Dear Sir:

It has been rumored for a year or more now that there are members of our faculty who hold views which are not in harmony with the fundamental doctrines of historic evangelical Christianity—such as the inspiration, infallibility and authority of the Bible as the Word of God, the direct creation of man, the deity, virgin birth, vicarious death and bodily resurrection of Christ. I have been incredulous of these reports and was disposed to deny them. Recently, however, I have been inclined to fear that there is some foundation for them, and hence this letter.

As you know, the college is owned and controlled by the Southern Presbyterian Church, and is conducted for the purpose of promoting the education and training of our students in the essential principles of Christian doctrine and life as held by the Southern Presbyterian Church and a liberal education in accord with these principles.

It is confidently expected, therefore, that no officer or teacher in the college will hold views, religious or otherwise, which are contrary to or inconsistent with any of the fundamental doctrines of the church. Should such views be held by you, this letter is a request that I as the president of the college be informed of the fact. Should I not hear from you immediately in answer to this letter, I will understand that you hold no such views, and that these reports are without foundation so far as you are concerned.

Yours very cordially,
S. C. BYRD, President

Two professors in the college, Professor Guy A. Lackey, head of the department of education, and professor of education and philosophy, and Professor James M. Reinhardt, of the department of history and sociology, returned answers to the letter of a character presumably unsatisfactory to the president. Their resignations have been asked for, received and accepted.

These men were not questioned as to their creeds before they were employed. Professor Lackey—naïve soul—"took it for granted that all psychologists believe in evolution," and apparently, also, that presidents of all colleges, including denominational ones, realized this common failing of all psychologists.

VERNON KELLOGG

WASHINGTON, D. C.

QUOTATIONS

PROFESSOR WHITEHEAD

PROFESSOR A. N. WHITEHEAD, whose appointment for a period of five years to a chair of philosophy at Harvard was recently announced, is fortunate in securing at the age of sixty-three the opportunity it presents of writing up the philosophy that has gradually been developing and maturing in his mind. Free from much of the routine administration and committee work of a busy university life, with which he is so fully identified, he will be able, save for a few lectures or "chats" per week on his own researches with his students, to devote his whole time to the expansion and publication of his work in certain realms of thought which he had made peculiarly his own—the philosophy of science, mathematical logic and generally the philosophical questions arising from it. On the philosophical side, he proposes to extend and systematize his recent work as embodied in his "Principles of Natural Knowledge," his "Concept of Nature," and "Principles of Relativity," and to consider the metaphysical questions suggested. On the logical side, he intends finishing the fourth volume of "Principia Mathematica," dealing with geometry and more generally with many termed relations. On account of his versatility and his manifold activities, Professor Whitehead's departure from Great Britain will be felt as a great loss to many sections of the educational world, administrative and pedagogic. To the mathematical layman, he is perhaps best known for his "Introduction to Mathematics," probably his one successful book financially, and his collection of addresses, "The Organization of Thought." Since his early days, Professor Whitehead has been identified with a distinctively progressive attitude both with regard to the general philosophic basis of education and to the special technical facilities that demand development. On this account his loss to the Imperial College of Science and Technology, South Kensington, where he succeeded Professor A. R. Forsyth as chief professor of mathematics and mechanics, and to the University of London, where he is chairman of the academic council, can not be estimated. It is a severe commentary on the inelasticity of the British university educational system that it should be necessary for one of such eminence, charm of manner, and inspiring intercourse, to seek a period of five years in an educational establishment of another country in order at the close of an active career to find the opportunity of completing his research. Scientific thought undoubtedly stands to gain by this latest form of American enterprise.—*Nature.*

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

Manual of the Vertebrates of the United States. By H. S. PRATT. P. Blakiston's Son and Company, Philadelphia.

NATURALISTS all over the country will have cause to rejoice at the convenient "Manual of the Vertebrates of the United States" recently brought out by Blakiston. It is written by Dr. H. S. Pratt, of Haverford College, and will serve an equally important function

as the "Manual of the Common Invertebrate Animals" by the same author (McClurg).

