reprint of his Collection towards a Materia Medica, in Lloyd's Bulletin, No. 1, in 1900. The article shows other omissions of noteworthy facts. For example, no mention is made of the honor bestowed upon Barton by Nuttall in naming a genus of plants "Bartonia." This name has been dropped, as Muhlenberg had given the name Bartonia to another genus and Nuttall's Bartonias are now Mentzelias. Barton's aid to both Pursh and Nuttall is a significant fact in the history of American botany. Barton himself took credit for the fact; see Lloyd's Bulletin, No. 1, page 3. A reference to Barton's connection with William Bartram, referred to in the article on Bartram, should certainly have been included.

A print of one portrait of Barton is mentioned, but the much more accessible reprint in *Popular Science Monthly* for 1896 (vol. 48) is not mentioned.

The bibliography is, of necessity, brief, but it might very properly have included a reference to the article in the *Popular Science Monthly*, (vol. 48: 834–40); possibly also to the reprint of the sketch of W. P. C. Barton, in his "Revised Elements of Botany," in 1836.

Some other articles in the volume are subject to similar criticism. Let this instance of Barton stand as an example. If it be urged that space is limited, it might be answered that at least the facts here mentioned are more significant than some of those included. Nothing should be omitted from the Barton sketch as it is printed, but a little condensation would have permitted the inclusion of everything here suggested.

The omission of (*q.v.*) after the name of T. P. Barton is, of course, only an oversight. Last of all, permit a query of fact: In the article on Jacob Bigelow, should it not be B. S. Barton, not W. P. C. Barton, under whom Bigelow studied?

WILLIAM H. POWERS
LIBRARY, SOUTH DAKOTA STATE COLLEGE

PROFESSOR CONN AND THE BROOKLYN INSTITUTE

IN the note in SCIENCE on the celebration of the conclusion of the first quarter century of the work of the Carnegie Institution at Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, no mention is made of the previous work carried on there by the late Professor Conn under the auspices of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences.

I had the very great pleasure of working under his direction there during the summer of 1892 when I was a medical student, and he showed a remarkable ability to interest his students in personal research and observation.

LOUIS C. AGER

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE

TESTIMONIAL DINNER TO DR. MERRILL

DR. GEORGE PERKINS MERRILL, head curator of geology in the U. S. National Museum, was tendered a dinner on Friday evening, May 31, 1929, at the Cosmos Club in Washington, by friends and colleagues from scientific circles. The dinner was given in honor of Dr. Merrill's seventy-fifth birthday.

Dr. Merrill was born at Auburn, Maine, May 31, 1854, but for half a century has been a resident of Washington where he has been connected with the Smithsonian Institution. During this time Dr. Merrill has won admiration and high esteem from his many friends and acquaintances in scientific and social spheres. His career is indicated by his versatility. He is a teacher, a critic, a public speaker, an executive and a scientist. During his long and active life, Dr. Merrill has done much for the advancement of science, among his many achievements being several works which stand out as monuments, namely, "Stones for Building and Decoration," "Rockweathering and Soils," "The First One Hundred Years of American Geology," and his many highly enlightening works on meteorites, for which, in 1922, he was awarded the J. Lawrence Smith medal by the National Academy of Sciences.

Dr. Merrill received his B.S., MS. and Ph.D. degrees at the University of Maine. In 1917 the honorary degree of doctor of science was conferred upon him by George Washington University, where he had been professor of geology and mineralogy from 1893 to 1915. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, Geological Society of America, Washington Academy of Sciences, American Philosophical Society, and others.

The committee on arrangements for the dinner was composed of Dr. Alexander Wetmore, chairman, Dr. Marcus Benjamin and Dr. Paul Bartsch. Dr. Charles G. Abbot, secretary of the Smithsonian, presided. The speakers of the evening were as follows.

Dr. Marcus Benjamin, editor, U. S. National Museum, gave the general report of the committee, and concluded his remarks as follows:

In a few years the Smithsonian will celebrate its centenary, and I can not but believe that when that event occurs, there will be those who will trace the history of that great institution and who will have much to say about the work of the eminent Henry, and they will review the valuable contributions made by the distinguished Baird. Those who are living in that day will learn more

of the researches of the able and much-loved Goode, and will come a little closer to the eminent if disappointed Langley, and somewhere there will be told something of the important results achieved by Merrill, so that his name will shine with added glory among this galaxy of scientists, contributing much to his own fame and reflecting luster on the reputation of the great institution which he has served so faithfully during the many years of his long life.

