During the last two weeks of August some students of the summer session and graduate department of Columbia University made an extended excursion with Professor A. W. Grabau through New York State for the purpose of studying the various type sections of the Paleozoic series. The party numbered fourteen in all and included Professor C. E. Gordon, of Amherst; Dr. Yabe, recently appointed to the professorship of paleontology in the new university at Sendai, Japan, and Dr. Hahn, of Munich. Among the localities visited were Schoharie, Little Falls, Trenton Falls, Holland-Patent, the ravine of Swift Creek near Chadwick, a type section of the Clinton, the typical outcrops of the Oneida conglomerate, the Syracuse region, Tully and vicinity, the Genesee Gorge at Rochester and at Portage, Olean and the Rock City, Eighteen Mile Creek, and the Lake Erie shore, North Buffalo, Niagara, etc.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has broken ground for the Summer Engineering Camp at Gardner Lake, Me., near East Machias. The wooden permanent buildings will be erected as soon as possible in the spring and the whole camp will be ready for the summer course of the civil engineers early in August. The camp grounds, which have been presented to the institute by an anonymous friend, include more than a square mile of land at Crosby's Point, with outlook on the water on both sides and more than three miles of shore line. Mr. Charles W. Eaton ('84), of Haverhill, gave to the institute $10,000 for the purpose of erecting permanent buildings on this land.

On October 3 members of the faculty and students at the University of Chicago observed the nineteenth anniversary of the opening of the institution with commemorative chapel services in Mandel Hall. The services were opened with prayer by Professor C. R. Henderson. President Judson spoke on the work of the university and compared the institution when founded with that of to-day. In a comparison of present conditions with those obtaining nineteen years ago, it was recalled that when the doors were opened for instruction on October 1, 1892, the number of students registered was 594, as against 6,466 during the year 1910–11. The faculty at the start consisted of 135 men; now it numbers over 400. At its inception, the university owned four city squares of ground, and its total assets in pledges, endowment, buildings and books were $4,341,708. To-day its endowment and property holdings and pledges total $37,270,792.

Announcement has been made of the consolidation of Barnes Medical College, St. Louis, and the St. Louis College of Physicians and Surgeons. It is hoped that the combination may bring the institution up to the standard required by the State Board of Health.

At Goucher College, Baltimore, Dr. Samuel N. Taylor, formerly professor of engineering at the University of Cincinnati, has been appointed professor of physics, and Dr. William H. Longley, professor of biology.

Professor H. E. Jordan has been promoted to a professorship of histology and embryology at the University of Virginia.

J. Chester Bradley, Ph.D. (Cornell '10), has been promoted to be assistant professor of systematic entomology in Cornell University, to succeed Dr. A. D. MacGillivray, Ph.D. (Cornell '04), who has accepted a similar position in the University of Illinois.

A. J. Goldfarb, Ph.D. (Columbia '10), has been made an instructor in natural history at the College of the City of New York.

Mr. H. A. Wadsworth has been appointed assistant professor in the School of Forestry at the University of Idaho.

Dr. Dudley B. Reed, formerly director of physical education at the University of Rochester, has assumed his duties as medical examiner at the University of Chicago, succeeding Dr. J. E. Raycroft, who has gone to Princeton University as head of a new department of hygiene and physical education.

THE position of curator in paleontology at Columbia University, made vacant by the resignation of Dr. Elvira Wood, has been filled by the appointment of Felix Hahn, Ph.D., of Munich, who began his work at the university in August. Dr. Wood has gone to the Museum of Comparative Zoology in Cambridge.

DR. J. D. FALCONER, late principal officer of the Mineral Survey of Northern Nigeria, has been appointed to the lectureship in geography at Glasgow University, vacated by Captain Lyons, F.R.S.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

TEXT-BOOKS AND REVIEWING

AMONG the numerous text-books which appear every year, some are critically and carefully reviewed, but others are treated superficially, or scarcely noticed. Without having compiled any statistics, I have the impression that the condition of affairs is on the whole very unsatisfactory, especially with regard to books intended for the secondary schools. Having for many years been interested in high-school biology, I have had occasion to look at many text-books and read many reviews, and it seems to me doubtful whether at the present time the high schools are protected, as they ought to be, from bad work. It may be said that the teachers themselves should know enough to avoid the use of badly written books, or to correct the errors in those which are on the whole meritorious; but any one acquainted with actual conditions will know that this is much more difficult than it seems. The one necessary thing is that responsible writers shall deal adequately and frankly with the books in responsible journals, making it impossible for anything unworthy to escape the criticism it deserves. Text-books stand on a somewhat different footing from other works. An original monograph may be praised for its good qualities, and its faults (there are always some!) forgiven. It is judged by the actual advance in knowledge it represents. A text-book should be scrutinized so carefully that all errors are eliminated, save those due to the unwitting ignorance of present-day science. Criticisms which may seem ungracious in respect to original works, are justifiable and necessary when dealing with text-books. I will even suggest that SCIENCE might do worse than open a column headed "errors in text-books," to which teachers should send signed notes pointing out the mistakes they find from time to time. These corrections would be especially valuable when concerning texts in constant use and of known merit.

The immediate occasion for these remarks is a book by Dr. E. Davenport, of the University of Illinois, entitled "Domesticated Animals and Plants" (Ginn & Company, 1910). A copy of this work reached us at the University of Colorado early in the present year, and was examined with more than usual interest, on account of the need for something of the kind in our high schools. It was seen to be of convenient size, well printed, pleasantly written, and well illustrated. However, about the first thing to strike the eye on turning over the pages was a good picture of a passenger pigeon, with the extraordinary statement that it is the "wild parent of all the domesticated sorts that have been developed by selection." On the next two pages are figures of twenty kinds of domestic pigeons, with these legends: "Types of pigeons developed from the rock or passenger pigeon shown in Fig. 13"; "Additional types developed from the passenger pigeon, by selection and breeding." This astounding information is outdone, if that is possible, by some of the definitions at the end of the book, as "*zygote,* that portion of the gamete which determines a unit character"; "*gamete,* the fertilized ovum or ovule." Fairly dizzy, we turn over a few more pages and discover that (p. 163) "every individual transmits all the characters of his ancestry," a statement considered so important that it is italicized. The amount of error in the book is well brought out by Mr. Richard Lydekker, who reviews it in *Nature,* March 23, 1911, p. 107. Taking up the one section on cattle and sheep (eleven pages) he finds a whole series of blunders,