

tribution ; the systematic observation of mature marketable fishes with reference to their local varieties and migrations, their conditions of life, nourishment and natural enemies ; observations on the occurrence and nature of fish food at the bottom, the surface, and intermediate waters down to the depths of at least 600 meters ; and determinations of periodic variations in the occurrence, abundance and average size of economic fishes and the causes of the same. These are briefly some of the principal points mentioned in the program of work recommended.

To carry out these investigations on a basis of international coöperation, and in order to ensure uniformity of method, it is proposed to create an international council with a central bureau and a central laboratory at an estimated annual cost, including salaries of staff, of £4,800, to be divided among the Governments concerned. No place is mentioned for this central bureau, which, however, should be conveniently situated for hydrographical and biological researches. It is considered desirable that the work should begin on May 1, 1901.

#### DEVONIAN FISHES FOR THE AMERICAN MUSEUM.

THROUGH a generous gift of a Trustee, Mr. William E. Dodge, the American Museum of Natural History has recently purchased the Jay Terrell collection of fossil fishes of Ohio—forms which from their great size and formidable dentition have long been known as among the most interesting as well as the rarest of fossil vertebrates. The present collection is the result of over six years' energetic and skillful field work. It is the fourth collection which Mr. Terrell has formed : the first was secured by the late Professor J. S. Newberry, and is now preserved at Columbia University ; the second is at Harvard, and the third is at Oberlin. Of popular interest in connection with the present purchase is the fact that material is now at hand for exhibiting as a single specimen the parts of the gigantic Placoderm *Dinichthys Terrelli*. The specimen is unusually complete and appears to be the largest hitherto secured—a jaw alone measuring nearly two feet in length. Much of the collection is of exceptional importance : it includes associated

head plates of *Titanichthys*, jaws of *Diplognathus*, and immature jaws of *Mylostoma*.

BASHFORD DEAN.

#### THE SPELLING OF 'PUERTO RICO.'

IF anything further were needed to determine the proper spelling of the name of our new West Indian Island possession, it has been supplied in a decision of the President of the United States himself. Through Secretary of State Hay, under date of December 16, 1899, the President declares in favor of the spelling *Puerto Rico*, basing his decision more especially on the fact that this is the spelling followed by the people of the island. He was doubtful mindful also, however, that *Puerto* is good Spanish for port just as *Rico* is Spanish for rich. He sustains the decision of the U. S. Board on Geographic Names, made some years ago and since followed by some of the Government departments but not by others.

W. F. MORSELL.

#### SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

AS SCIENCE goes to press a number of our most important scientific societies are holding meetings in New Haven, Washington, New York and Chicago. The American Society of Naturalists meets at New Haven, together with the societies more or less closely affiliated with it, namely, The American Morphological Society, The Association of American Anatomists, The American Physiological Society, The American Psychological Society, The Society for Plant Morphology and Physiology, The American Folk-lore Society, Section H, Anthropology, of the American Association. A Bacteriological Society will at the same time be organized. The American Chemical Society also meets at New Haven. Western naturalists are organizing a society at Chicago. The Geological Society of America is meeting at Washington and the American Mathematical and Physical Societies at New York. We hope to publish in subsequent numbers full accounts of the meetings of these societies.

PROFESSOR WILLIAM HARKNESS, astronomical director of the U. S. Naval Observatory,