sions as will aid in furthering its objects. It is requested that all who intend to contribute papers 
will notify the secretary (William Kent, 62 Read Street, New York) as soon as possible. The commit-
tee on the best method of teaching mechanical 
engineering. — Prof. J. Burkitt Webb, Prof. 
George J. Allen, Dr. Calvert M. Woodward, and 
Prof. Arthur Beardsley, — and the committee on 
the use and value of accurate standards, screws, 
surfaces, and gauges, — Prof. William A. Rogers, 
Mr. Othniel Smith, and Prof. J. Burkitt Webb, 
are expected to present reports at the Buffalo 
meeting.

— The fish commission steamer Albatross ar-
ived at Nassau, New Providence, March 19, after 
a most successful trip. The ship was chiefly en-
gaged in making soundings. Two naturalists 
were landed at Watling's Island, San Salvador, 
where much valuable scientific material was 
gathered during a stay of two weeks. But little 
dragging has been done, so that few specimens 
of marine life have been made. At Rum Cay, 
Conception Island, Cat Island, and Great Exuma 
Island, the naturalists of the expedition obtained 
many valuable specimens of fish, invertebrates, 
birds, eggs, birds' eggs, pottery, and about five 
hundred tadpoles. These islands are very small 
and thinly populated. Vegetation is scarce, 
and the islands themselves are formed almost 
equally of rock. Coconut-trees and bananas are abun-
dant, but oranges and apples rather scarce. The 
Albatross is now at Key West, and will spend 
some time dredging in the Gulf of Mexico and 
vicinity.

— General Hazen said recently, in his testi-
mony before a congressional committee, that 
foreign signal stations were unnecessary, and the 
establishment of a station in the West Indies had 
fully demonstrated this fact. It is quite probable 
that Congress will authorize the establishment of 
stations at important future points.

— The commissioners of the District of Colum-
bia have refused the gift of Judge Pacificus, Ord, 
of a tract of land along Rock Creek for a zoologi-
cal garden. The grant was made on the condition 
that the property should be used for a free 
zooological garden and free public baths, to 
be kept by officers created by Congress for that 
purpose. The commissioners think there is no 
present need of a zoological garden or bath-
houses, nor have they that the means to establish them.

— The U.S. fish commission is busily engaged 
in stocking the Great Lakes with whitefish. Cars 
Nos. 2 and 3 are now at Northville, Mich. About 
April 25 the seed distribution will begin. The 
eggs are hatched at the Fort Washington station, 
and shipped to the central station of the com-
mision at Washington, the distribution being 
made from there. The distribution of carp has 
ceased for this season, as it has been found im-
practicable to ship these fish after the first of 
March; the young carp developing fungus, and 
becoming diseased.

— No less than forty-four weeks appear on 
the April number of the "Pilot chart," issued by the 
hydrographic office. Some were seen in January, 
but the greater number are reported from obser-
vations late in February and through March. 
These recent cases of disastrous collision with 
sunken wrecks are quoted. It is announced that 
the vessels of the National line, including all the 
cattle-steamers, have made arrangements for the 
regular use of oil in rough weather.

— The bark Plata (Spanish) reports that on 
March 21, Cape Hatteras, bearing W.S.W., dis-
tant thirty-five miles, three very large seals 
were seen (vessel probably heading north), 
and in passing caused the vessel to roll deeply. 
At the time the sea was very smooth, and became 
so again immediately after the passage of the 
heavy swell. There was a light breeze from 
S.S.W. The captain says he never saw or heard 
of such an occurrence before. On p. 206, vol. ii., 
of the "Voyage of the Challenger," Sir Wyville 
Thomson says, "It must be a wonderful pheno-
menon, an enormously heavy swell arising in a 
perfectly calm sea, without any apparent cause, 
and breaking against the leeward coast of the island."

— A bottle was found floating near the beach 
at Colton, on the 1st of February. It had the 
appearance of having been some time in salt 
water, and was found to contain two papers on 
which was written as follows: "Lat. 40° 40' N., 
Long. 24° 47' W.; noon, Saturday, 20th December, 
1884; ship Patriarch 69 days out from New Castle 
(S.S.W.), and bound for London; all well."

