versity, has declined the post of New York State Commissioner of Agriculture, to which he was recently appointed by the State Council of Farms and Markets.

ROBERT C. DUNCAN, physicist at the Bureau of Standards, has resigned to accept a position as technicist for the Bureau of Ordnance, Navy Department.

MR. B. H. RAWL, assistant chief of the Bureau of Animal Industry, U. S. Department of Agriculture, has resigned to take charge of the educational work of the California Central Creameries, with headquarters in San Francisco.

DR. W. K. GREGORY sailed for Sydney, New South Wales, on May 31, to enlist the cooperation of Australian museums with the American Museum of Natural History and to secure material for the Australian Hall of the Museum.

MR. W. L. G. JOERG, of the scientific staff of the American Geographical Society of New York and editor of its Research Series, left on May 21 on a six months' leave of absence for a trip to Europe on behalf of the society to study the present status and tendencies of geography in Europe and to establish closer relations with kindred workers and institutions.

DR. H. H. WHETZEL, head of the department of plant pathology at Cornell University, has been granted sabbatical leave for the year 1921–22. He will sail on June 8 for Bermuda, where he is to be associated with the Department of Agriculture of the Islands in plant disease survey and research work. Dr. L. M. Massey will be acting head of the department in the absence of Professor Whetzel.

A BOTANICAL garden, established as part of Albany's park development program in cooperation with the Albany College of Pharmacy, which will contain every plant grown in the state, is included in the new college plans. According to Dean Mansfield, the garden will be one of the most complete of its kind in the United States and will be arranged after the plan of the London and Paris botanical parks.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS

OFFICIAL announcement is made in *Yale Alumni Weekly* of the construction in the immediate future of a new chemical laboratory by Yale University. It will be known as the Sterling Chemical Laboratory and will be constructed to accommodate all the undergraduate and graduate chemical activities of the university. At present the department of chemistry is occupying the two departmental laboratories, Kent and Sheffield, which are inadequate to meet the future growth of the department.

A MEMORIAL has been presented to the council of the Senate of the University of Cambridge for a syndicate to be appointed to consider possible alterations in the Mathematical and Natural Sciences Triposes with the object of facilitating the acquisition by candidates in one subject of a knowledge of the other.

PROFESSOR R. A. DUTCHER of the department of biochemistry will leave the University of Minnesota at the end of the school year to become head of the department of chemistry in the college of agriculture at Pennsylvania State College.

PROFESSOR A. D. ROSS, professor of mathematics and physics and formerly vice-chancellor of the University of Western Australia, Perth, has been elected a member of the governing body of the university.

IT is proposed to appoint Professor H. Lamb, now in residence in the University of Cambridge, to an honorary university lectureship to be called the Rayleigh lectureship in mathematics.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

THE AURORA OF MAY 14, 1921

A VERY bright auroral display was observed here on the evening of May 14. The sky was overcast until 10 P.M. eastern standard time. As the clouds dissolved, the aurora was noted in spite of the bright moonlight.

The focus of the display was near the zenith in the vicinity of the star Arcturus. From that point streamers radiated in all directions,

constantly changing both in position and in intensity. Across these streamers, pale green pulsating clouds drifted, in general from north to south, but occasionally assuming a spiral form around the zenith. They attained their maximum brightness near the zenith where they were especially conspicuous on account of their almost instantaneous changes in intensity.

Bright colors were not noticed during the evening, but after the moon set about midnight, pale reds and blues appeared on the edges of the streamers and clouds. The display continued at intervals throughout the night. It was not more conspicuous in the north than in other directions.

The aurora was undoubtedly due to the very large group of sun-spots which had just passed the center of the sun's disk.

Frederick Slocum

Middletown, Conn.,
May 15, 1921

Against a clear, moonlit sky, a brilliant auroral display was observed at Ames, Iowa, between 8:30 and 10:30 P.M. on May 14. The arch which was visible throughout this time except at short intervals, formed in our magnetic north and extended about 15 degrees above the horizon.

As the streamers, which were predominantly white, grew in number, in length and in extent along the horizon, they converged to a focus at a point somewhat variable in position but approximately 15° south and 5° west of the zenith, which point, the magnet zenith, became a center of radiation for the streamers. Abouth 15 minutes before the maximum development of the display, streamers of red were seen to rise from the horizon a few degreees south of east and to extend through the radiant center to the horizon about the same distance north of west, forming an arch along a magnetic parallel.

The maximum degree of brilliancy was attained at 9:27, when the streamers from a large coronal area formed about the magnetic zenith extended to the horizon in all directions, lighting the entire heavens. The radial streamers were visible within a few degrees of the moon, which had just passed the first quarter. At this time a dark area a few degrees west of south on the horizon closely resembled an auroral arch, but a definite segment of a circle like that on the northern horizon could not be discerned.

The shades, tints and hues, changeable and increasing from the beginning of the observation, now became more distinct and all of the primary colors appeared in varying degrees of intensity. Reappearing intermittently, the colors gradually faded away during the remaining hour of the display.

John E. Smith

Department of Geology,
Iowa State College

RUSSIAN GEOLOGISTS

The sad fate that has befallen many of the leading Russian geologists and mineralogists constitutes a gloomy chapter in the history of these sciences. From particulars gathered by Professor Sederholm, of Sweden,[1] and confirmed by a personal letter of March 30, 1921, received from Dr. Cornelius Doelter of Vienna, the following data have been secured.

Of some seventy Russian specialists in these fields eleven are dead. Of these, there died in Petrograd the well-known Professors Inostranzer, Fedorov (who died of hunger), Karakash, Derzhavin and Kasanski. Professor Sokolov died in Moscow. Professor Armasevski was shot in Kiev, as were Professors Samiatin and Mitkyevich in Petrograd. Stopnjevich died of smallpox and Snertkov of hunger-typhus. Baron Rebinder committed suicide, and it is reported that Faas is seriously ill.

The president of the Petrograd Academy of Sciences, and former director of the Geological Institute, Alexander Karpinsky, the Nestor of Russian geologists, who is now eighty years old, lives with his three daughters, a son-in-law, and his grandchildren, in a cold kitchen, and suffers great deprivation be-

[1] Given by Professor Mohr in *Centralblatt für Mineralogie, Geologie und Paläontologie*, 15 Jan., 1921, No. 2, p. 60, from the *Svenska Dagbladet*.