world-renowned Miocene beds of that locality. In the immediate vicinity are to be seen the petrified remains of an ancient forest. One of the stumps measured fifteen feet in diameter. The whole surrounding country shows the effects of igneous action in past ages. This is especially noticeable in the rear of the post-office in Florissant, where the granites are rent into fearful chasms, and where several deep, extinct geyser funnels may be seen, worn on the interior perfectly round and smooth by the action of water.

A trip was taken to Crystal Peak, four miles north of Florissant, where some fine Amazon stone was obtained. This completed the work of collecting, which, in every respect, has given very gratifying results.

S. WARD LOPER.

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY,
November 5, 1898.

THE PROPOSED CATALOGUE OF SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE.

IN SCIENCE for October 28th there is a notice of the Second Conference on an International Catalogue of Scientific Literature, and it is said that a decimal system has been recommended.

At this critical time (before the work has been begun) there ought to be open discussion by cataloguers, and the most liberal attention given to the wishes of the users of such a catalogue. A repetition of the English catalogue, monumental but not used, is to be avoided. The most important characteristic of a catalogue of scientific literature ought to be its convenience to the user; this quality ought to prevail over all other qualities of such a catalogue. The possible wants of a user of the catalogue should be constantly thought of and provided for by the cataloguer.

The user is interested in his subject, probably not in cataloguing. He wants to find quickly and easily what has been published on a certain branch of Science. He does not want to learn a system of classification nor its method of application, as he would have to do in the case of the decimal system. He wants to find his subject in the alphabetical order, as he would in an encyclopædia; first the title, then the date, then the author and the size of the work.

The list of subjects should be derived from the titles as they are being collected, and it should be arranged in alphabetical order, for the convenience of the user.

In doubtful cases and where more than one branch of a subject is treated in a paper a title should be repeated under as many subjects as by the most liberal construction a user is likely to look for it, with too many repetitions rather than too few.

Ask the users if I am not right; and for whom else is the catalogue to be prepared?

In a case like that of the great English Catalogue of Scientific Papers, where the titles are arranged in the order of the authors' names with a number against every title, the numbers only need be collected and classified; or the numbers and the dates (though this would perhaps double the cost of publication). And here again the user should be considered by making the list of subjects large and by putting them in alphabetical order.

ALFRED TUCKERMAN.

NEW YORK, November 5, 1898.

SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE.

Charles Darwin and the Theory of Natural Selection. By EDWARD B. POULTON. New York, The Macmillan Co. 1896.

This was not only a very timely book when it appeared, but will always be one of the minor classics of evolutional literature. It is well and clearly written, compact, and a most handy book of reference for the student of Darwin's life and work, by a sincere and orthodox Darwinian. Not only does Professor Poulton give us the leading facts in Darwin's life, but in a happy and skillful way he tells the secret of his greatness, when and how the fact of evolution was impressed upon him, and the date when the idea of natural selection as an efficient cause was suggested to him. The two discoveries of Darwin which led him to reflect on the principle of evolution were, first, the fossil armadillos of the Pampean deposits and their relation to those now living, which led him to remark, in 1837, in his 'Naturalist's Voyage round the World:' "This wonderful relationship in the same continent between the