

Science News a Century Ago

Societies and Academies

The Zoological Society

At a meeting of the Zoological Society on October 9, 1838, Richard Owen began the reading of a paper on the osteology of the Marsupialia. He remarked upon the great value of an acquaintance with the structure of the skeleton in determining the genera and species of this group of animals, and proposed a new genus *Thylacomys*, for certain species presenting a peculiar conformation of the cranium. In treating the maxillary bones, Owen said that he was induced to enter more largely into details, from the great interest attached to the fossil jaw found in the oolitic strata at Stonesfield, and the doubts which had lately been expressed by M. de Blainville as to its true mammiferous character. The author had examined four specimens, of which one was in the museum at York, another was in the collection of Mr. Broderip, and the other two were in the possession of Dr. Buckland. The double fangs to the molar teeth, and the ramus of the jaw being formed of a single bone, he thought, sufficiently attested the mammiferous nature of these remains; while minor anatomical characters led him to regard them as belonging to a marsupial genus.

Meteorological Science in Germany

Writing from Carlsruhe, a correspondent of the *Athenæum* said: "The attention of scientific men is just now directed to a curious discovery of Professor Stiefel—well known throughout Germany for his researches in Natural Science—the result of which has been the attainment of a more accurate knowledge of those changes to which the atmosphere is subjected than was possible by the old methods. The instruments hitherto in use have been the thermometer and the barometer, but an unerring standard has been considered a desideratum: that is said to have been at last supplied in the shape of geranium fruit, the awns of which are *in* and evolved by the dryness or humidity of the atmosphere, in obedience to laws so regular and unvarying, that being fixed upon a dial plate properly graduated, the change from one part of a room to another may be noted with the greatest accuracy. A paper on the subject was to be read at the meeting of German naturalists, held this year at Freyburg. Professor Stiefel is the greatest weather doctor in southern Germany, and has for many years tabulated all changes in the atmosphere, according to a plan suggested by Goethe, but he does not venture to predict for more than twenty-four hours at a time and laughs at our weather prophets." (*Athenæum*, Oct. 13, 1838.)

New Botanic Gardens in Regent's Park

"THE interior portion of the Regent's-park," said the *Mechanic's Magazine* of October 13, 1838, "will shortly be laid out as botanical gardens, the Commissioner of Woods and Forests having granted a lease to a society newly formed under the title of the Royal Botanic Society of London, at the head of which is the Duke of Richmond as president. The object of this society is the formation of an extensive botanic garden, with a library, museum, and conservatories, so that medical and scientific as well as merely ornamental botany will respectively receive the attention commensurate with their importance."

Paris

Academy of Sciences (*C.R.*, 207, 353-384, August 8, 1938).

K. KITAGAWA: Dispersion of a turbulent current of air and the flow of subterranean waters.

G. BERTRAND: Principle of a method for obtaining rapidly a relative value of g .

G. WATAGHIN: Indeterminism in the space of moments and the origin of explosion showers.

MME. G. CHAUVENET: State of surface and oxidizability of cobalt. A fresh surface at high temperature is very vulnerable; gradually it becomes covered at lower temperatures with a thin film of unknown nature.

Y. DOUCET: Electrolytic dissociation of cadmium iodide.

D. BODROUX and A. CHATENET: Paracyclohexylphenoxyacetic acid and some of its derivatives.

M. MOUSSERON and R. GRANGER: Some active cyclohexane compounds.

C. KILIAN and X. LANGLOIS: Discovery of freshwater mussels of middle carboniferous age near the watering-place Nord de Chelemma, in the northern Touraieg-Tebou region of the French Sahara.

E. DE CHETELAT: Extension of the Gothlandian in French Guinea.

R. GUIZONNIER: Study of the diurnal component of the terrestrial electric field.

P. L. MERCANTON: The new Kreis-Wanner seismograph of the Swiss seismological service.

H. PARENT: An important bed of Bathonian ammonites in the north of the Department of Var.

G. BOURGUIGNON and MLE. R. DEJEAN: 'Time characteristic of excitability' of the vestibular system by mono-auricular excitation, in various disturbances of central origin.

L. LAPICQUE: Observations on the preceding communication.

F. HOLWECK: Measurement of the elementary dimensions of viruses by the method of statistical ultra-micrometry. The virus is diluted until a critical concentration, which ceases to be constantly infective, is reached, and the amount of X-ray irradiation required to match this effect is determined.

A. BESREDKA: Test of local cutaneous bacteriotherapy.

Geneva

Physical and Natural History (July 7.)

E. A. H. FRIEDHEIM: Relation between chemical constitution and trypanocidal effect of 4-(4-arsono-anilino)-1, 2-naphthoquinone-8-sulphonic acid. The naphthoquinone group is essential for therapeutic action. The presence of free hydroxyl in position 2 is important, but not essential. Sulphonation at position 8 gives a more active product than sulphonation at 7 or 6. The anilino-arsonic residue at position 4 of the acid is essential.

L.-W. COLLET: Discovery of a fragment of the San Colombano nappe under the miocene of Saint-Florent (Corsica) and its consequences. The San Colombano nappe, which is the highest in Corsica, would appear to extend into the upper tectonic element of the island with rock of a deeper facies. It is equivalent to the Ligurie nappe of the Apennines.

A. LOMBARD and W. SCHROEDER: New observations on the miocene of Saint-Florent (Corsica). The