Dr. L. O. Howard, formerly chief of the Bureau of Entomology, U. S. Department of Agriculture, now retired as senior entomologist, spoke of Dr. Merrill's work as a museum curator. Dr. Howard gave his address with unusual charm, and paid high tribute to Merrill's qualifications in this line, stating that "Dr. Merrill is the best museum man in his line alive to-day."

The next speaker, Dr. H. S. Washington, of the Geophysical Laboratory, Carnegie Institution of Washington, whose subject was "Dr. Merrill and his Studies of Meteorites," spoke as follows:

It was my privilege to make the acquaintance of Dr. Merrill and of the City of Washington simultaneously, about 1888, at the time when his first paper on meteorites was published. Since then he has "carried on" most actively along this line, and, apart from many books and papers dealing with other subjects, he is the author of some fifty-eight papers on meteorites alone, in which he describes forty new falls—a truly remarkable record. And he is still going strong. He is one of the most active workers on meteorites now living, and his researches cover many different phases of their study. Dr. Merrill thus takes his place with his famous predecessors, J. Lawrence Smith and C. U. Shepard, as one of a great trio high in the annals of American science.

In a long series of memoirs and papers on the chemistry of meteorites, Dr. Merrill, with the analytical cooperation of Dr. J. E. Whitfield, has made one of the most valuable contributions of recent years to our knowledge of these bodies. In the course of these he showed the general presence of certain elements (such as those of the platinum group) and the absence of others (as barium and fluorine). Merrill has also made many detailed studies of the various minerals that occur in meteorites, adding much to our knowledge of them. One of these, first identified by him, has been named in his honor. He has also devoted much attention to the study of the peculiar textures of meteorites, casting light on some hitherto obscure features. For these researches Dr. Merrill was awarded the J. Lawrence Smith gold medal by the National Academy.

Our friend also contributed greatly to the elucidation of the vast "crater" in Arizona, known as Meteor Crater, as having been caused by the impact of a huge meteorite, thus disposing of the hypothesis that it originated in the strenuous efforts made by a Scotchman to recover a shilling that he had lost down a gopher hole.

For these researches he had the courage to make use of the meteorites in his care in amounts sufficiently large for the scientific purpose in view. Similarly, many mineralogists are deeply indebted to him for his generosity and broadmindedness in providing material and specimens of minerals for proper scientific study. The specimens were not used up—they were rightfully used. In this respect Dr. Merrill stands out from many museum curators, who regard specimens only as objects to be viewed in a glass case, rather than as material for scientific study. He is thus, to my mind, an ideal type of curator.

Finally, Dr. Merrill, by his industry, wisdom, the ability to make friends and the knowledge that specimens entrusted to him will be fully appreciated and properly used for their scientific interest, has got together, in the forty-odd years of his curatorship, a magnificent collection of meteorites in our National Museum. It is one of the great meteorite collections of the world, and it, with his many contributions to the science of these mysterious bodies, will always remain one of his greatest memorials.

Dr. Harvey W. Wiley, well known in the field of chemistry, then had a word to say as to Dr. Merrill's chemical researches in geology. "Dr. Merrill is the most complete authority on soils," said Dr. Wiley. "He has given much to geology but has given much more to agriculture—how much, the public will never know." Dr. Wiley further stated, "The greatest work on the genesis of soils we owe to Merrill."

Miss Margaret W. Moodey, Dr. Merrill's assistant for many years, then presented a bound volume of testimonial letters of congratulation and esteem, from his friends and colleagues in America and foreign countries.

Dr. Merrill's response followed. He said, in part: "At times I have felt that I must get away from Washington, but after talking the matter over with Mrs. Merrill, we decided to stay. To-night I am happy that we did, for in no other place could we have found the culture and friendship that we have here." Dr. Merrill closed his address with lines expressive of a hope based upon T. B. Brown's well-known poem:

"I stand upon the summit of my years!"
So may it ever be,
Not bowed beneath their weight
With feet firm planted
And soul undaunted
I'll stand and contemplate
What time has wrought,
And tremble not
For what was, is,
Or is to be,
I'll stand upon the summit of my years.

JAMES H. BENN
U. S. NATIONAL MUSEUM