Like this latter book, which leaves out of account the insects, on the ground that they are practically a subdivision in themselves, and have been so often and so repeatedly written up that they may here be well left out of account, so in this new manual of the vertebrates the birds are similarly treated, and for the same reasons. The fishes, too, are limited to those of fresh-waters, that is, ponds, lakes and rivers, leaving out of account the ocean-dwellers. In the same way, no mention is made of the true oceanic mammals, whales and porpoises (Cetacea), although seals and manatees (Pinnipedia and Sirenia) are included, as are, of course, otters and beavers. The polar bear is shut out, on the other hand, not because of his occurrence frequently in salt water, but because of his non-inclusion geographically within the limits of the United States.

Within this territory, and within the limits of the animals treated, the author gives a detailed, and very modern, treatment, including not only the various species into which certain well-established and classical animals have expanded, but also in many cases has found room to enumerate many sub-species or varieties. For example, the fishes commonly called "trout" expand into five species of *Onchorhynchus,* 31 species of *Salmo,* two species of *Cristivomer,* and one species of *Salvilinus,* this last divided into five sub-species. Of course these are not all called "trout," for there are several "salmons" among them, which seem to be nothing but convenient popular distinctions, whose replacement by a more technical classification is much to be desired. The genus *Notropis* (Shiners) contains no less than 64 separate species, for which, although some distinctions may have been observed among careful and enthusiastic fishermen, there are nowhere near enough popular names in use among them. The catfish (Siluridae) are represented by five genera and 23 species, of which the commonest, *Ameiurus nebulosus,* is further divided into five subspecies.

The salamanders, so numerous a group in this country, are well expanded, represented by 21 genera and 63 species, the most plentiful North American family, the *Plethodontidae,* consisting of 14 of these genera and 39 of these species. Certain of the most abundant species, like *Desmogmathus fusca,* and *Eurycea* (*Spelerpes*) *bislineata,* mention seven subspecies, five of the first and two of the second, yet the end is not yet!

Scattered throughout the book there will be noticed certain new and unfamiliar names, such as *Eurycea* for the more familiar *Spelerpes*; *Triturus* for *Diemyctylus,* and the introduction of *Sylvilagus* for a branch of the old genus *Lepus.* These, however, follow closely the most recent revisions of the systematists, and are not only inevitable, but, as the systematists assure us, follow the established law of priority, and will not be changed again. Opinions differ concerning the use of these revised names, especially between the systematists and the anatomists, and differences of opinion are natural among such men, since one of them focuses his attention upon the relations of the mesonephros, and those of the arterial arches, and the other upon the number of costal grooves and whether the fore-legs, when folded, reach the nose or not. Whatever opinion we may have on the matter, it is right and important that in writing a work upon systematic zoology the author adopt the newest uses of the systematists.

It is to be devoutly hoped that, eventually, these two groups will unite and no longer force us to employ a long synonymy for each animal; it is also not beyond the possibility that at least amateur fishermen, men who have a real love for nature and are actually naturalists, although they may be unwilling to acknowledge it, may learn to use the terms of systematic zoologists, and be no longer content with the use of vernacular names, which change locally and confuse well-marked varieties.

To accomplish these greatly desired ends, such works as these two of H. S. Pratt are especially calculated.

H. H. W.

A Manual of Laboratory Astronomy. By HARLAN TRUE STETSON, with the collaboration of JOHN CHARLES DUNCAN. Eastern Science Supply Co., Boston, 1923. 150 pages.

IN the teaching of descriptive astronomy, laboratory work has not, in general, been accorded the same relative amount of attention as it has received in physics and chemistry; and this neglect has in some cases been due not to the disinclination of the instructor to use the laboratory method, but to the want of suitable apparatus for indoor work or to the failure to realize that laboratory work need not be entirely dependent on the weather. This manual is well adapted to obviating such difficulties; for the authors have not only provided sufficient exercises for indoor use during cloudy weather, but have also made arrangements whereby the necessary equipment may be purchased conveniently from a single dealer.

The book in its present form contains 33 exercises designed to cover the material usually presented in an elementary course in descriptive astronomy, with references to Moulton's "Introduction to Astronomy," to Young's "Manual of Astronomy," and occasionally to Willson's "Laboratory Astronomy." The exercises are contained, however, in a demountable binding, which, for all practical purposes, holds the leaves as firmly as would a permanent binding, but which per-