that readers of the newspapers will either send for the publications referred to or visit the exhibition. The Press statements are distributed a few days before it is intended that they shall appear, and editors are requested to return a card of acknowledgment that they have been so used. We shall probably learn the result of the experiment in some future report of the Smithsonian Institution, to which museum curators in this country will look forward with much interest. Although some of our museums, both national and provincial, already utilise the Press in this direct official manner, we are under the impression that their communications are neither so frequent nor so freely distributed as those of the United States National Museum appear to be; neither are they written with quite the same obvious intention of furnishing easy reading for the average citizen.

EXPLORATION IN THE KARAKORUM.

DR. FILIPPO DI FILIPPI'S paper to the Royal Geographical Society on June 14 is the record of an expedition more thoroughly equipped, from a purely scientific point of view, than any that has yet attacked the many problems still awaiting solution in the dreary solitudes that lie beyond the valley of the upper Indus. To one who knows by experience the labour involved in transferring himself for a few months only, with no more elaborate outfit than a single tent, a geological hammer, and a camera, to the higher regions of the Himalaya, it seems almost incredible that such items should be included in the impedimenta as a complete wireless installation; pilot balloons, with the hydrogen for their inflation carried in sixteen steel cylinders; and other scientific gear; to say nothing of tents for a party numbering one hundred and fifty persons, and the provisions, amounting to some forty-six tons, requisite for a sojourn of many months in that most inhospitable country. Yet the task was brought to a successful conclusion, in the face of every obstacle that Nature in her most inclement mood could oppose to it. We are left to imagine with how great an expenditure of patience and energy, for the modest narrative of the leader of the expedition, Signor Filippo di Filippi, makes light of this aspect of the achievement.

The programme was certainly ambitious. It included a topographical survey of the Karakoram east of the Siachen glacier, where the great Remo

glacier was found to possess some of the features of an ice-cap, its upper basin being described as a vast circus filled to the brim with ice, which overflows between the surrounding peaks, while one of its branches sends its waters down the Yarkand river into Central Asia, and another feeds the Shyok, a tributary of the Indus: a series of gravimetric observations designed to connect the work of the survey of India along the southern flanks of the Himalaya with that of the Russians in Turkestan: determinations of longitude by means of wireless time signals transmitted from Lahore: a comprehensive study of the geology, not confined to the main route traversed by the expedition, combined with a collection of anthropological data: and lastly, astronomical and meteorological observations, with complete photographic and cinematographic records.

Leaving Skardu, where it had passed the winter, in February, 1914, the expedition, making its way over passes deep in snow, arrived in the beginning of June on the Depsang plateau, a desolate expanse of minute detritus, at an altitude of 17,400 ft. above the sea, "entirely devoid of vegetation except for occasional patches of a yellowish-green plant which at first view suggests, more than anything else, some malignant disease of the soil." On this plateau, constantly swept by an icy wind, and deluged with storms of hail and sleet, the scientific work of the expedition was carried on until late in August, when the journey to the plains of Russian Turkestan was resumed and successfully accomplished early in November.

The scientific results of this expedition will be awaited with eager interest. They cannot fail to throw light upon the geodetic aspects of the Himalayan problem, which have recently been the subject of much discussion, and on meteorological questions of great moment in India. It will be interesting also to compare the geological results with the observations of Stoliczka, who traversed the same route more than forty years ago, and whose classification of the formations met with in the N.W. Himalaya remains practically unimpaired to the present day.

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NOTES.

THE Moxon gold medal of the Royal College of Physicians has been awarded to Prof. J. J. Déjerine, of Paris, and the Baly gold medal to Dr. F. Gowland Hopkins.

WE learn from *Science* that the Board of Estimate and Apportionment of New York City has passed a resolution authorising the issue of 20,000l. corporate stock of the City of New York to provide means for permanent improvements at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, including the completion of the laboratory building and plant houses. This action was taken following the generous offer of Mr. A. T. White, chairman of the Botanic Garden Committee of the Brooklyn Institute trustees, to secure a like sum by private subscription. The amount was subscribed by