

## THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION.

The forty-fifth meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science was held in Buffalo beginning with the meeting of the Council on Saturday, August 22d. The general sessions opened on Monday and the meeting continued throughout the week until Saturday, which was given to excursions. It is worthy of note that this was the fourth meeting held in Buffalo, the Association having met there every tenth year since 1866.

At the first general session the retiring President, Professor Edward W. Morley, called the meeting to order and introduced the President-elect, Professor Edward D. Cope. Bishop Charles H. Fowler, D.D., pronounced the invocation. The Hon. Edgar B. Jewett, Mayor of Buffalo, delivered the address of welcome from the city, and Professor Cope responded. In the afternoon eight vice-presidents delivered addresses before their respective sections; and in the evening the retiring President gave a learned address before the Association on the subject, "A Completed Chapter in the History of the Atomic Theory."

Vice-President B. K. Emerson, of Amherst, Mass., chose for the subject of his address before the Section of Geology and Geography, "Geologic Myths." He announced that he would speak of "The Chimaera, or the poetry of petroleum; of the Niobe, or the tragic side of calcareous tufa; of Lot's wife, or the indirect effect of cliff erosion; and of Noah's flood, or the possibilities of the cyclone and the earthquake wave working in harmony."

The myth of the Chimaera, he said, was told in its earliest form by Hesiod, who lived about nine centuries before the Christian era; and a little later by Homer. In each of these verses, which he quoted, the Chimaera is represented as a huge monster having the head of a goat, the body of a lion and the tail of a serpent, from whose mouth and nostrils issue flames of fire. Tracing the origin and development of this myth, Professor Emerson showed that it was derived from the remarkable geological phenomenon of natural gas burning on the peak of a mountain of serpentine and limestone in Lycia. This burning mountain was seen by Admiral Beaufort while off the coast of Lycia toward the end of the seventeenth century; and according to tradition it has burned there for nearly 3,000 years. "Ruins of an ancient temple of Vulcan near by and a little Byzantine church show how strongly it has impressed the inhabit-