Röntgen radiations is by no means an easy matter. The present state of knowledge and practice is certainly represented by the Röntgen Society, and the exhibits represented the utmost limits to which the process has been brought; yet, setting aside improvements in practical technique, the matter has not been pushed a step further than when Röntgen gave his remarkable discovery to the world. Mr. Mackenzie Davidson showed his beautiful method of localization of foreign bodies and some really practical applications of his stereoscopic radiographs. The same worker has also solved the difficulty of photographing stone in the kidney. This he does by the ingenious method of eliminating movements due to respiration by only exposing when a recording lever shows absolute rest of the abdominal parietes, the patient holding his breath the while. Professor Silvanus P. Thompson, F.R.S., demonstrated experiments with the Tesla oscillator, and Mr. Campbell Swinton showed a collection of tubes which he has used in his researches. There were many other exhibits too numerous to mention. The results which Mr. Wimshurst has obtained with his influence machine are extremely good; the steadiness of the shadows given on a screen by twelve 20-inch plates is remarkable.

AT a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society, London, on November 28th, Mr. Charles W. Andrews read a paper entitled 'A Description of Christmas Island (Indian Ocean).' Mr. Andrews said according to the report in the London *Times* that, as it seemed desirable that a more complete examination of the island should be undertaken than had up to that time been made, Sir John Murray, in 1896, generously offered to pay the expenses of an expedition. The lecturer left England to carry out the undertaking in May, 1897. He gave a detailed account of the physical features of the island, and said that its climate was delightful. During the greater part of the year it resembled a very hot English summer tempered with sea breezes. The island was perfectly healthy, there being no marshes or stagnant pools, while there was a fair supply of good water. The whole island was covered with forest, except the spray-swept edges of the sea cliff and the vertical faces of the inland cliffs. Many creepers and ferns added to the beauty and variety of the forest scenery. The fauna was not a rich one. There were only five species of mammals, consisting of two kinds of rats, a shrew mouse and two bats. Rats swarmed everywhere and were very destructive. The reptiles were few and small. Insect life was fairly abundant. There were several species of land crabs, the most common being a little red crab living in burrows all over the island. The robber-crab was also very numerous, and if one sat down for a short time anywhere in the forest numbers could be seen approaching from all sides. They were good climbers and ascended trees in search of food. For some years Mr. Andrew Ross, brother of Mr. George Ross, the owner of Keeling Cocos Island, had been settled in Flying Fish Cove with his family and a few men from Cocos. During his stay some substantial houses had been built, well sunk, and fruit trees and cocoanut palms planted, and a small experimental plantation of coffee had also been made, the results showing that the island was well suited for coffee growing. In May last the total population was about 40.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS.

AT a meeting of the Board of Governors of McGill University, on December 1st, Lord Strathcona announced his intention of endowing the new Victoria College for Women, which he built at a cost of $250,000, to the amount of $1,000,000. Mr. W. C. McDonald also announced that he intended to endow the chair of history in the arts faculty. At the dedication, on December 20th, of the new chemistry and surgery building of the University, given by Mr. McDonald, knighthood was conferred upon him.

IT is expected that the New University of London will have its offices in the Imperial Institute, South Kensington, though it is possible that arrangements will be made to occupy the premises on Gower Street occupied by University College.

MR. AND MRS. L. LANSING ZABRISKIE have given $500 to Wells College for the purchase of physical apparatus.

MR. E. F. HOLDEN has given $6,000 to Syra-

cuse University, part of which has been used for the purchase of twenty-nine microscopes.

THE will of the late Miss Elizabeth Rogers leaves all her property, valued at $100,000, to the Rogers Hall School for Girls at Lowell, Mass.

THE sum of $50,000 has been collected in Pittsburg for the Methodist American University at Washington.

THE growth of the various English university colleges as compared with the older universities is illustrated by the papers read before the Royal Society during the past three years. Professor Ramsay points out that of 252 such papers about half—122—were contributed from these colleges, leaving only half from Oxford, Cambridge, Scottish and Irish universities and private individuals. University College, London, contributed 57 papers, which apparently surpasses the number of papers from Oxford or Cambridge.

THE Isaac Newton Studentship of Astronomy and the John Lucas Walker Studentship in Pathology at Cambridge University will be filled in January. Each studentship is of the annual value of £200 and is tenable for three years.

WE announced last week that Professor W. C. Röntgen had been called from Würzburg to Leipzig. The vacancy, we now learn, is caused by the retirement of Dr. Gustav Weidermann, which takes place at the end of the present semester.

DR. KLOCKMANN, of Clausthal, has been appointed professor of mineralogy and geology in the Institute of Technology at Aix.

M. C. SAUVAGEAU has been appointed professor of botany in the faculty of sciences at Dijon.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

ANLAGE OR PROTON?

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: I have read with interest the letter from Professor Burt G. Wilder which you recently published in regard to the word 'proton.' I thoroughly agree with him that it is very desirable to have some word better than *rudiment* for the primitive beginning in the embryo out of which some future structure is to be developed. We need a good word to use in our language, as the Germans use 'anlage' in theirs.

The suggestion of *proton* by Professor Wilder and that of 'primordium' by Professor Willey are certainly interesting, and I think, if we are to rely upon the Greek to supply us with a new term, that the suggestion made by Professor Wilder is the best we have had. But against all these suggestions I have to make an objection. It seems to me that the time has now definitely passed when it can be taken as a necessity for science to derive *all* technical terms from the Greek. When we look the matter fairly in the face we must recognize that the claim of superlative availability of Greek words and Greek derivatives is a survival of the Mediæval epoch, which was itself a survival of the earlier Roman days, when the Greek language was the language of the cultured, and the language with which all educated persons were not merely acquainted, but familiar. Whether or not this is a loss or gain, the Greek language is not now familiar to our generation; it is a language quite apart from the present day. The fact which we have to meet is that a knowledge of Greek is far from universal, and that a thorough knowledge of Greek is rarely attained except by the special student of the language. After all, a word is merely a convenient combination of sounds to furnish a symbol for a certain idea, and there is no inherent psycological reason why sounds of the type used by the Greeks should alone serve to represent ideas of a scientific character. Indeed, is it not striking that the greatest scientific nation of the world habitually uses technical terms of its own language—that German scientists use German words?

Now, Germany has attained such preeminence in science that it is probable that in any department at least as much is published in German as in any other two languages. It is literally impossible to keep abreast with any special department of science without a knowledge of German, and this implies an acquaintance with German words used by Germans with a technical meaning. An acquaintance with such words is absolutely indispensable.

To return to the question of an English equiv-