

major (S.W. California), *Leurognathus marmorata* (North Carolina), *Typhlotriton spelaeus* (Missouri), *Ascaphus truei* (Washington), *Rana virgatipes* (New Jersey), *Phrynosoma brevicornis* (Texas), *Neoseps reynoldsi* (Florida), *Crotalus willardi* (Arizona).

The new check list "has been prepared generally upon the basis of the American Ornithologists' Union Check List of Birds, and following that example, it has included the species and subspecies which the authors deem valid and of certain occurrence in North America, north of the Rio Grande, and in Lower California, Mexico." The higher groups and genera are in systematic sequence, but the species are in alphabetical order, which is regrettable and surprising on the part of the authors, whose perfect knowledge of the subject should have been imparted by arranging the species according to their relationships; in the larger genera, a subdivision into sections would have been a help to the student, and added greatly to the value of this catalogue.

Notwithstanding the protest raised against the constant changes in the scientific names of genera and species which appeared, over the signatures of so many distinguished zoologists, in this journal ten years ago, the process of "revision" goes on as before, and it is lamentable to notice such substitutions as *Eurycea* for *Spelerpes*, *Gastrophryne* for *Engystoma*, *Coluber* for *Zamenis*, *Micrurus* for *Elaps*, etc.

G. A. B.

The Photographic Industry of Great Britain, 1918.

Pp. 247. (London: British Photographic Manufacturers' Association, Ltd.)

FORTY firms who manufacture photographic goods have banded themselves together as "The British Photographic Manufacturers' Association, Ltd.," for the purpose of extending their export trade by developing to the fullest possible extent friendly business relations with buyers in the Overseas Dominions and in foreign countries. This is the first annual handbook of the association. The important parts of it are printed in English, French, Spanish, and Russian, and many of the members' announcements (or advertisements), which fill the second half of the volume, are also given in the four languages, though some omit the Russian version, and others are content with English and French or English alone. After the list of members comes an article by Mr. G. E. Brown which gives a concise sketch, first of the history of photographic invention, and secondly of the photographic industry of to-day. He shows how British invention and British industry stand in the very foremost position. Indeed, if it were possible to abolish all that originated in this country, there would be very little, if anything, left of photography. The handbook gives a classification of makers under the headings of the goods they offer, registers of trade names and trade marks, and various other data to facilitate international dealings. The secretary of the association will be glad to send a copy of it to any established dealer abroad who does not receive one and applies to him for it.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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The Promotion of Post-graduate Work and Research.

IN the article bearing the well-known initials "W. A. T." in NATURE of May 9 on the above subject, the writer has quoted from a report of the Academic Council to the Senate of the University of London a summary of reasons for and against the institution of a new doctoral degree. The report referred to has been approved and adopted by the Senate, and a copy is enclosed for your information. Among the reasons for the establishment of such a degree, the first is:—

"That it would be the means of strengthening the unity of the Empire by increasing the number of students from the universities of the British Empire who pursue their graduate studies in Great Britain."

On this the writer says:—

"Of all these considerations [i.e. the reasons in the summary] it appears to the writer that the first is, at the present time and probably for generations to come, of greatly preponderant importance. And in declining the proposals which come to it from his Majesty's Dominions beyond the seas, the Senate has missed a great opportunity for the development of the University."

The proposals as formulated by the President of the University of Toronto in a letter dated April 30, 1917, are as follows:—

"It will be necessary for the universities of Britain to establish some doctor's degree which will be within reach of our best students who hold our preliminary degree, provided they are required to spend not more than three years in Britain in order to obtain it."

A student coming from a foreign or Colonial university immediately after graduation can enter for the M.Sc. examination after pursuing an approved course as an internal student of the University of London extending over not less than two years. If successful, further attendance at a prescribed course of study will not be required. It is possible for him to return home to continue his studies, and to present a thesis for the D.Sc. degree after the prescribed interval of time. On the other hand, if he continues his studies abroad for two years after taking his preliminary degree and produces work of sufficient merit, he may be excused the M.Sc. examination and allowed to proceed to the D.Sc. examination after a period of study as an internal student of the University of London of not less than two years. The provision that four years must elapse between the date of the examination, in virtue of which he is registered, and the date of his D.Sc. examination can be shortened in exceptional cases.

It would appear from the above that, although the Senate has not instituted a new degree, the opportunities for overseas students to carry on research and to proceed to higher degrees in the University of London are ample.

The main reason for declining to establish a new degree is that it would damage the standard of the existing doctorates. The writer's estimate of that standard as set out in his article is not flattering. If it is accurate, there is no case for the establishment of a doctorate of a lower standard.

One of the resolutions passed by the Conference of Universities of the United Kingdom, held on May 18, 1917, was as follows:—