so that the work ought to be done over before the conclusion can be accepted.

Since Professor Chamberlin has again and again mistaken my position, or has otherwise changed the point at issue, and since little of scientific value is likely to come of this discussion, I shall write no more upon this point.

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POUDRÉ.

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: Mr. Goode's description of what he calls *Pseudo-Aurora* (SCIENCE, January 29, 1897), as seen by him at Moorhead, Minn., is abundantly confirmed by my own observations at this place. The complete manifestation of the phenomena is comparatively rare. The finest I ever saw was on January 22, 1890, an account of which was furnished by me at that time to the *American Meteorological Journal*, and published in the February number, and to which the title of this article was given by the editor, Mr. M. W. Harrington. From this article I condense the following extract: After a ten days' period of continued cold weather the thermometer reaching $-20°$ to $-32°$ at night, a south wind set in on the 22d, and the temperature rose to $+10°$. During the afternoon and evening the air seemed full of small ice crystals; and my recollection is that I examined them, and found them to be, as Goode describes them, minute, thin, perfectly clear, hexagonal ice-crystals. The reflection of street lamps and electric lights made long streams of light, *all tending to the zenith of the observer;* that produced by the electric light being so nearly like the Aurora Borealis as readily to be mistaken for it.

LUDOVIC ESTES.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA, April 28, 1897.

EARLIEST PUBLISHED NOTE OF THE LATE CHAS. E. BENDIRE.

IN my obituary of Major Bendire, published in SCIENCE of February 12, 1897 (pp. 261–262), I stated that "his earliest published writings are in the form of letters to well-known naturalists, chiefly Allen, Baird and Brewer." While this statement is correct as it stands, the first letters mentioned by me were published in 1876. Dr. Coues calls my attention to an earlier note I had overlooked, one by himself in the *American Naturalist* for June, 1872 (p. 370), in which a quotation is given from a letter about a small owl, written by Bendire, from Tucson, Arizona. So far as I am aware, this is the earliest publication of any of Bendire's notes.

C. H. M.

SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE.

RECENT TEXT-BOOKS IN PHYSICS.

Elementary Text-books on Physics. ANTHONY AND BRACKETT. Revised by W. F. MAGIE. John Wiley & Son. Eighth edition. 1897.

The Elements of Physics. NICHOLS AND FRANKLIN. Volume III., Light and Sound. The Macmillan Co. 1897.

The Outlines of Physics. E. L. NICHOLS. The Macmillan Company. 1897.

Problems and Questions in Physics. MATTHEWS AND SHEARER. The Macmillan Company. 1897.

Intermediate Course of Practical Physics. SCHUSTER AND SEES. The Macmillan Company. 1896.

Experimental Physics. W. A. STONE. Ginn & Company. 1897.

First Principles of Natural Philosophy. A. E. DOLBEAR. Ginn & Company. 1897.

In view of the enormous number of new books, on all sorts of subjects, which are continually making their appearance, it is important to inquire whether book-makers, publishers and authors are not increasing at an abnormal rate. Indeed, it begins to look as if some check on their activity would shortly be necessary for the protection of those old fashioned people whose pleasure it is to read rather than to write books. At the present rate of book production it will not be long before that day, which has often been foretold, is actually at hand when every man will have time to read only his own works, and even now there must be some authors who are too busy for that.

The intellectual, and especially the scientific, activity of the present period is in some measure finding an outlet in the preparation of text-books for schools and colleges, and this is particularly true in the domain of the physical sciences.