B. Platt before the historical club of the hospital, and the address of Prof. W. H. Welch at the opening of the William Pepper laboratory of clinical medicine. The papers are all noteworthy for historical research and literary form. Prof. Osler reviews the life of Thomas Dover, physician and buccaneer, whose career throws curious light on the social conditions and medical practice in England at the beginning of the eighteenth century. In a second paper there is given from private sources an account of the life of an Alabama student, John I. Basset, "whose name was not written on the scroll of fame, but who heard the call and forsook all and followed his ideal." Prof. Osler's third paper is entitled 'John Keats, the Apothecary Poet.' Mr. Platt reviews the work of Johannes Müller as a physiologist and a teacher. Prof. Welch, in his address at Philadelphia, described the evolution of modern scientific laboratories. With the exception of anatomy, laboratories for instruction and research are comparatively recent. Purkinje's physiological laboratory at Breslau was established in 1824, one year earlier than Liebig's famous chemical laboratory at Giessen. Lord Kelvin established a physical laboratory in Glasgow about 1845. The first pathological laboratory was founded by Virschow, in Berlin, in 1856.

THE Division of Botany of the U. S. Department of Agriculture has issued a bulletin by Mr. L. H. Dewey reviewing the legislation undertaken by twenty-five of the States and Territories for the suppression of weeds and giving the essential provisions of a general State weed law.

THE Canadian government proposes to send an expedition to Hudson's Bay next summer to establish customs officers and to further investigate the navigability of Hudson's Straits.

THE position of scientific adviser to the London Trinity House, which has been in abeyance since the resignation of Tyndall, has been revived and has been accepted by Lord Rayleigh.

THE Royal Academy of Sciences of Belgium proposes, as the subject for a prize in 1897, a discussion from a theoretical point of view of the Variation of Latitude, its cause and meaning, together with a criticism of the works of geometers on the subject, from Laplace to the present time. A gold medal valued at 800 fr. will be awarded.

THE *London Times* states that investigations have recently been undertaken by the Marine Biological Association into the contents of certain bays on the south coast of Devon. The bays selected for the investigations were Start and Teignmouth Bays, both of which are closed to trawlers in accordance with a by-law of the Devon Sea Fisheries Committee. The object in view of which the work was begun was to discover the characteristic features of the localities in question in respect to the food fish they contained. Mr. F. B. Stead, the naturalist in charge of these investigations, has conducted trawling experiments in these localities during the months of October to December, and the most important facts ascertained by him are as follows: Of the different species of fish captured in the bays, plaice and dabs are by far the most numerous, and as of these two species the plaice is, from the economic point of view, far the most important, and the large number of competing dabs must probably be regarded as a positive hindrance to the well-being of the plaice, any controversy that may be raised as to the advisibility or otherwise of maintaining the by-law now in force should be solely occupied with the consideration of the question whether the closure of the bays to trawlers is necessary or desirable for the protection of the plaice. It has been further shown that the bays differ markedly from one another in respect to the sizes of the fish they contain. Thus, while half the plaice in Start Bay were found to be over 12½ in. in length, in Teignmouth Bay half the plaice captured were under 10½ in. A similar difference held in the case of the dabs. A preliminary account of these investigations will appear in the ensuing number of the journal of the Association.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS.

MRS. D. G. ORMSBY, of Milwaukee, has given $25,000 to Lawrence University at Appleton, Wis., to endow the 'D. G. Ormsby professorship of history and political economy,' in memory of the husband; and by the will of the

late Horatio Stone, Rockford College, Rockford, Ill., receives $28,000. Donations to the University of Pennsylvania during the past month amount to $69,370.23.

At the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Princeton College, held on February 13th, Mr. J. Bayard Henry, '77, of Philadelphia, was elected trustee in place of William Libbey, of New York City, deceased, and Mr. Howard Crosby Warren, '89, was appointed assistant professor in experimental psychology.

On the birthday of Mr. Henry W. Sage, celebrated at Cornell University on January 30, the following list of his gifts to the University was noted:

Sage College for women, with endowment fund (1873)	$266,000
Sage Chapel (1873)	30,000
Contribution towards extinguishment of a floating debt (1881)	30,000
House of Sage professor of philosophy (1886)	11,000
Susan Linn Sage chair of philosophy (1886)	50,000
Susan Linn school of philosophy (1886)	200,000
University library building (1891)	260,000
University library endowment (1891)	300,000
Casts for archæological museum (1891)	8,000
	$1,155,000

A memorial praying for the admission of women to degrees at Cambridge University has received the signatures of 2,200 university members.

Dr. Cesare Lombroso has been transferred from the chair of legal medicine in the University of Turin, to the post of professor of psychiatry. He has also been made director of the University Clinic for Mental Diseases.

William Warde Fowler, M.A., Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, has been appointed a Curator of the Botanic Garden, in place of Edward Chapman, M.A., Fellow of Magdalen College, resigned.

CORRESPONDENCE.

AMERICAN JUDGMENTS OF AMERICAN ASTRONOMY.

The astronomical notes published in the last two numbers of Science afford instructive illustrations of a habit of judging American and foreign scientific work which is too prevalent among us. While in nearly every other country scientific investigators and writers are apt to be more or less biased in favor of their own countrymen, giving frequent occasion for remarks on their ignorance of what is going on outside and on their general insularity, the system prevalent among us is directly the contrary, at least in astronomy, and, to a certain extent, in the allied sciences. The way in which this bias displays itself is so well illustrated by the notes in question that we may be pardoned for taking them as a text for some remarks.

Among the great wants of astronomy for half a century past has been a standard system of positions of the principal fixed stars, which should serve as points of reference in defining the positions of other stars and of the heavenly bodies in general. The first step toward this end was taken by Dr. Auwers about 1870, and consisted of a determination of the corrections necessary to reduce the principal modern catalogues of stars to a homogeneous mean system; that is to say, to a system which should be as nearly as possible self-consistent, and express the mean result of all the determinations of positions made in each region of the heavens. But this work, though most ably performed and marking an epoch in astronomy of precision, was defective in not rigorously taking account of the proper motions of the stars. Hence, Dr. Auwer's system was valid only near a central epoch, say about 1840 or 1850. That he did not make it permanently valid was doubtless due to the fact that at that time the older observations, especially those of Bradley, had not been reduced with sufficient rigor to determine the proper motions. It was, therefore, a fitting complement of his work that he set about the thorough re-reduction of Bradley's observations at Greenwich with the mural quadrant, during the years 1750-1757.

About 1878 was published Boss's system of declinations, which appeared in a quarto volume of some 200 pages. A careful examination of this work showed that it stood unequalled in the thoroughness with which all the material was collected and worked up; in the completeness with which the errors of the older adopted