

Pressed by the necessity to obtain the requisite animal forms wherewith to illustrate his many and voluminous works, Professor Parker became a patient and indefatigable collector of morphological material, and at the time of his death his private cabinets stood among the largest and best in existence. As will be seen from what his distinguished son says, that collection is soon to be placed upon the open market for disposal. From my own personal knowledge, gained through a correspondence with its collector extending over a number of years, I can state that it simply represents a perfect mine of anatomical wealth, abounding in alcoholics of the rarest of vertebrate forms, in carefully worked out skeletons of all the classes of the animal kingdom possessed of a bony skeleton, in unique types, and in a rich mass of illustrative material for the *Invertebrata*. Fortunate indeed will that institution be that can secure by purchase this great treasure, and I feel sure that American science is with me in the devout hope that it may as a whole be obtained by this country. More than a generation will surely pass by before such another opportunity will be offered our museums to so enrich their collections in departments of such paramount importance, — and yet it needs but a word from some one among the wealthy, or the timely action of our own government, to have all this conveyed to our shores. Think for an instant how the inpouring of that material would swell and fill the gaps in the collections of the United States National Museum. What a living repository of reference would be there for the students in science for ages to come. Let it be hoped that the bare

suggestion of the above facts is sufficient for our prompt action to secure for ourselves such a rare treasure as Professor Parker's collection.

DR. R. W. SHUFELDT.

Takoma, D.C., July 7.

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— An ephemeris for the use of members of the astronomical department of the Brooklyn Institute, July to December, 1891, prepared by the executive committee of the department, has just been issued by the Institute. Garrett P. Serviss, president of the department, says that the purpose of the ephemeris is to present in a convenient and readily accessible form information about variable stars, meteors, occultations, and other phenomena, with the hope that many may be induced to undertake observations which will certainly prove to be interesting to the observers, and cannot fail to be valuable to the department by giving a definite direction to the efforts of its members. The greatest charm of the starry heavens is felt only by those who study them systematically, but for that purpose an observatory, and even a telescope, is

not essential. With an opera-glass, and with the naked eye, many of the most interesting phenomena of the sky may be satisfactorily and usefully observed. Arrangements have been made to furnish special information and assistance to observers at the meetings of the department, which will be resumed in October, and in the meantime members are requested to observe, in any way that may suit their convenience, the phenomena to which attention is called in the ephemeris, and to make notes of their observations. The president of the department will be particularly obliged if members will, at their earliest convenience inform him, by letter or otherwise, of their intention to undertake any of the observations recommended. Any request for additional information or advice will meet with prompt attention. It is intended to make the department of astronomy one of the foremost in the Brooklyn Institute, both in the attractiveness of its meetings and in its general influence, and every member who undertakes any of these observations will give material assistance to that end.

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