Dr. A. S. Eakle presented 'Notes on Some Rocks from the Fiji Islands.' The collection, which included both igneous and sedimentary rocks from about twenty of the smaller volcanic islands, was made by Mr. Alexander Agassiz during his recent studies in that region. The specimens of eruptive rocks were found to include hornblende andesites, augite andesites, hypersthene andesites and basalts.

J. M. BOUTWELL,
Recording Secretary.

TORREY BOTANICAL CLUB, JANUARY 25, 1899.

Dr. N. L. BRITTON presented a report on the progress of the New York Botanical Garden, with exhibition of photographs. Dr. Britton said that during 1898 the species cultivated in the Garden at Bronx Park have reached 2,110, a gain of 700 on the previous year. The fruticetum, on the plain northeast of the Museum building, was begun in October, and now includes 195 species. The arboretum has been increased to 178 species, including those native to the tract. A viticetum is in preparation, to be planted next spring, including rock-ledges, and a rustic arbor about 600 feet long, now nearly completed. An additional nursery space near the southern corner of the tract was prepared in the spring, and planted partly with Siberian cuttings. Border screens are now planted around the entire tract except to the south. A complete record of all plants grown is kept by means of a card catalogue. From every plant which flowers on the ground an herbarium specimen is made; and these are classified in a special herbarium, useful already in satisfying inquiries. The use of the greenhouse on the Columbia University grounds at Morningside Heights was granted in 1896, and is still very important to the Garden. This is the old greenhouse built in 1857 by Mr. S. Henshaw for the Bloomingdale Asylum, and is one of the oldest greenhouses still standing in the United States.

Progress on the Museum building has been active, and it is thought it will be ready for occupation by midsummer. The Power House is nearly ready to put into operation. A subway from this to the Museum is under construction. A stable, toolhouse, etc., have been

finished. The range of horticultural houses is planned to contain 13 houses; the contract for 7 of these has been signed, and ground was formally broken for them on January 3, 1899. Important work has been done toward improving the drainage of the Herbaceous Grounds, and a great deal of grading, and the terraces about the Museum have been begun. The Lorillard Mansion is now used as a police station-house, occupied by more than 65 officers, making a new and wholesome water-supply necessary. This has now been finished.

The Hemlock Forest remains in healthy condition; only three trees have died in the last three years.

The Museum is planned to provide in the basement a lecture-room seating 900; on the first floor a collection of plant-products, with models and photographs; on the second, a scientific collection for expert use, including a mounted collection of the local flora on swinging panels; followed by herbarium and laboratories on the top floor.

The herbarium already includes 30,000 specimens. Through the liberality of Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt, Mr. and Mrs. Heller are now making collections in Porto Rico. Messrs. P. A. Rydberg and Ernest Bessey made collections in 1897 in Montana, through the liberality of Mr. W. E. Dodge. The results will soon appear as a Flora of Montana, forming the first volume of the *Memoirs of the New York Botanical Garden*.

E. S. BURGESS,
Secretary.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR SCIENTIFIC SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES.

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: I feel that an experience of several years as a respectful and regular listener to scientific papers by young and old students, at college seminars or conferences, and at annual or periodic meetings of societies, gives me the basis for certain generalizations, without leaving me open to the criticism of judging from insufficient data.

The principal generalization I should like to offer is to the effect that our scientific students in colleges and professional schools do not re-