lowed by a train of sparks much like a spent rocket, but originated too high to have been one. From our position we could not see if it reached the water. While it seemed to be only two or three miles away, I realized that such appearances are deceptive. There was no sound accompanying the fall audible from where we stood.

WILLIAM L. BRYANT

PARK MUSEUM

QUOTATIONS

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN ZOOLOGY

IN 1924 the Federal Parliament of Australia, knowing the fact that the unique native fauna of the commonwealth was fast disappearing, and recognizing its importance to medical science, founded the National Museum of Australian Zoology. It was a wise and statesmanlike act, the full effect of which is only now beginning to be seen. Dr. Colin Mackenzie was appointed director, with the title of professor of comparative anatomy. It was a museum with a difference. In the previous year Professor Mackenzie had presented to the commonwealth his specimens of living native animals, together with the buildings and fencing on the Research Reservation at Healesville. He had given also his collection of macroscopic and microscopic specimens, numbering many thousands; and these now form the basis of the museum collection. Each specimen has a direct application to some medical or surgical problem. Nothing quite like the collection of normal histological preparations from reptiles, monotremes and marsupials, with which human or other mammalian tissue can be compared, exists anywhere in the world, and we are glad to know that illustrated atlases describing the collection are being prepared for publication—a huge enterprise which has been begun not a day too soon. Early in 1923, when commenting on the announcement that the commonwealth government had passed an act to establish a Museum of Australian Zoology, we observed that there was clearly an obligation on Australia to preserve a full series of specimens, since the whole indigenous fauna of Australia seemed only too likely to follow Tasmanian man to extinction. The commonwealth legislature has now gone rather further than we hoped, for it has not only allotted a site for the National Museum of Australian Zoology at Canberra, the new capital of Australia, but the Federal Capital Commission has provided a site for a zoological park or reservation, in which will be kept living specimens of Australian and Tasmanian native animals in their natural state. The area of the site for the museum, laboratories and lecture theater is about five and a half acres, in a magnificent situation on Action Hill, facing Parliament House. The research reservation or zoological park, containing about eighty acres, is on a peninsula bounded on two sides by the river Molonglo. The report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, dealing with the construction of buildings, has now been published, authorizing for this purpose a sum approximating £100,000. The report has received the unanimous approval of the Federal Parliament, and the buildings, representing what is really the first stage in the establishment of the National University of Australia, will be begun immediately. When the buildings are completed every facility will be offered to workers—not only Australian, but also from other countries—wishing to study comparative anatomy and its application to modern medical and surgical practice. The museum is now at Melbourne, but is to be moved to Canberra next year. To its original contents many important additions have recently been made, including the collection of specimens valued at £25,000 belonging to Dr. George Horne, of Melbourne, dealing with the Stone Age men of Australia, and also a collection of aboriginal skulls made by Dr. Arthur Nankivell, of Kerang. The museum also possesses the Froggatt entomological collection, and that of Mr. Murray Black dealing with the aborigines of South-East Victoria. The completely fossilized prehistoric Cohuna skull, together with many other specimens of anthropological value, belong to the museum. The federal government of Australia is to be congratulated on its decision to establish a center for the advancement of comparative anatomy, which admittedly is the foundation of all the medical sciences. We may venture to express the hope that the lead now given by Professor Colin Mackenzie will encourage wealthy Australians to display a similar national spirit, and by liberal endowments help on the necessary research work in the interests of humanity.—*The British Medical Journal.*

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

The Internal Constitution of the Stars. By A. S. EDDINGTON, M.A., F.R.S., Cambridge; at the University Press, 1926. 407 pp., 5 figures.

THE fundamental problem in astrophysics may be regarded as the construction of models which, obeying the well-established laws of theoretical physics, describe the observed intrinsic properties of the stars. Thus there are stellar models which describe the formation of the observed spectra in reversing layer and chromosphere, models which describe the formation of binary stars by fission and the behavior of cepheid