

## BOTANICAL EXCURSIONS.

## GERMAN FIELD METHODS.

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There are few places in central Europe where the student can spend a more agreeable summer than in the pleasant city of Freiburg, in the famous Black Forest region of southwestern Germany. In this city is located the University of Freiburg, noted for its strong medical staff, and to the average American naturalist remembered as the institution with which Weismann, the eminent zoologist and student of evolution, has long been connected.

It was my privilege a year ago to attend several of Dr. Weismann's lectures, and it may interest readers of THE NATURALIST to hear some of the personal features of these events. It is quite the custom in Germany for the chief or head of a department to give an elementary course, and this is the case with Professor Weismann. The number of advanced students seemed to be comparatively small. The course which attracted the mass of students was an elementary and general course in zoology, differing in no special respect from such outlines as are available in the best text books of the present day; but it was exceedingly popular and the great attraction was the man, the lecturer, and many students with whom I talked told me that their main reason for coming to Freiburg was the fact that they would have the privilege of studying under Weismann. Another reason possibly for the head of a department giving elementary courses may be due to the fact that the German professor's salary derived from the university itself is not large, but each full professor has the privilege of charging a fee to all students taking his lectures and these fees constitute the large share of his revenue, therefore it is not surprising that the elementary courses should be elected by the full professor who is permitted to charge a fee.

It is interesting to note the manner in which the work is given and lectures conducted. Weismann is now well advanced in years a man between seventy-five and eighty, tall, of dignified, cultured presence white hair and beard. He wears very heavy lens glasses, owing to weakened and waning vision. The lecture period is forty-five minutes in length and begins fifteen minutes after the hour, at which time the professor enters the class, and in the case of Weismann was always greeted with applause by his waiting students who had previously secured seats in the large auditorium. The lecturer immediately advanced to a