science whose séances were reported. Professor James blames me for not quoting the knowledge that the medium showed of the family affairs of Professor Shaler's wife, but Professor Shaler himself says, "I am * * * absolutely uninterested in it for the reason that I don't see how I can exclude the hypothesis of fraud." I wrote the note with reluctance and only because I believe that the Society for Psychical Research is doing much to injure psychology. The authority of Professor James is such that he involves other students of psychology in his opinions unless they protest. We all acknowledge his leadership, but we cannot follow him into the quagmires.

J. McKeen Cattell.

SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE.

Report of Naval Court of Inquiry upon the destruction of the United States battleship 'Maine,' in Havana harbor, February 15, 1898, together with the testimony taken before the Court. Washington, Government Printing Office, 1898. 8vo., pp. 293; illustrated by exhibits, drawings and photographs.

A message to Congress from the President of the United States, dated March 28th, accompanied the transmission of the report of the Court of Inquiry appointed to ascertain, if possible, the cause and the method of destruction of the U. S. S. 'Maine,' by an explosion, in the harbor of Havana, February 15, 1898. The message is short and merely restates in brief summary the essential conclusions of the Court; that the ship was destroyed by an explosion of a submarine mine, on the port side of the hull, well forward, and that no clew had been obtained to the train of circumstances leading to this great disaster, resulting in the death of two officers and two hundred and sixty-four of the crew, nor any evidence indicating who were the criminals guilty of this act of assassination.

The report, now before us, is a very long and intensely interesting paper, mainly given up to the simple stenographers' reproduction of the testimony of witnesses.

The testimony of the commanding officer of the shipand his staff is positive in declaring the ship to have been in good order in all respects, her crew in not only an excellent state of discipline, but also in the best of spirits and with absolutely no sign of discontent or of insubordination. Captain Sigsbee stated that 'A quieter, better-natured and apparently better satisfied crew I have never known on board any vessel in which I have served.' The executive officer testified to the maintenance of order and the compliance of all officers and the crew with the regulations which are considered essential to the morale and safety of a man-of-war, and gave positive evidence of the facts that there was no dangerous heating of coal-bunkers or other known source of danger within the vessel. Other witnesses testified to the character of the explosion, and still others, from other vessels in the harbor and from the shore, testified as to the appearance of the explosion from their various points of view. Divers gave testimony, in great detail, regarding the condition of the hull as found after the explosion, and the officers entrusted with that duty showed by means of carefully drawn sketches and diagrams the position of the ship and of its now separated main and bow sections, and gave expert testimony regarding their condition, as furnishing proof of the nature, origin and effects of the explosion, and especially as settling the question as to whether the explosion was exterior to the ship or within. This portion of the evidence is extensive and minute, and the Court was evidently determined to secure every scintilla of evidence obtainable bearing upon this vital question. The photographs and drawings appended to the report are reproductions of those presented in evidence.

According to the verdict of the court, the sworn testimony suffices to establish the following main points, to which its members subscribe under oath: The ship was on a friendly visit to Havana, as is customary among nations at peace; she was assigned a berth in the harbor by the regular harbor master; ship and crew were illustrating, at the time, a most creditable condition of excellence; there were no known interior sources of danger, and every usual precaution, and some unusual care, was taken in the internal menage of the vessel; danger from without was recognized and special watches set.

At 8 p. m., of February 15th, the usual and regular reports were made, indicating that all was well throughout the ship, and the crew and officers retired as usual. At 9:40 p. m. two explosions occurred; the first lifted the ship forward; the second produced most of the internal destruction; the protective and main decks were blown up, forward the smokestacks, and thrown aft and over to starboard, as is inferred, by the explosion of magazines. The keel and outer bottom plating of the ship is blown upward and inward, and now reaches, at one point, a height of over thirty feet above its original location, in the main line of the keel; this is considered to be due to the external explosion, and its evidence is taken as conclusive. This effect could only have been produced by the explosion of a mine, 'situated under the ship and on the port side.' The explosion of the magazines is considered to be the consequence of the primary explosion of the mine. No evidence was secured 'fixing the responsibility upon any person or persons.'

Many details of evidence are given which sustain the verdict of the Court; but the drawings themselves are perhaps the best proof that the ship herself, in her present position and condition, affords the best evidence, and most positive, regarding the source of the disaster. The bending upward of keel and bottom plating; the fact that all the lower positions of the ship, the lower and main decks, protective deck and frames, are forced upward and toward the starboard side; the complete breaking away of all the plating and the whole ship's side over a considerable area at the point at which the force of the explosion was felt; the distribution of the débris wholly toward the starboard side, and the non-existence of coal, or other material from the hold, on the port side of the ship; the location of the detached forward part of the vessel at right-angles with the original line of the keel; its separation and its relation to the uplifted keel—these and many other details appear in the evidence, and are shown by drawings made from measurement so fully as to afford, in the opinion of the experts constituting the Court and expert witnesses before it, sufficient proof to justify unqualified and positive statements regarding the nature of the explosion.

The report, happily, completely exonerates the officers and crew of the battleship; though, most unhappily, fails to fix the responsibility where it belongs, or to afford a clue to the authors of the catastrophe. This report, as a scientific discussion and a logical construction of proofs and conclusions, will always have more than historical interest, and it is very probable that the question: Who were the perpetrators of one of the most diabolical crimes of which history gives us an account? may forever remain unanswered.

R. H. THURSTON.

Birds of Village and Field: A Bird Book for Beginners. By FLORENCE A. MERRIAM. Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin & Company. The Riverside Press, Cambridge. 1898. Illustrated. 12mo. Pp. xlix+1–406. 28 half-tone plates and 220 cuts in text. Price, $2.00.

The ever-swelling stream of popular bird books is still further augmented by this attractive little volume which is possessed of a sparkle all its own as compared with several of its numerous competitors. The accuracy of the writer's statements and the breezy originality of her bits of bird biography commend her work to every bird lover be he scientifically or otherwise minded. The book is written for the otherwise minded, for the beginner, but as the Latin name, a few words of description and a mouthful of 'geographic distribution' precede each species mentioned, no one may justly complain that the scientific cravings of his nature are not stilled.

The introduction contains much about the economic value of birds to the farmer, and considerable stress is laid upon this matter elsewhere throughout the volume. It also contains a 'Field Color Key to adult spring males mentioned in this book,' and is followed by brief sketches of about one hundred and fifty common everyday species, such as one meets in eastern North America, including the Mississippi Valley. And, by the way, it seems to have been an oversight that no direct mention is made as to what section of the country is covered by the title. Following the sketches which make up the bulk of the volume is an