

be associated with the Mousterian phase of culture, the anatomical evidence can be interpreted more easily than would be the case if the deposit is Aurignacian.

The paradoxical evidence provided by the anatomical features of the skull renders the determination of the geological age a matter of fundamental importance. Hence Mr. Warren Dawson and I have taken the advice of many authorities in the hope of deciding this issue. Since this letter was written, Mr. Hinton, who examined the remains of the woolly rhinoceros and mammoth from the Lloyd's site last March, has again assured Mr. Dawson that "the blue clay in London is quite definitely post-Mousterian."

G. ELLIOT SMITH.

The Collection of Bryophytes by Scientific Expeditions.

MAY I ask the publicity of your columns for a matter concerning a rather limited branch of natural science, but one which we desire to ventilate as widely as possible in scientific circles?

The following resolution, passed unanimously at the annual meeting of the British Bryological Society held at Ross in August last, to a great extent explains itself:

"That it is desirable that in any future scientific expeditions promoted by British or Colonial public bodies, special attention should be given to the collection of bryophytes, the determination of which should be entrusted to British botanists."

The necessity for such a resolution arises from the fact that in most recent scientific expeditions bryophytes have received the scantiest attention or none at all. As an example may be cited the Mt. Everest Expedition, 1924. Although a special request was made that attention might particularly be paid to the collecting of bryophytes, not a single specimen was brought back by the official scientific staff, although at the altitudes at which most of the encampments were made it was obvious that cryptogamic plants might be expected to form far the highest percentage of the vegetation. This is evidenced by the fact that a certain number of cryptogams were individually collected by one of the climbing members of the expedition, and privately transmitted home, and these proved of great scientific interest (*cf. Journ. of Bot.*, 1925, pp. 189, 221)—including a moss from considerably the highest altitude from which any moss has hitherto been collected.

A recent scientific expedition to Australia, the West Australian and Islands Expedition, under Capt. Wilkins, sent out under the auspices of several of the principal scientific institutions and societies of Great Britain and Australia, returned with but a single example of the lower cryptogamous plants—a block of fossil diatomaceous earth. Bryologists have repeatedly the tantalising experience of hearing from returned explorers of the wealth of bryophytic vegetation traversed by them—lantern slides being sometimes especially prepared, for their particular delectation or exasperation, to illustrate the "dense masses of arboreal mosses" through which an expedition passed—only to find that among the botanical collections brought home the bryophytes are conspicuous by their absence.

The older botanical explorers knew better—Hooker in the Antarctic, Spruce on the Amazon, Schweinfurth in Africa, Wallich in Asia, and a host of others—and our knowledge of the world flora and of the factors of geographical distribution has been vastly increased thereby.

The facility of their collection further justifies our claim, since no plants demand less in the way of space or preparation. They simply require drying; and they may be usefully employed in filling up interstices and acting as packing for other specimens.

These arguments might easily be multiplied, but they would make a further demand on your space which would be, I fear, undue, and I hope superfluous.

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The London Zoological Society's Aquarium.

In NATURE of November 21, p. 767, in a report of the recent ornithological meeting in Berlin, "E. H." states that the Berlin Aquarium was "the model from which the larger London Aquarium has been built." This is entirely erroneous. Certainly we knew of and had inspected the Berlin Aquarium as well as many others whilst making our plans, but I do not know of any single feature, either mechanical or decorative, which we based on the Berlin Aquarium.

P. CHALMERS MITCHELL.

Zoological Society of London,
London, N.W.8,
November 23.

I AM glad Dr. Chalmers Mitchell corrects an error in my report. I understood that Mr. Boulenger had thoroughly inspected and measured the tanks in Berlin, which to me looked very much like those in the London Aquarium—but as I am not an expert on aquariums, I should not distinguish differences very clearly, and would notice similarities in all modern institutions of that kind. I have never had any doubt that the London Aquarium has great improvements on all others, as it is natural to improve on former establishments of the kind, when building a new one, by making use of the experience of others.

E. H.

Cyclops robustus, G. O. Sars.

Cyclops robustus is given by Prof. Sars as one of the rarer species, and to the best of my knowledge it has not been recorded previously for the British Isles.

Last July several specimens occurred in some tubs outside the biological laboratory at Marlborough College. The tubs in question are kept for the refuse from pond-life study. Some time afterwards, as the result of a fairly prolonged search, several ponds were found in Savernake Forest containing this species.

The reason why this species has not been recorded in the British Isles before must be, I think, that it has been overlooked on account of its resemblance to *Cyclops lucidulus*, Koch. That *Cyclops robustus* is really widely distributed in the British Isles is almost certainly proved by the fact that I found it so far north as Roineval in the Isle of Skye in September last.

It is interesting to note that Prof. Sars in "Crustacea of Norway" (vol. 6, p. 46) states that he has only found this species, in Norway, on the borders of the larger lakes. I have only found it in quite small ponds, if not puddles, especially those containing Sphagnum. Dr. W. Arndt has also found it in ponds in Bulgaria (*Zool. Anzeiger*, vol. 61, p. 298), though his specimens seem to differ somewhat from the original type.

A. G. LOWNDES.

Marlborough College, Wilts.,
November 20.