

tary station on the Bahr-el-Jebel. The travellers were engaged in exploring the Nyam-Nyam district, between the tributaries of the Nile and the Upper Kongo. Nothing had been heard of them for a long time, and it was feared that the Mahli had cut off their retreat.

—The exhibition of metal-work at Nuremberg was opened on the 15th of June. The Japanese exhibits arrived late, in over fifty packing-cases.

—A new exhibition was opened in Paris July 26: it is called the Exhibition of Industry, and presents some analogy to the English inventions. It will remain open till the 23d of November. It is to be held at the Palais de l'Industrie; and, naturally, electrical matters will be of primary interest. The commissioner-general of the undertaking is Mr. de Redon; and the committee includes some well-known names, such as those of Lemonnier, Tarraut, Milde, Bolstel, de Meritens, Cance, etc. Electricians, in fact, form a considerable majority.

—*Nature* states that the third session of the International geological congress, which was postponed last year on account of the cholera on the continent, is fixed to be held this year on Sept. 28, at Berlin, under the honorary presidency of the veteran geologist of Rhineland, Dr. H. von Dechen. The president of the organizing committee is Professor Beyrich; and the general secretary, M. Hauchecorne, 44, Invalidenstrasse, Berlin.

—The New-York *Evening post* publishes the following: I just learn from a newspaper that the commission which investigated the Coast-survey reflected upon me in their report as follows: "That for several years, beginning in 1873, C. S. Peirce, assistant, has been making experimental researches with pendulums, without restriction or limitation as to times and places; that since 1879, expenditures on account of those experiments, aside from salaries of chiefs and assistants, amount to about \$31,000; that the meagre value of those experiments to the bureau have been substantially destroyed." I have immediately addressed a letter to the secretary of the treasury, of which the following is the substance: 1°. My expenditures, aside from compensation of myself and my assistants, during the period specified, have not amounted to one-third of the sum named; and I appeal to the secretary to ascertain this by the addition of the amounts of my original accounts now on file in the department. 2°. All my operations have been carried on under specific instructions, and therefore have not been "without restriction or limitation as to times and places." I ask to be informed what operation does not appear to be covered by instructions on file in the office, and promise to show, in any instance, that it really is so covered. 3°. No records have been destroyed. 4°. I maintain the value of determinations of gravity in general, and the excellence of mine in particular. 5°. I tender my resignation if the opinion expressed as to the meagre value of my services is accepted by the department. Until my letter is acted upon, it might perhaps be

considered a breach of official etiquette for me to make it public; but I wish you, as a friend and scientific man, to know that I have a defence against the accusations made.

C. S. PEIRCE.

Ann Arbor, Mich., Aug. 10.

—The *Romaji zasshi* is a journal recently established in Japan, with the object of introducing the use of the Roman alphabet to spell phonetically the Japanese words. The journal is partially supported by the government, and is the official organ of a society of some forty-two hundred members, which aims to do away with the Chinese characters in Japanese literature.

—A late report upon the Cambridge (Eng.) local lectures, by Mr. Roberts, contains (says the *London Graphic*) an interesting story of the pursuit of scientific knowledge under difficulties. Two miners at Backworth, in Northumberland, in order to attend a course of lectures on chemistry at Cramlington, five miles off, walked after their day's work to that place and back in order to attend every lecture. They made sufficient notes to enable them on each occasion to retail what they had heard to a class formed by them at Backworth, and actually repeated the experiments, so far as rough apparatus and their means would allow. The lecturer visited this little class (there were only seven in all), and found upon examining them that they had acquired a sound knowledge of the first steps in chemistry. This germ has now blossomed into 'The Backworth students' association,' consisting entirely of miners. It is not often that such a splendid instance of self-help is offered for our admiration, and, we may add, imitation.

—The death of the distinguished zoölogist, Henri Milne-Edwards, so long connected with the Paris museum, is announced to have occurred on July 20 last. He was a Belgian by birth, and spoke English fluently. His son Alphonse has been, in recent years, almost as well known, his father's age (he was born in 1800) preventing much literary activity.

—We learn from *Nature*, that, on July 10, at about noon, a wonderful mirage was seen on Lake Wetteren, in Sweden, by a number of people between the villages of Fogelsta and Vadstena. A small island in the lake appeared as if covered with the most gorgeous flora, and tall gigantic trees, forming great groves, between which buildings having the appearance of the most splendid palaces were seen. The Sandö, another little island, seemed to rise out of the sea many times its actual height, its sandy shores looking like lofty castellated walls. It had the exact appearance of a mediæval fortress enclosed by four walls. Two other little islands, Åholmen and Risön, appeared also as lofty towers above the water. The mirage lasted for nearly half an hour, when it disappeared somewhat rapidly.

—Inspired, apparently, by the success of Marvin's 'Russians at the gates of Herat,' Mr. Archibald Ross Colquhoun—the author of 'Across Chrysé,' and special correspondent of the *London Times* in China—has written a little book of fifty-eight pages on Bur-

Anonymous.  
1885

"Exorbitant Expenditures,"  
The Washington Post (Saturday 25 July), page 1,  
column 7.

#### EXHORBITANT EXPENDITURES.

#### COAST SURVEY OFFICIALS SUFFER PENALTY FOR EXTRAVAGANCE.

Superintendent Hilgard Suspended,  
Several Subordinates Dismissed  
and an Investigating Committee  
Appointed.

For a long time the Treasury Department has been dissatisfied with the manner in which the accounts of the Coast and Geodetic Survey Bureau have been kept, and the bureau officials have shown disinclination to submit to the interference of the Treasury authorities. Mr. Chenoweth, First Auditor of the Treasury Department, has made an examination of the accounts, and found them, he says, entirely unsatisfactory. On his report and recommendation Secretary Manning yesterday suspended from service Prof. Hilgard, superintendent of the survey, and dismissed C. O. Boutelle, assistant superintendent, who was in charge of the office; W. B. Morgan, disbursing agent; George N. Saegmuller, chief mechanic, and Anton Zumbrock, electrotypist. At the same time the secretary appointed a commission, consisting of Mr. Thorne, chief clerk of the Internal Revenue Bureau; Mr. Garrison, deputy first comptroller, and Mr. Huntington, of the Secretary's office, to make a full investigation of accounts in the Coast Survey Bureau and report. These gentlemen took possession yesterday of the office which had been vacated by the suspension and the dismissals.

Exorbitant expenditure is the ground stated in Secretary Manning's orders for the action taken. The sums charged as travelling expenses and under other heads are alleged to be unnecessarily extravagant. But the gentlemen who have thus been removed or suspended on the recommendation of the First Auditor are not going to let the matter go without fighting the issue. They say that the new officials who are causing this trouble apparently think that the work of surveying the American sea coasts can be done by men sitting in their offices, and they desire the fullest investigation of their accounts. Already the dismissed ones have seen Secretary Manning, and it is understood that he has revoked the absolute dismissals and substituted suspensions.

"The trouble," said Prof. Hilgard last night, "has been instigated through influence brought to bear on the First Auditor by a sorehead who was dismissed some time ago from the Coast Survey service. We intend to

settle this matter with the department." The officials were all surprised with the action taken, which they claim is premature and unfair, considering that the full investigation has not yet been made, and no specific charges have been made against them. Prof. Hilgard and Mr. Boutelle have both been in the service over forty years, and they think they ought to have had an opportunity of answering any charges that are to be made against them before being either dismissed or suspended. The annual appropriation for the Coast and Geodetic Survey amounted last year to \$540,000. The salary of the superintendent is \$6,000; assistant superintendent, \$4,000, and of the disbursing agent, \$2,500.