— The New York Evening post states that "the 
treasury commission for investigating the coast 
survey have addressed a communication to the 
secretary of the treasury in which they say, 'In 
the light of the demonstrated inaccuracy of some 
of the evidence upon which the committee relied, 
and to the extent hereinafter indicated, it is but 
just to admit that the criticism of Mr. C. S. 
Peirce in the committee's report was unwarranted 
by the facts." It is understood to be admitted 
that Mr. Peirce's expenditures were overlooked, 
and his work undervalued. The only criticism 
the committee continue to maintain is, that he
practically conducted his operations as he now fits. His work has been done under detailed instructions issued by the superintendent of the survey, and these instructions have been based upon projects which Mr. Peirce was required to submit each season. We will only add that this finding is what every one acquainted with Mr. Peirce must have expected as the result of a calm and unprejudiced examination.

—Telegram received from Professor Pickering announce the discovery of three new asteroids by Dr. Palis of Vienna. The first was discovered on March 31, and was of the thirteenth magnitude; the other two, on April 2 and 3, were of the thirteenth and twelfth magnitudes. These three will receive the numbers 254, 255, and 350 respectively, and will raise the whole number discovered by Dr. Palis to fifty-three.

—The programme for the second half of the course under the auspices of the Astronomical and Biological Society of Washington is as follows: Saturday, April 19, Dr. Washington Matthews, U.S.A., The gods of the Navajo; Thursday, April 24, Dr. D. B. Simmons, Social status of the women of Japan; Saturday, April 26, Prof. W. J. Brooks, Life; Saturday, May 1, Mr. Leiter F. Wied, Heredity and opportunity; Saturday, May 8, Dr. J. F. Billings, C.S.L.A., Animal freed.

—The series of summer schools at the Mount Eagle (Tenn.) seminary is announced to open on June 20, and continue to Aug. 25. The scientific instruction in chemistry, geology, and botany, will be under the charge of Prof. J. D. Hinds.

—We cut the following from the Atlantic "Fleet list" for April:—Mr. J. H. Barker, an oil-merchant of New York, informs the branch hydrographic office that he has the contract with, and since Jan. 1 of this year has furnished, the National line of steamships with oil to be used to lessen the dangerous effects of heavy seas. Ten vessels, including all the cutters-sterners, have been provided with the necessary apparatus to use oil when occasion requires. The company's requisition called for fish-oil, but the recent experiments proved it thickened too rapidly when in contact with water at the general low winter temperatures. To obviate this tendency, Mr. Barker has mixed a mineral oil having a low, cold test, with fish-oil which has a comparatively high test; the result is an oil which coagulates at a much lower temperature than ordinary fish-oil, but which it is claimed will be as efficacious. The mineral oil has stood the test as a lubricant for railways in cold weather, and it is claimed will be very useful for sea purposes when mixed with a proper proportion of fish-oil, during the mild and warm months fish oil alone is to be supplied. The method adopted of using oil is by means of punctured canvas bags filled with oxathin.

—From numerous experiments on flies, bees, hymenoptera, lepidoptera, and neuroptera, M. Plateau concludes that insects with compound eyes, with or without simple eyes, pay no heed to differences of form in the light openings of a half-darkened room, but fly with equal readiness to the apparently easy and apparently difficult way of escape; that they are attracted to the more intensively lighted opening or to one with apparently greater surface: and that, in short, they cannot by visual distinction form, or only to a very slight extent.

—Chief engineer Melville of the ill-fated Jeannette has recently stated that he is still endeavoring to organize another polar expedition, and although his schemes have met with little success, he will yet continue to work upon them.

—The question of the movements of the ulna and radius of the human arm during the act of pronation and supination has left provided considerable discussion among students of anatomy. The view most commonly held and taught, that the elbow-joint is a perfect hinge, and that the ulna remains fixed during pronation and supination, has been disputed by some recent investigators. At the last meeting of the Biological Society of Washington, Dr. Frank Baker read a paper upon this subject, in which he concludes that the ulna is capable of considerable lateral movements, and that in pronation and supination both the ulna and radius rotate. Dr. Harrison Allen (of Philadelphia has also been studying this question with the aid of instantaneous photographic apparatus, and is said to have reached similar conclusions.

—Harriss & Sons, London announce "Physico-chemical constants, melting and boiling point tables," by Thomas Carnegley, professor of chemistry in University college, Dublin. These tables will contain about fifty thousand melting and boiling point data. The object of the tables is as follows: 1. To present at complete a list as possible of all known melting and boiling point data, and at the same time to indicate which of them is probably the most exact, when there are several determinations referring to the same substance; 2. To state as fully as possible the constitution of each substance to which the data refer; 3. To adopt such a system of re-