

SCIENTIFIC INTELLIGENCE.

The Literary and Scientific Institutions of Scotland are about to be united, for mutual aid and assistance.

Mr. Ransome has founded, at Ipswich, Suffolk, a Museum for the collection of specimens of British ornithology, entomology, and geology, with other kindred subjects; the peculiarity being, that it is intended chiefly for the instruction of the labouring classes.

Died lately, at Copenhagen, aged 66, the celebrated writer M. Finn Bagnussan. He was a native of Skalholt, in Iceland. His life was chiefly spent in researches into the literature and history of the ancient inhabitants of the North, and of Central Asia. His principal works are—*Commentaries on the Sagas*, in Latin—*'Northern Archæology,'* and *'Doctrines and Origins of the Edda,'* in Danish—*'Dictionary of the Mythology of the ancient Populations of the North,'* in Latin—and a *'Parallel between the religion of the ancient Scandinavians and of the Indo-Persian People,'* in Danish.

Two seams of coal have been discovered in Western Australia, the one about five, and the other six feet in thickness. The coal crops out on the surface.

In the *Memoirs of the London Chemical Society* there is an interesting paper by Warrington on the analysis of tea; in which he states that he has not only removed the whole of the colouring matter, or glazing, from green tea, but has been able to analyse the matter removed, and prove it, by chemical evidence, to consist of Prussian blue and gypsum principally. So that, in fact, the drinkers of green tea, as it comes to the English market, indulge in a beverage of Chinese Paint,—and might imitate the mixture by dissolving Prussian blue and Plaster of Paris in hot water. The Chinese do not drink this painted tea; they only sell it.—*Gardener's Chronicle.*

Captain Vicary, of the East India Company's service, who was employed by Lieutenant General Sir Charles Napier to explore the mineral structure of Scinde, has made some interesting discoveries. In a letter to the Editor of the *Athenæum*, Sir R. J. Murchison says,—

"In collecting the living plants of Scinde, of which he is preparing a description, Cap-

tain Vicary has 'discovered that they are made up of Indian forms, mixed up with those of Persia, Arabia, Africa, and particularly of Egypt; several species of the latter country being absolutely identical with those of Scinde.' To the geologist who traces the same nummulitic limestone from the Nile to the Indus, this discovery is interesting, as shewing that—inasmuch as these two distant regions must formerly have been under a sea which was pervaded by a Fauna common to the whole of it,—so in the present terrestrial state of things the similarity of the Scindian and Egyptian subsoils, (which are continuous, not separated by any great natural barriers,) is accompanied by a striking coincidence in the living Flora of the two countries."

At a recent meeting of the Institute of British Architects, Mr. Layard gave an account of his discoveries among the ruins of Nineveh. He adverted particularly to the use of the arch, and stated that he had found one small chamber perfectly vaulted with unburnt bricks, the diameter of the arch being 13 or 14 feet, and the form semi-circular. The bas-reliefs now in the British Museum had been found by Mr. L. under earth which had been used as a burial-place, in his opinion, as early as 700, B. C.

Mr. Hinde has ascertained that the period of revolution of Flora (about three and a quarter years) is considerably shorter than that of any other small planet. The small planets are now placed in the following orders with respect to their mean distance from the sun;—Flora, Iris, Vesta, Hebe, Astræa, Juno, Ceres, Pallas.

Ornamental roofing tiles, made in Belgium, have been lately introduced into England. One pattern is in the form of a leaf, and has a very picturesque effect.

The ruins of an ancient city have been discovered in Central Africa, according to the report of the Sheikh Mahommed Zain el Abidin, whose travels have been recently translated from the Turkish by Professor Rosen. The King of Prussia intends to send a scientific expedition, to ascertain the correctness of the report.

Extensive fields of coal have been discovered in Vancouver's Island.