

second map, in 1879, shows them narrower, straighter and in every way more peculiar. His third map, in 1882, presents them as of geometric precision; as he himself remarks, as if laid down by rule and compass. His fourth map shows that they afterward kept such a character.

Had their precision been of his devising, they should not have gained in it as time went on and his eye grew versed in decipherment. That they did so implies that the recognition was forced upon him from without.

9. The third deduction is:

III. That an evolution in detail marks the series, and can be traced steadily on from the beginning to the end. The additions made in each period find themselves superposed upon the work of the period before. Similarly each map of any given period adds to its predecessor and is corroborated and extended by its successor. Thus a chain of evidence is made by them whose strength depends upon this very intertwining of results.

The discussion called forth by the paper was participated in by many, among whom was Mr. Nikola Tesla. S. A. MITCHELL.

TORREY BOTANICAL CLUB.

A MEETING of the Club was held at the New York Botanical Garden on May 28.

The first paper on the program was by Mrs. N. L. Britton under the title of 'Remarks on West Indian Mosses.' Comments were made on several questions of synonymy and nomenclature arising from a study of collections recently made in Porto Rico by Mr. A. A. Heller and by Professor Underwood, and in St. Kitts by Dr. Britton. Attention was directed particularly to the genus *Sematophyllum* Mitt. 1864 (= *Raphidostegium* De Not. 1867 = *Rhynchostegium*, section *Raphidostegium* Br. & Sch. 1852). This genus is chiefly tropical or subtropical in its distribution, though eleven species are known to occur in North America, north of Mexico.

The second paper was by Dr. P. A. Rydberg on 'Some Genera of the Saxifragaceæ.' The speaker presented some of the results of studies intended as a contribution to a projected work on the flora of North America.

The family name Saxifragaceæ was used in a restricted sense, excluding *Ribes*, *Hydrangea*, *Philadelphus*, *Parnassia*, *Itea*, etc. The members of the family in this narrower sense are all herbaceous plants, with the exception of a single species of *Heuchera* which has a sort of aerial woody stem. Dr. Rydberg commented especially upon the genera *Bolandra*, *Therofon*, *Telesonix*, *Hemieva*, *Tiarella*, *Heuchera*, *Tellima*, *Lithophragma*, *Mitella*, and *Chrysosplenium*, referring to the geographical distribution and number of species of each. *Heuchera* is the largest of these genera, being represented by 58 species in North America including Mexico. The paper was discussed by Dr. Britton and others.

Professor F. S. Earle made a brief report on a recent trip to western Texas and Eastern New Mexico, stating that 800 numbers of botanical specimens were collected. April and May seemed too early in the season for finding many herbaceous plants in flower, and this was especially the case with the monocotyledons.

Dr. N. L. Britton showed specimens of *Washingtonia longistylis* collected a few days previously near Washington, D. C., differing from Torrey's type of the species in greater hairiness.

Mrs. Britton alluded to the organization of 'The Wild Flower Preservation Society of America.' Professor Earle remarked upon the region west of the Pecos River, where vegetation has been nearly exterminated by overstocking with cattle, as a proper field for the activities of the society.

Dr. MacDougal showed a corm of *Amorphophallus*, kept for twenty months in a dark room, where it had flowered. New buds, apparently adventitious, had formed near its base.

MARSHALL A. HOWE,
Secretary pro tem.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE IN BOTANY.

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: On returning from Central America I find Dr. Dall's note