THE current number of the *Journal* of the Society of Arts contains the first of Dr. D. Morris's Cantor lectures on "Sources of Commercial India-rubber."

WE learn from the *Kew Bulletin* that a Flora of Simla and the surrounding district is being prepared by Sir Henry Collett, and is expected to comprise about 1500 species of flowering plants. The illustrations are contributed by Miss Smith.

JUDGING from the Report for 1896-97, which has just reached us, the Felsted School Scientific Society is doing good work by creating an interest in science among the members of the rising generation. During the session under review a number of interesting papers and lectures were delivered, among the number being a lecture by Mr. George Murray, F.R.S., on "A Journey to the Tropics," and a paper by Mr. C. Hose, Resident of Baram, Sarawak, entitled "A Visit to Celebes."

SURGEON-GENERAL STERNBERG, of the U.S. Army, contributes an article on "The Sanitary Regeneration of Havana" to the August number of the *Century Magazine*, which should be read by all who take an interest in sanitary matters. The writer of the article considers it practicable to put the city of Havana in such a sanitary condition that it would be exempt from its ever-recurring scourge of yellow fever, but that the undertaking would be of considerable magnitude, involve the expenditure of large sums of money, and require much time for its accomplishment.

THE additions to the Zoological Society's Gardens during the past week include a Pig-tailed Monkey (*Macacus nemestrius*, ♀) from Java, presented by Mr. C. R. Johnson; two Squirrel Monkeys (*Chrysothrix sciurea*) from Guiana, presented by Mr. C. E. Günther; a Common Rat Kangaroo (*Potorous tridactylus*, ♂) from Australia, presented by Major Fleming; a White-crested Jay Thrush (*Garrulax leucolophus*), a White-throated Jay Thrush (*Garrulax albogularis*) from India, presented by Mr. Henry Fulljames; a Rook (*Corvus frugilegus*), British, presented by Mr. Mack; a Leopard Tortoise (*Testudo pardalis*), a Bell's Cinixys (*Cinixys belliana*), a Home's Cinixys (*Cinixys homeana*) from Kavitando, near Victoria Nyanza, presented by Captain E. M. Woodward; a Common Chamæleon (*Chamæleon vulgaris*) from North Africa, presented by Mr. W. Cooper; a Humboldt's Saki (*Pithecia monachus*) from the Amazons; a Vinaceous Amazon (*Chrysotis vinacea*) from Brazil, an Orange-winged Amazon (*Chrysotis amazonica*) from South America, a Festive Amazon (*Chrysotis festiva*) from Guiana; five Gazelles (*Gazella dorcas*) from North Africa, two Magpies (*Pica caudata*), British, deposited; four Cambayan Turtle Doves (*Turtur senegalensis*), a Spotted Pigeon (*Columba maculosa*), bred in the Gardens.

OUR ASTRONOMICAL COLUMN.

AUGUST METEORS.—In consequence of the brightness of the moon during the earlier portion of this month, only the more brilliant members of the Perseid swarm of meteors are likely to be observed. These meteors originate, as their name indicates, from a point situated in the constellation of Perseus near the star η, which lies in the north-eastern part of the heavens, and is rather low down during the earlier portion of the evening. As the maximum is usually attained on the 10th of the month, the moon should not prove such a disturbing factor; and if the night be fine, observers should make a point of recording their observations in a manner which has been described by Mr. Denning. It is only in this way that observations can be properly discussed and made to serve a useful end. Mr. Denning has recently (*Knowledge*, August 1) published an ephemeris of the position of the radiant point, and below we give an abstract which may prove useful for the present return.

August.	R.A.	Decln.	August.	R.A.	Decln.
4	38	+56	10	45	+57
5	39	56	11	46	57
6	40	56	12	47	57
7	41	57	13	49	58
8	42	57	14	50	58
9	44	+57	15	51	+58

We may mention again that the maximum occurs on the night of the 10th.

WOLF'S COMET.—This comet is gradually decreasing its northern declination, but is increasing slowly in brightness. Its ephemeris for the present week is as follows (*Astr. Nach.*, 3506):—

12h. Berlin M.T.

1898.	R.A. h. m. s.	Decl. ° ′	Br.
August 4	4 37 7	+17 45	2·4
5	39 48	36·8	
6	42 28	27·7	2·4
7	45 7	18·3	
8	47 46	8·7	2·4
9	50 23	16 58·8	
10	52 59	48·8	2·4
11	55 34	38·4	
12	4 58 8	+16 27·9	2·4

Between the above dates, the sun's apparent right ascension at apparent noon lies between 8h. 58m. and 9h. 29m. G.M.T.

THE VARIABLE *o* CETI.—This variable star has always afforded plenty of interest to the observer, and according to the most recent observations much attention must still be paid until we are able to understand all the intricacies which are connected with it. In the current number of the *Astr. Nachr.* (3506) Herr W. Stratonoff gives a short account of his observations, which extend over the years 1896-98 ending January 24, and these show that there are peculiarities which need further study. According to these observations the maximum (3·60 mag.) in 1897 occurred about January 5, which indicated that the time of computed maximum was about sixty-three days too early. The following maximum in 1897 took place on about November 23, the magnitude of the star amounting to less than on the former occasion, namely 3·06. This maximum occurred fourteen days later than the calculated time. The interval between the two amounts to 322 days, which is smaller by nine days than what is generally computed to this star. Herr Stratonoff further points out that after the chief maximum a secondary maximum occurs, twenty-seven days later; this is very interesting, as such a maximum takes place in the well-known variable η Aquilæ. Herr Stratonoff's observations were all made with the naked eye, with the exception of those included in October 22-25, when he used an opera-glass. He attempted, by photographic means, to determine the variations of the star by making equal exposures on different nights, and examining the diameters of the images formed; but he ultimately found that the method was not so accurate as the one, namely Argelander's, that he had employed.

In the same number of the *Astr. Nachr.* Dr. A. A. Nijland communicates a short paper on the same variable, and shows that, according to his observations, the maximum in 1897 occurred sharply on November 26. This determination may be perhaps considered more accurate than that of Herr Stratonoff, whose observations at the time of maximum were less numerous than those of Dr. Nijland. Even in this case the computed time was far too early, amounting to fifty-seven days. In Dr. Nijland's curve the secondary maximum of Herr Stratonoff is also indicated, although the former observer draws his curve through the mean of the observed points, looking upon the variation of intensity as within errors of observation. Assuming that the maximum fell according to Chandler, on January 11, 1897, then the last observed period amounts to about 319 days, which does not differ very much from that found by Herr Stratonoff, as mentioned above. The light curves reproduced in both the papers referred to are well worth perusal, and will perhaps lead other observers to follow the fluctuations of this interesting variable.