more to be said than that science teaches us to think and literary education to express our thoughts, do we not require both?" Most reasonable people would probably be prepared to concede the soundness of Mill's opinion. Is not therefore the educational system of a country which concerns itself in no way as to the status of science altogether imperfect and lopsided? The educational value of science was excellently assessed nearly half a century ago by the distinguished author of the words above quoted, in the following terms (*vide* Rectorial Address, St. Andrews University, 1867):—

"But it is time to speak of the uses of Scientific Instruction: or rather its indispensable necessity, for it is recommended by every consideration which pleads for any high order of intellectual education at all.

"The most obvious part of the value of scientific instruction, the mere information that it gives, speaks for itself. We are born into a world which we have not made—a world whose phenomena take place according to fixed laws, of which we do not bring any knowledge into the world with us. In such a world we are appointed to live, and in it all our work is to be done. Our whole working power depends on knowing the laws of the world—in other words, the properties of the things we have to work with, and to work among, and to work upon. . . .

"It is surely no small part of education to put us in intelligent possession of the most important and most universally interesting facts of the universe, so that the world which surrounds us may not be a sealed book to us, uninteresting because unintelligible. This, however, is but the simplest and most obvious part of the utility of science, and the part which, if neglected in youth, may be the most easily made up for afterwards. It is more important to understand the value of scientific instruction as a training and disciplining process to fit the intellect for the proper work of a human being."

Since Mill's day there have been many realisations and warnings that those in charge of the country's affairs were not maintaining its position in the international scale of scientific efficiency, the probable contingent future effects being at the same time pointed out. The Government have no doubt always listened respectfully to the representations, emanating from conviction, that have from time to time been made to them, but, having no thoroughly intelligent apprehension, the central fact remains—they have done nothing. The country, in a matter vital to its welfare, has been allowed to fall back while parliamentary gentlemen have occupied themselves, and the minds of the majority of their fellow-countrymen, with domestic questions of only accessory, not essential, importance.

How can matters be remedied? In what possible way can progress in the future be ensured? Experience does not readily incline one to the belief that any number of memorials, deputations, or advisory boards will be able adequately to effect the greatly desired result. Would it not be an excellent thing and solve many difficulties were there a body of scientific opinion in the House of Commons? An old teaching of Bagehot's was that any notion, or creed, which could get a decent number of English members to stand up for it, might be a false, and, indeed, pernicious, opinion, but it was felt by nearly all Englishmen to be at all events possible—an opinion within the intellectual sphere, and to be reckoned with. And it was an immense achievement. This, of course, means that scientific men would require to stand as candidates for election to Parliament. The assertion that in general their very specialised scientific training would disqualify them from being useful participants in the ordinary business of the Legislature appears quite unfounded.

To the writer the foregoing suggests itself as one likely solution of our difficulty. The country, in an educational sense, appears to have got somewhat out of adjustment with external national requirement. Equilibrium with environment is, perhaps, not always easy of maintenance, but it is worth continually striving after, so far as is humanly possible; for, without this, insidiously begin the multifarious processes of destruction compassing an end which it is never possible precisely to define.

D. BALSILLIE.

St. Andrews, April 30.

A Mysterious Meteorite.

THE photograph here reproduced is of a meteoritic stone which was recently obtained by Mr. A. S. Kennard from a curio-dealer in Beckenham, Kent. All that could be discovered of its history was that it had

been purchased at the sale of the effects of a local auctioneer named Harris. Hitherto also all efforts definitely to fix the locality given on the label have failed. Any help in the solution of the mystery will be welcomed by me.

G. T. PRIOR.

Natural History Museum, South Kensington.

THE RELIEF OF THE SHACKLETON ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION.

AS the middle of May has been reached without news of the *Endurance*, action for the relief of Sir Ernest Shackleton's expedition has to be taken on the expectation that there will be no further news this season. It is possible that the *Endurance*, damaged and short of coal, may still be slowly working her way northward, and that any day we may hear of her return to South Georgia with perhaps the whole of the expedition on board. But such a solution of the difficulty must be regarded as highly improbable, and the relief expedition must be prepared with the information already available.

The more detailed news received from the *Aurora* encourages the hope that she can be refitted in New Zealand and entrusted with the relief work necessary on the Australasian side of the Antarctic. If so, the problem there is comparatively simple. The main anxiety in regard to that section of the expedition is due to the fact that when the *Aurora* was blown out to sea there had been no news of the depôt-laying parties for two months. Three sledge parties had started at the end of January, 1915, from the *Discovery* Hut at the southern end of Macmurdo Sound. Some depôts were successfully laid on the Ice Barrier.