

THE managers of the Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia have taken steps to add to the institution a clinical laboratory, the funds being provided by a bequest of \$50,000 by the late Josephine M. Ayer, of Philadelphia, supplemented by a gift of \$25,000 from her son, Fred. F. Ayer.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS.

THE New York University Medical College and the Bellevue Medical College will be consolidated under the name 'The University and the Bellevue Hospital Medical College.' It will be remembered that the negotiations for this union failed a year ago at the last moment, but the resignation of a portion of the faculty of the New York University Medical College to form a new school under the auspices of Cornell University has now led to the consolidation.

THE Trustees of Colby University have made a contract for the construction of a chemical laboratory to be built of stone and brick and to cost \$30,000.

THE will of the late Felix R. Bonnet, of Pittsburgh, Pa., provides that, upon the death of his widow, \$300,000 shall go to the Western Pennsylvania University for the endowment of scholarships.

PRESIDENT F. P. GRAVES, of the University of Wyoming, has been elected President of the University of Washington.

THE following promotions and appointments have been made by the corporation of Yale University: Assistant Professor Sneath was promoted to a full professorship of philosophy in the College; Dr. Philip E. Browning, promoted from an instructorship to an assistant professorship in chemistry; Dr. E. W. Scripture was given the title of director of the psychological laboratory; E. M. Weier, B.A., 1895, was appointed assistant in the same laboratory; George Grant McCurdy, B.A., Harvard, 1893, was appointed to a new instructorship in prehistoric anthropology in the Graduate School; H. E. Gregory, B.A., 1896, instructor in physical geography.

THE University of Dublin has elected to the chair of mental and moral philosophy Mr. Swift

Paine Johnston, who is said to be an American citizen.

MR. H. YALE OLDHAM has been appointed reader in geography in Cambridge University.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

'A PRECISE CRITERION OF SPECIES.'

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: In the issue of this JOURNAL for May 20, 1898 (N. S. vii., No. 177) is a joint contribution, under the above title, by Messrs. C. B. Davenport and J. W. Blankinship, in which Mr. Davenport, under the subheading 'A. The General Method,' says: "What is needed is a method of precisely defining the degree of isolation and the degree of divergence necessary for distinct species." To establish such a method, and to define 'the degree of isolation and the degree of divergence necessary for distinct species,' is the grand task here undertaken—and accomplished, to the satisfaction apparently of, at least, the author of the paper; and his diagrams of curves and his mathematical formulæ are very interesting and very suggestive, so far as they go. But the conclusions based thereon, and the methods by which they are reached, display an extraordinary lack of practical experience with the actual conditions of the problem in hand. No one duly appreciating the conditions to be met would ever undertake to formulate a 'method' on such imperfect data as he has employed for the 'Determination of the Line between Species and Varieties,' since their utter insufficiency is obvious, one would suppose, to any one at all experienced in this field of research.

"The question arises," says Mr. Davenport, "whether it would not be necessary to draw curves for many characters." He answers: "Practically it will not be necessary, for confluent species are usually separated chiefly by one most distinctive character." Unfortunately, this is not the case, but by a combination of slight differences along a number of distinct lines. But suppose it were as Mr. Davenport assumes, and the most distinctive character was one of color, involving not only the prevailing tint, but coincidently variations in