generous offer in placing their facilities at the disposal of the graduate school; he emphasized the clinical advantages, which are unusually great in proportion to the population, on account of the several large government institutions aggregating over 4,000 beds, with an excellent corps of teachers. The president then delivered his introductory lecture on 'Preventive Medicine,' tracing the progress and achievements of hygiene and the methods by which the beneficial results have been accomplished. The teaching staff of the school consists of 85 professors and adjunct professors. Clinics every day from 9 A.M to 2 P.M. Laboratory work every week day from 2 to 5 at the School of Medicine, Georgetown University, 920 H Street.

The following constitute the board of directors of the Graduate Medical School: General George M. Sternberg, U.S.A., President (address, 2144 California Ave.); J. Ford Thompson, Vice-President; George M. Kober, Secretary and Treasurer; Walter Wyman, Surgeon-General, Public Health and Marine Hospital Service; P. M. Rixey, Surgeon General U. S. Navy; R. M. O'Reilly, Surgeon General U. S. Army; A. B. Richardson, Superintendent Government Hospital for Insane; Samuel S. Adams, M.D., Swan M. Burnett, M.D., Joseph Taber Johnson, M.D., Sterling Ruffin, M.D., Edward A. Balloch, M.D., E. A. de Schweinitz, M.D., H. L. E. Johnson, M.D., William C. Woodward, M.D.

From the foregoing it would appear that here we have the foundation for the establishment of a school of preventive medicine, a most worthy undertaking, and the important question arises how many of our young medical men will avail themselves of this opportunity, especially when the average graduate may reason that he has devoted his time, money and energy to equip himself for the recognition and cure of diseases, and who will pay him for their prevention? It is evident that so long as no special qualifications are demanded for the appointment of health officers in the United States, a voluntary training in preventive medicine will be sought by a comparatively limited number, and yet the undertaking is of such far-reaching importance to the general public, that the establishment of fellowships in this school appears urgently called for. We know of no branch of science which has contributed so much during the past twenty-five years to the sum total of human happiness than sanitary science, and perhaps no field affords better prospects for fruitful results than the endowment of a school of preventive medicine.

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS.

Postelsia: The Year Book of the Minnesota Seaside Station, 1901. St. Paul, Minnesota. 1902. Small 8vo. Pp. 229.

This unique book is one outgrowth of the work done at the Vancouver Seaside Station of the University of Minnesota in the summer of 1901. It consists of seven papers which were given before the members of the station, covering the following subjects: 'Uses of Marine Algæ in Japan,' 'The Distribution of Plants in Colorado,' 'The Phylogeny of the Cotyledon,' 'Botanizing in Jamaica,' Algæ Collecting in the Hawaiian Islands,' 'The Distribution of Marine Algæ in Japan,' and 'The Kelps of Juan de Fuca.' These are illustrated by twenty-nine plates, three of which are reproductions of Japanese pictures showing the methods of collecting and preparing certain seaweeds for food.

It is difficult to decide which are the more interesting of these papers. One becomes greatly interested in the account given by Mr. Yendo of the uses to which marine algæ are put in Japan, and can not close the book until he has finished the paper. Then should he happen to open the book where Miss Butler describes her experience in Jamaica, he is charmed with the style of the enthusiastic

writer, who is an acute botanist as well; but just as he concludes these interesting pages he comes upon Miss Tilden's paper on botanizing in the Hawaiian Islands, and is fascinated again. So it is with all the articles. There is not a dull paper in the seven, and the editor is to be congratulated upon his skilful selection. He has achieved something literary in this volume, while at the same time adding not a little to our botanical knowledge. It is one of the very few botanical books which possess a distinctly literary flavor, and for this reason, in addition to its botanical merits, it is to be highly commended.

CHARLES E. BESSEY.
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA.

SOCIETIES AND ACADEMIES.

BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON.

THE 364th meeting was held Saturday, January 10.

Walter H. Evans stated that a bill had just been passed making a forest reserve of that portion of Porto Rico containing the only tract of primitive forest now remaining on the island.

Mr. L. O. Howard exhibited a series of lantern slides giving a pictorial history of the recent investigation of the etiology of yellow fever by the Army Yellow Fever Commission and the subsequent Board of Health of Havana. The slides included photographs of Major Reed, Drs. Carroll, Lazier and Agramonte, Dr. Carlos Finley, and Dr. Guiteras, as well as of Camp Lazier, the Las Animas Hospital and laboratories, and a number of others. He spoke eulogistically of the work of the commission and dwelt on the enormous value to humanity of the results of their work. He referred to the deaths of Drs. Reed and Lazier, and mentioned the memorial raised to the latter, and that now in progress for the former, as deserving in the highest degree of contributions from all scientific men. He also stated that in honoring the immortal dead we must not forget the living, and reminded the society that Dr. James Carroll, one of the society's members, was a member of the commission and in the thick of the struggle had been attacked with yellow fever but fortunately had recovered, and that he should receive the highest honor for the rest of his life.

S. F. Meek spoke on 'The Geographic Distribution of the Fresh-water Fishes of Mexico,' illustrating his remarks with lantern slides. He stated that four distinct fish faunas were represented in Mexico—that of the Rio Grande, with 80 species; the Colorado, with 9 species in western Sonora; the Lerna basin, with 49 species; and a tropical fauna with 137 species. The fauna of the Lerna basin was the most remarkable, for of the 49 species not one was found in any other river, while 9 of the 18 genera were peculiar to this basin. Sixteen of the species belong to the salt-water family Atherinidæ, and were the only salt-water fishes represented on the Mexican plateau. Seventeen species, including one *Gambusia,* belong to the Pœcilidæ, and all are viviparous. With the exception of the *Gambusia* these have the first six rays of the anal fin short and stiff, and having the same position in the males and females, while the viviparous Pœcilidæ previously known have the anal fin slender and placed well forward. The speaker noted that the tropical fishes extended northwards in a belt on the east and west coasts, reaching the highest latitude on the east. On the west coast the Cichlids extend to Mazatlan, and the Characins reach only to the Balsas, while on the east coast the Characins are the most northerly. He was of the opinion that the fish fauna of the Rio Grande region was derived from the Mississippi Valley, and that of Sonora from the Colorado. As for the Lerna region he believed that it was an island with a well-established fauna before a rise of the continent made it part of the mainland, and that it has since been a center of distribution.

O. P. Jenkins discussed 'The Rate of the Nervous Impulses in Certain Invertebrates,' saying that so recently as fifty years ago the most diverse opinions prevailed regarding the speed of nervous impulses, and that it had even been thought to exceed the speed of light. The experiments of Helmholtz showed that the rate was comparatively slow, being in the frog but ninety feet a second. Mr. Jenkins then detailed his own experiments