ing minimum thermometer at the base of Blue Hill and at several surrounding stations seems to show that the phenomenon recorded at the base fairly represents what occurred over the whole of the surrounding country. A minimum thermometer observed by Rev. A. K. Teele of Milton, about two miles north of Blue Hill, gave a temperature of 41°; and one observed by Dr. Granger at Randolph, five miles south-east of Blue Hill, gave a temperature of 44°, — the same as that observed at the base of Blue Hill.

These observations show very clearly the gradual increase of temperature with height above the earth's surface: 1°, at the earth's surface in low places, the temperature fell to or below 32° F., as shown by the formation of frost; 2°, at the height of a few feet above the surface, the temperature fell to not quite 40°; 3°, at a height of 156 feet above ground, the temperature only fell to 49°, as shown by the records of the Boston signal office; and, 4°, at a height of 650 feet above sea level, and more than 400 feet above the surrounding land, the temperature only fell to 50.5°, as shown by the records at Blue Hill observatory.

I pointed out in my last letter that on the night of Aug. 22 the sky was clear, and that the air was very dry, and must have descended from above over New England, since the surface-wind blew out from this region in every direction; and the facts just given seem to clearly indicate two opposing actions on the air: 1°, a heating effect, due to compression of the air by its descent; and, 2°, a cooling effect, due to radiation, chiefly from the earth's surface. At elevated points, such as Mount Washington, where the land surface is very small, the heating effect was in the ascendency; the temperature of the air was above the normal, and actually increased during the night. At lower stations the cooling from radiation was in the ascendency, and the temperature of the air fell continuously during the night.

H. HELM CLAYTON.

Blue Hill meteor. observ., Sept. 10.

The Almiqui.

The Smithsonian institution has recently received a living Almiqui, Solenodon cubanus, one of the rarest of American mammals, and the largest of American insectivores. Three individuals were captured, but only one survived.

The two species of Solenodon, S. cubanus and S. paradoxus, are indigenous respectively to Cuba and Hayti. Of the latter species almost nothing is known. The specimens of the Cuban species recently received were obtained by John Gundlach, Esq., in the interior of the Sierra Maestra, some thirty miles from Bayamo. He writes to Professor Baird regarding them as follows: "A friend, who has sent all the Solenodons to Professor Poey and myself, has, after the promise of many years, received a pair of living S. cubanus, captured in the high mountains thirty miles from Bayamo. This animal is very rare, and difficult of obtaining, because he lives in caves which in most cases pass under great trees, and cannot therefore be penetrated into."

The female and young individual died on the way, but the male arrived in excellent condition. Though in reality a nocturnal animal, he shows no dislike of sunlight. He has been fed on small pieces of raw beef, of which he seems very fond. Some of his attitudes are quite singular: when inspecting the floor of his cage, he rests the weight of his body on his hind-legs, while the front feet barely touch the floor; when his attention is attracted, he raises his long, flexible snout, and advances the abundant vibrissae so that they stand at right angles with the head. Ordinarily the vibrissae lie back against the cheeks.

THE ALMIQUI.

The specimen measures about eleven inches, exclusive of the tail, which is seven and one-half inches long. He will be sent to the Philadelphia zoölogical gardens.

F. W. TRUE.

U. S. nat. mus., Sept. 13.

Revivification.

Your correspondent V. in *Science*, No. 187, inquires concerning the fakirs of India, and the wonders of their voluntary suspension of vitality. He will find the information of which he is in search very fully given — more fully than at any other place of which I am aware — in a small volume published in 1850 in London. Its title is 'Observations on trance or human hibernation,' by James Braid, M.R.C.S.E., C.M.W.S., etc. (London, *John Churchill*, Princes Street, Soho; *Adam and Charles Black*, Edinburgh). Both the facts and the proofs are very clearly set forth.

W. O. AYRES.

New Haven, Conn., Sept. 13.