

guish between seconds of arc and of time. Although an inexcusable blunder, yet it serves to emphasize anew the intolerable nuisance of this double unit, and makes us wish for the speedy coming of the day when all kinds of circular measure shall have a common convenient unit; when every watch and clock face, every graduated circle, and every logarithm-table of the trigonometric functions, shall be divided into decimals of the circumference.

Gould's Zone catalogue.—The Argentine government have presented the stereotype plates of this valuable catalogue to the *Astronomische gesellschaft*, with authority to use them for a new edition whenever it is needed.

NOTES AND NEWS.

THE National academy of sciences will hold its autumn session in the capitol at Albany, beginning November 10, at eleven o'clock. The session will probably continue three or four days.

—The Lowell free courses in the Teachers' school of science, under the auspices of the Boston society of natural history, will begin on November 7, with a series of lectures by Prof. A. Hyatt on the structure and habits of typical animals.

—Despatches from Paris, under date of Oct. 27, announce that at the meeting of the Academy of sciences, held that day, M. Pasteur furnished proof of his theory that inoculation was easily practicable, and had been successful in preventing hydrophobia. Dr. Vulpian gave additional proofs confirming the deductions of M. Pasteur.

—Mr. F. W. Putnam has been chosen Peabody professor of American archaeology and ethnology under the Peabody trust at Harvard university.

—The October number of the Harvard university bulletin contains continuations of the very useful index to the maps in the London geographical society's publications, and a further instalment of the bibliography of the Kohl collection of early American maps.

—*Lippincott's magazine* for November contains a well-written article on the Peabody museum of archaeology at Cambridge, by Ernest Ingersoll.

—Henshaw's list of the Coleoptera of America north of Mexico, just issued, includes 9,238 species. Crotch's check-list, published in 1874, contained 7,450 species. Previous to these came the lists published by Le Conte, and in 1880 Austin published a supplement to Crotch, bringing the

number of nominal species up to 9,704, which recent studies have greatly reduced.

—The Johns Hopkins university *circular* for October is entirely devoted to the summer work of the Chesapeake zoological laboratory at Beaufort, N. C., and contains interesting summaries of investigations upon the embryology of a variety of invertebrate marine animals, and on the physiology of some of the lower vertebrates. An interesting 'Note on inheritance,' by the director, Dr. Brooks, is added, containing a rejoinder to some criticisms that have appeared on the author's work on 'Heredity,' together with a short letter from Fritz Müller, discussing the question of heredity among the Brazilian species of *Melipona*.

LONDON LETTER.

THE prospects of the Marine biological association are now beginning to shape themselves somewhat definitely. A suitable site for a laboratory has been obtained at Plymouth, and the building committee, which consists of the officers, together with Mr. John Evans and Mr. Spence Bate, will meet shortly to make a final decision upon the plans which they will recommend to the council. The subscription list has not received many additions of late; but it is hoped that further contributions may be obtained, when the public can form a better idea of the nature of the building and its uses than is the case at present. A grant of money will probably be given by the treasury toward the expenses of the station, provided that it is brought into relation with the Scotch fisheries board, the duties of the English fish inspectors being limited to the salmon fishery only.

A considerable amount of criticism has been excited in biological circles by the action of the government in abolishing the professorship of natural history at the Normal school of science, South Kensington. The chair has hitherto been filled by Professor Huxley, who has lately retired in consequence of ill health; and as the salary attached to it is greater than that of any similar post in England, it has always been regarded by the younger school of zoologists as the highest object of their ambition. Now, however, this will be no longer possible. English zoological teachers are left without an official head, and the flow of promotion has received a sudden check. It had been generally thought that the chair would be given to Professor E. Ray Lankester, who is well known not only as a distinguished investigator, but also as a teacher of no ordinary power. His claims, however, have been altogether passed over. The professorship has been abolished, and a