the summer on the gulf coast in Texas under direction of Professor C. E. McClung. This material will be used in the biological classes of the university and will also be furnished at cost to zoology classes in the accredited high schools of the state.

The registration at the close of the first week at the University of Wisconsin shows an increase of 331 students over the number enrolled at the same time last year. This gain indicates that the total number of students at the university this year will be over 4,500.

The new building of the engineering laboratory of the Heriot-Watt College, Edinburgh, was opened by the Earl of Rosebery on September 16.

The Russian minister of public instruction has forbidden women to attend university lectures in the future, but permits those to complete their studies at universities who have already received permission, and whose transfer to higher educational institutions for women is impossible.

At Wesleyan University (not Northwestern University, as previously stated) David R. Whitney, of Columbia University, has been appointed instructor in biology, and J. W. Turrentine, M.Sc. (North Carolina), Ph.D. (Cornell), instructor in physical chemistry.

Dr. Harry T. Marshall has returned from Manila and has assumed charge of the work in pathology and bacteriology at the University of Virginia. He is assisted by Dr. Carl Meloy, who returns to the university this year as adjunct professor of pathology.

The following appointments have been announced in the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale University: Arthur Lyman Dean, Ph.D., to be instructor in industrial chemistry; J. F. McClelland, M.E., to be lecturer on mining engineering, and William Harry Kirkham to be instructor in biology. In the Medical School Dr. Marvin Scarborough, M.A., has been appointed instructor in pharmacology.

At the College of the City of New York the following have been promoted from the grade of tutor to that of instructor: In chemistry, Robert W. Curtis, Ph.D. (Yale); William L. Prager, Ph.D. (Clark); Reston Stevenson, Ph.D. (Columbia); in descriptive geometry and drawing, William Chadwick and Frederick W. Hutchison; in education, Samuel B. Heckman, Ph.D. (Pennsylvania); in philosophy, Howard D. Marsh, Ph.D. (Columbia); in physics, David H. Ray, Sc.D. (New York University). Dr. W. L. Estabrooke has been appointed a tutor in the department of chemistry.

At George Washington University Mr. Sidney I. Kornhauser has been appointed instructor in biology and Dr. Irving K. Phelps, instructor in physiology.

Mr. James P. Barrett has resigned an assistantship in botany at Illinois Agricultural Station to accept a fellowship in botany at Cornell University.

The board of governors of the University of Toronto in July last established, at the urgent request of Professor A. B. Macallum, the head of the department of physiology and physiological chemistry, a second professorship in the department and on September 24 the board appointed Professor T. G. Brodie, M.D., F.R.S., of the Royal Veterinary College, London, to the position as titular professor of physiology. Professor Brodie has accepted the appointment and will assume his duties at Toronto in November.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

AN UNUSUAL METEORIC FALL

To the Editor of Science: There was an unusual and somewhat remarkable fall of meteoric masses in this vicinity on the evening of Thursday, September 17, some of the facts concerning which may be worthy of record in Science. I was an eye-witness of some of the phenomena, as will appear. The general account is gleaned from the newspapers of the following day. On the date mentioned, at about quarter past seven o'clock in the evening, a large and brilliant meteor passed over the whole state of Massachusetts from west to east. According to reports, a large fragment of it dropped into Boston harbor between Apple Island (a small island) and the shore of the town of Winthrop, which

is a few miles north of Boston. This same meteor was seen to pass over the city of Springfield, about ninety miles west of Boston, and according to newspaper reports "its glare lit up the earth as bright as day," "the hissing of the fiery mass could be plainly heard in some sections," it had "a white head and a reddish tail of burning gases." The Springfield accounts state that a few seconds after its passage over that city it seemed to explode into particles which were burned or vaporized before falling to the earth. The Boston account indicated that it parted high up in the air, one piece dropping in a southwesterly direction. The piece that fell into the harbor is described as seeming to be of the size of the full moon. "Several small boats," so one account states, "were observed in the vicinity when one piece dropped into the water near Winthrop." It is unfortunate that if this was the case, the exact spot of the fall was not noted, as the water there is probably not more than a few feet deep, and the fragment, heated (as such bodies are) only externally in their flight, might be found almost intact in spite of its impact with the water. Moreover, it is probable that its velocity was well spent and that the water resistance would so far reduce the speed that it would not even bury itself in the earth below.

My personal observations in regard to this meteor are as follows: While journeying eastwardly from the direction of Pittsfield to Springfield with a party in an automobile we followed the road which runs approximately parallel to the Boston and Albany Railroad tracks east of the town of Huntington. At a point about a mile southeast of that town and about eighteen miles west of Springfield, with a clear sky but somewhat smoky air, we were startled by a very bright illumination of the landscape, like that given by an intense flash of lightning though much more prolonged. On looking upward at once for the cause, our attention was at once fixed upon a brilliant body descending rapidly and almost vertically, and apparently nearly overhead. It appeared to fall into the woods on a hill to the left of us. The light was remarkable as being of a pure and intense greenish blue, which continued at full intensity until the mass was lost to sight in the woods. This fragment of the larger mass which itself continued on east, appeared to me to owe its luminosity to an actual combustion in our air, as its velocity of fall was apparently much too low for it to have been maintained at a high temperature by air resistance. In fact our first impression was that it was falling almost directly upon us or might strike nearby; an impression confirmed by the appearance that although we were moving at moderate speed along a straight part of the road our horizontal direction of view was changing quite rapidly with respect to its line of descent. I am convinced that this was no illusion. The vivid green blue color of the light rendered the effect very beautiful.

It seems to indicate an unusual chemical composition, something which readily burned in the air and which at the same time gave a pure light, spectrum lines in the green and blue, or green-blue only.

ELIHU THOMSON

SWAMPSCOTT, MASS.,
September 24, 1908

DR. W. J. HOLLAND ON THE SKULL OF DIPLODOCUS

IN the second volume of the *Memoirs of the Carnegie Museum,* Pittsburg, page 225, Dr. W. J. Holland has written at considerable length on the skeleton of *Diplodocus.* Most of his original matter is based on the well-preserved hinder part of a skull that was found in Wyoming. On request Dr. Holland kindly sent me this skull for examination, and I have carefully compared it with the skulls of various reptiles, living and extinct. I regret that I find myself at variance with Dr. Holland as regards many of his determinations of bones and foramina in this skull; but it is essential that errors in such important matters be corrected as early as possible.

First of all it may be said that most of the sutures between the bones are far less distinct than they are represented in Dr. Holland's figures, and some of them do not appear to be where they are drawn.