The first stated paper was by Dr. W. W. Johnston on 'The Ill-health of Charles Darwin,' its nature, cause and its relation to his work. Dr. Johnston presented the results of an extended research into the life of Darwin, showing that up to the age of twenty-seven the philosopher was strong and vigorous; then followed thirty-six years of suffering, and eleven years of improvement to the date of his death. Dr. Johnston stated that the visible beginning of Darwin's intellectual life was during the voyage of the *Beagle*. These five years were characterized by constant strain of overwork, which was continued for several years after the voyage, though his nervous system was exhausted. The break-down of Darwin necessitated a strict regimen, the good results of which appeared in the last decade of his life. Dr. Johnston diagnoses the case as one of neurasthenia brought on by overwork, the symptoms appearing on the voyage of the *Beagle*. The prolongation of Darwin's life was due to the regimen adopted and the unremitting care given him by the members of his family. The paper was discussed by Dr. Frank Baker and Dr. Theo. N. Gill.

Dr. George M. Kober read a paper entitled 'The Progress of Charity Reform in the District of Columbia since 1896.' Dr. Kober's paper was more than locally interesting in showing what may be done by the application of rational methods to the charity problem. These are personal inspection as to the needs of applicants, stimulation to self-help by aid in securing employment, and the encouragement of small savings during times of production, to be drawn upon in times of stress. The progress noted under this system since 1896 is remarkable. Dr. Kober presented statistics showing a great diminution in applicants for aid, a heavy reduction of the expense of conducting the work, and a large increase in the number of those depositing savings.

WALTER HOUGH.

THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE OF ST. LOUIS.

At the meeting of the Academy of Science of St. Louis on April 1, 1901, thirty-three persons present, a memorial notice of the late Judge Nathaniel Holmes, a charter member of

the Academy, was presented by a committee composed of Professor Nipher, Dr. Sander and Dr. Baumgarten.

Mr. John S. Thurman delivered an address on the many industrial uses now made of compressed air, illustrating his remarks by apparatus in operation, including electric motor air compressor, compressed air auger, drill, disinfecting atomizer, sculptors' and stone-cutters' tools, carpet renovators, etc., and a set of lantern slides showing the practical uses made of these and other implements and machines operated by means of compressed air.

Dr. Theodore Kodis exhibited, under the microscope, slides illustrating a new method of staining brain tissue, whereby, in four or five days, it has proved possible to prepare single or double stained preparations containing nerve cells with the dendrites of the latter brought out by a direct stain, instead of being differentiated merely as amorphous silhouettes, as is the case with the much slower Golgi process commonly employed. It was stated that the material is treated before sectioning, for about twenty-four hours, with cyanide of mercury, followed for approximately the same length of time by a formaldehyde solution, after which sections are cut, stained with phosphomolybdate hæmatoxylin and, if desired, a contrasting stain, such as one of the aniline greens, and mounted in the usual way.

WILLIAM TRELEASE,
Recording Secretary.

THE ELISHA MITCHELL SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA.

THE 134th meeting of the club was held on April 9th, when the following papers were read:

'First Aid to the Injured in the United States Army': Professor C. S. Mangum.

'The Work of the Commission for the Examination of the United States Mint': President F. P. Venable.

CHAS. BASKERVILLE,
Secretary.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

OIL IN TEXAS.

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE:—You doubtless have remarked that in various commercial journals the oil which flows in such