

into a streak of harmless and beautiful vapour. On the most moderate computation, scores of tons of meteoric matter were added each day to the previous mass of the earth. Since the Queen came to the throne, the earth had acquired not less than half a million tons of additional matter, which had been gathering from the depths of space. No one could tell where this matter was not to be found. On lofty Alpine summits, amid the eternal snows, whose purity had never been sullied by smoke from furnaces, minute particles were found, bearing evidence of having been fused by intense heat. Such particles were the poor residues of glacial shooting stars which had originated in comets. Amid the ozone that came up from the bottom of the Atlantic were many little particles which had merely exchanged their position from the depths of space to the depths of ocean. For they were the spoils of the shooting stars which had dropped into the sea. The notes which floated so beautifully in the sunbeam frequently comprised heavenly contributions. The furrows turned over by the plough of the husbandman contained no insignificant proportion of materials which in the lapse of illimitable ages of geological time had been gathered in from the tails of mighty comets. Grains of corn owed something to the gentle rain of meteoric matter, as well as to the gentle rains of a more familiar description. The loaf as it came to the table contained within it particles which had voyaged for uncounted thousands of centuries of time through illimitable millions of miles of space. Thus to provide the actual material of our bodily frame, the remotest realms of space had been laid under contribution. The life of every one present was at that moment in intimate association with particles that had been brought thither by shooting stars. These wonders of the shooting stars did but lead them to think of those fine words of Hoskin — "It is but the outer hem of God's great mantle our poor stars do gem" (loud applause). The lecture was illustrated by lantern pictures.

The Bishop of London will preach at St. Paul's Cathedral on Wednesday, October 19, at 7.30 p.m., to the members of the medical profession. The service, which is an annual one, is organised by the Guild of St. Luke, and all doctors who are graduates or Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons are asked to attend in academical robes. At the corresponding service last year upwards of 1200 medical men were present, and the space under the dome of the Cathedral was largely filled with those in academical dress. The music will be rendered by a choir of 200 voices, provided by the London Gregorian Association. Admission to the space under the dome will be by ticket only.

The Reviving Barricade disallowed the claim for the time being, but said that if this certificate was produced before the registration closed he would again deal with it.—Mr. Howard Bremer now produced the following telegram on the subject from the Home Office:—"Dinger. Naturalisation certificate granted. Will be forwarded when completed.—Under Secretary, Home Office.—The Barricade: Yes, I must accept that, and I am glad to accept it. The vote is allowed."

The result of the recent Revision for the Hornsey Division of Middlesex is a net Conservative gain of 961.

"PALMISTRY AT BAZAARS."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE STANDARD.

Sir,—I am afraid that "Layman" will derive but little comfort from "Another Layman's" statement that "S. Anselm's (intentional) is only Church of England in name," when I tell him that the curate in charge of S. Anselm's is appointed by the Bishop of Rochester, and holds his licence to officiate.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

VICARIUS.

September 27.

NEW RHINOCEROS AT THE ZOO.—There has just been deposited in the elephant-house an example of the Sumatran rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros sondaicus*), which brings the number of these great pachyderms now on view up to five—certainly more than can be seen together in confinement anywhere else. Two belong to the Indian species (*R. unicornis*), and two to the "hairy-eared" variety of the Sumatran species, while the fifth is the new arrival: these three are two-horned. One of the Indian examples is a magnificent animal, and has been in the gardens for more than thirty years. It is scarcely likely that so fine a specimen will ever again be seen in any zoological collection. No African species has been exhibited since 1891, in which year a black rhinoceros (*R. burchardi*) died, after a captivity of twenty years. The other African species, the so-called "white" rhinoceros, has never been brought alive to Europe; and the species will probably become extinct without a specimen having been procured for any of the great collections. A few years ago a collector was sent out on purpose to obtain specimens, but he only succeeded in bringing home skins and skeletons, and some of the material obtained by him is now in the British Museum (Natural History), and some in Mr. Rothschild's museum at Tring. From the same owner two reticulated pythons have been deposited in the reptile-house. One of them is a huge brute, probably over twenty feet in length, and apparently quite as large in girth as the python now exhibited in the reptile-house.

the scheme in its present form. This scheme involved the utilisation of an existing railway near Portmadoc, and the Commissioners have held that a special Act of Parliament would be necessary for the purpose. The difficulty, however, is only a technical one, having no reference to that part of the scheme which affected the Pass of Aberglaslyn itself, and, therefore, in no way prevents either the present or other promoters from furthering schemes having all the really objectionable features of the last.

Now that you have drawn attention to the fact that such a project was contemplated, it may be well to point out that, fortunately, by Section 22 of the Light Railways Act, anyone may make objections to such a scheme on the ground that it will injuriously affect the natural scenery of the district. It is not necessary that he should have a local and pecuniary interest in order to obtain a *locus in rebus* at the local inquiry; and anyone may carry in objections to the Board of Trade after a draft order has been framed.

When an Act of Parliament does not seem to recognise the existence of an aesthetic sense in both the Commissioners and the Board of Trade, surely there must be someone enough at David Cox's drawings of this district, without taking into account those who have actually been there, to raise an outcry sufficiently powerful to prevent such a desecration as the presence of a puffing and screeching locomotive amidst the gorgeous crags and silent pines of the Pass of Aberglaslyn.

For the Portmadoc, Talyllin, and Morris Railways there was the justification of stern necessity arising from the existence of a great slate industry. In Bethesda there is no such industry, nor the prospect of any, and it cannot even be said that the ordinary tourist would benefit by a railway. The distance is barely five miles, and if that is too long a walk in paradise, there are—it tortures me to state—char-a-bancs.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

ARTHUR E. HUGHES.

Royal Society's Club, S.W., September 23.

The Conference convened by the Municipal Officers' Association, at a meeting held on the 22d inst., at 117, Holborn, had under consideration the question of again promoting legislation in the next Session of Parliament, and decided to invite all Associations and Societies representing Municipal Officers to again send Delegates to the Conference. The Chairman and Secretary presented a joint Report, together with balance sheet, showing what had been done last Session in promoting the Local Authorities Officers Superannuation Bill. In order to further the movement, a Conference will be held in London at the end of October, to which Municipal officers throughout the country will be invited to attend, and a large gathering is anticipated.