

class began with four students, but soon the number was as great as the rooms could conveniently accommodate, and excellent work was done in spite of many inconveniences, one of the greatest of which was the impossibility of excluding the sounds of the entertainments in the Hall. From time to time *soirées* were held, and the students informally consulted as to what additional classes they wished for. Where a demand existed, every effort was made to obtain the supply.

Then came the offer of the Commissioners to meet a subscription with an equivalent endowment, and the freehold was bought, in memory of one of the truest friends of the work, Mr. Samuel Morley. Finally, the waste space which had been occupied by dressing-rooms and stores of old scenery was cleared of its dangerous wooden staircases, a sound-proof, fire-proof wall was built to divide it from the theatre, and large convenient classrooms were built; and on the last day of September the Morley Memorial College was opened, for working men and women; Miss Gould (the well-known head of the Queen Square College) having consented to take the office of Principal here also.

Already there are 680 students on the books. Many criticisms may be made on the arrangements, but no one can say that there is a want of life in the place. The builder's men are hardly yet out of it, and the fittings are at present of the scantiest (the result of want of funds, for the delay in passing the Commissioners' scheme through Parliament has caused unlooked-for and very embarrassing delay in the receipt of the help expected from that quarter) but the enclosed prospectus will show ample signs of life. Admission to the gymnasium, smoking, and recreation rooms can only be gained by *bona fide* attendance on at least one class, a rule which the Committee consider very important, and which they adopted in consequence of their experience with a club which met at one time in some of the old rooms belonging to the Hall. No new students are admitted under 17, for the simple reasons that it does not answer to mix boys and men, and that the boys are provided for by the Recreative Evening Schools Association; but there is no limit of age at the other end. When the Borough Road Polytechnic is started, the College will probably take those students who want advanced literary and scientific teaching, excluding "technological classes," for which neither space nor funds would suffice. In fact, the College will be in all probability the advanced branch of the Polytechnic. At all events, it is intended that the two institutions should play into each other's hands and avoid overlapping.

You say most truly that life develops from within. I would go further, and say that "*omne vivum ex vivo*" is as true of moral and social as it is of organic life. No institution can grow and flourish unless life has been given in its service, and this is emphatically the case with that of which we are speaking. To mention names would not interest outsiders, and to those who have watched the Hall from its very beginning, nine years ago, it is well known whose heart work as well as head work has been devoted to it and kept it alive through its troubled infancy. This it is which has drawn other workers to help in doing what one alone could never accomplish, and given spirit to the whole. They have allowed life to develop from within, watching for what was practicable instead of airing preconceived theories, and this is why so little has had to be done twice over. Help of all kinds is greatly needed, for the concern is only in its early childhood yet, but one thing is certain—whatever wants have to be supplied and defects remedied, this is *not* an "architectural white elephant." Probably that could never be true of any institution which had so much heart as well as head devoted to it, but let those who doubt come and see for themselves!

February 5.

A MEMBER OF COMMITTEE.

Galls.

IN NATURE of November 28, 1889 (p. 80), Prof. G. J. Romanes speaks of galls as "unequivocal evidence of a structure occurring in one species for the exclusive benefit of another," and states that "it is obvious that natural selection cannot operate upon the plants directly." Nevertheless, there is one way in which galls may be supposed to have been evolved as beneficial—or rather, less harmful—to the plants. Every farmer is aware of the great loss to vegetation caused annually by larvæ of insects boring within the branches and twigs of trees. Now suppose that all internal plant feeders were originally borers or leaf-miners—and this is highly probable,—but that some had a tendency to cause swellings in which they fed. These latter

would be less injurious to the plants, and the greater the vitality of the plants the more nourishment for them; and so by degrees the globular and other highly specialized and least harmful galls would be developed, by natural selection, for the benefit not only of the insect, but also of the plant. And known galls, which I need not here enumerate, furnish us with all the steps of this evolution.

T. D. A. COCKERELL.

West Cliff, Colorado, U.S.A., January 23.

Foreign Substances attached to Crabs.

THE Compound Ascidian referred to by Dr. R. v. Lendenfeld in yesterday's NATURE (p. 317) is one of the Polyclinidæ, and probably a new species. It belongs to the genus *Atopogaster*, and is closely related to *A. informis* (Challenger Report, Part ii. p. 171).

I have before me now five good specimens of the crab and Ascidian (the crab in this case is *Dromia excavata*, Haswell), dredged in Port Jackson, and sent by the Australian Museum, Sydney; they measure as follows:—

Specimen.	Crab (greatest diameter). cm.	Ascidian (length, breadth, and height) cm. cm.
A	4	10 × 8 × 5
B	3.5	10 × 6 × 5
C	2.5	8 × 6 × 5.5
D	2.5	6 × 6 × 5
E	2.5	5.5 × 4.5 × 3

In the largest of them the Ascidian seems to be quite twenty times the size of the crab.

I notice in these specimens that the last pair of thoracic legs in the crab, which are much larger than the preceding pair, are turned up dorsally, and are so firmly embedded and attached by their sharp claws in the test of the Ascidian that it is easier to disarticulate them than to loosen their hold.

To those who dredge much round our coasts, a crab covered with foreign substances is no unusual sight. Specimens of *Hyas* are often found so overgrown with Algæ, Sponges, Zoophytes, and Polyzoa that almost the whole of the body and legs is hidden, and the animal is scarcely recognizable except by its movements.

W. A. HERDMAN.

Liverpool, February 7.

The Ten and Tenth Notation.

It is no doubt difficult for anyone to really conceive enormously great or infinitely small quantities. This difficulty is, however, much minimized by the ten and tenth notation. Indeed, if systematically used, I believe one's mental power of estimation would be practically perfect. But is it so used? I have before me three books—I only take this as an example of what frequently occurs—in which Joule's equivalent is given is—

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} 42 \times 10^6 \\ 4.2 \times 10^7 \\ 0.42 \times 10^8 \end{array} \right\} \text{respectively.}$$

B. A. MUIRHEAD.

Pall Mall Club, Waterloo Place, S.W., February 8.

P.S.—The natural uniform notation, at any rate for text-books, seems obvious.

EARTH TREMORS FROM TRAINS.

AMONG the writings of those who love to speculate on the future of our planet there is probably somewhere (though we have not had time to discover it) an essay on the cosmical changes which man will be able to produce in the earth. The data for solving this problem are striking. In a few centuries man has acquired all those powers over large and solid objects represented by his knowledge of explosives, and his use of steam. Multiply the centuries, and with them the history, by convenient figures (a familiar process in this kind of problem) and there is no reason why the earth's axis of rotation should not be shifted considerably by human agency.

For the present, however, we are concerned with a more