We have found in this laboratory that a large direct-vision spectroscope is most satisfactory for projection.

When salts are placed in the crater the effect is just as striking as with iron, but naturally more transitory.

E. P. HARRISON.

Physical Laboratory, Presidency College,
Calcutta, July 18.

Strepsiptera in India.

IN a notice on Dr. W. W. Fowler's recent volume on Coleoptera (Fauna of British India Series), the reviewer makes a statement (*vide* NATURE, May 16, 1912, p. 267) to the effect that "the abnormal Coleoptera, Strepsiptera or Stylopidae, . . . are not yet proved to be Indian." If, as I gather from the context, by "Indian" is meant "represented in the Indian region," this statement is incorrect. So long ago as 1858 Westwood described *Myrmecolax nietneri*, obtained from a species of ant in Ceylon. W. Dwight Pierce refers to this record in his "Monographic Revision of the Insects comprising the Order Strepsiptera" (Smithsonian Institution, Bulletin 66, p. 88, 1909), and in the same author's "Notes on Insects of the Order Strepsiptera" (Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus., vol. xl., p. 490, 1911) he refers to the same species an insect that I captured at light in the Yatiyantota district of Ceylon. In the same paper (p. 505) he describes a new species—*Pentazoe peradeniyae*—bred by me from the Homopteron—*Thomponiella arcuata*—at Peradeniya.

Another species, as yet undetermined, is a common parasite of the allied Jassid—*Tettigoniella spectra*. Again, in his useful work, "Indian Insect Life," Lefroy records the occurrence of a species of *Xenos* in the bodies of the wasp *Polistes hebraeus* in India. I think that these references are sufficient to prove the existence of Strepsiptera in the Indian region.

E. ERNEST GREEN,

Entomologist to the Ceylon Government.
Royal Botanic Gardens, Peradeniya, Ceylon
July 5.

IN reference to Mr. Green's letter, I should perhaps have verified the statement to which he takes exception, but will now merely quote a passage from Dr. Fowler's work concerning the Strepsiptera:—

"They have been found in Europe, North America, Brazil, Africa, and Mauritius, and stylopized bees have been observed in Tasmania and other countries; most probably they are represented in the Indian region."

THE REVIEWER.

The Occultation of a Star by Jupiter.

IN reference to the occultation of the star ω Ophiuchi by the planet Jupiter on September 15, I should like to direct attention to the possibility that one or other of the satellites may make a close approach to the star, so that it would be worth while to observe the planet for several hours before and after the occultation itself. Satellite I. will be nearest to the star about 6 p.m. on that date, at which time Jupiter will be favourably situated for observation in Europe and Africa. The second satellite will be in conjunction with the star about 6 a.m. on September 16, and satellite III. about midnight on September 15. The latter is in transit on the evening of that day, and emerges from the disc shortly after the com-

mencement of the occultation. The conjunction of this satellite with the star will therefore be visible in America. Satellite IV. is at this time well to the east of the planet, and its nearest approach to the star, which takes place in the early afternoon of September 15, may therefore be witnessed in India and China.

It is unfortunate that the occultation of this fairly bright star (mag. 4.5) will not be visible in this country. The star disappears behind the planet between 9h. 20m. and 9h. 30m., the time varying slightly in different localities owing to the effect of parallax. Reappearance takes place between 10h. 45m. and 11h. 0m.

ARTHUR BURNET.

52 Prospect Terrace, Hunslet Moor, Leeds.

August 15.

Boulder Clay in Essex.

WITH your kind permission I should like to supplement the letter which you were good enough to print in NATURE for June 20, 1912.

(1) To the geological formations recognised in the erratics must now be added varieties of Millstone-grit (rather frequent), Marl-slate (as seen at the base of the Magnesian Limestone in Notts), and a highly weathered, roughly cleaved slate, reminding one of the Swithland quarries (Charnwood). A slab of Millstone-grit (32 in. $\times$ 28 in. $\times$ 8 in.) is the largest erratic observed. A very coarse-grained Oolite (unfossiliferous) has also turned up.

(2) Two miles south of Harlow the limit of the Boulder Clay is reached, and we come upon the London Clay, with frequent *Septaria*. This occurs at first underlying the "till," and from that point southwards nothing but London Clay is met with.

(3) Several fragments of crystalline rock have now been found, but these have not yet been accurately determined or identified as to their original home.

(4) Mindful of recent speculations as to the antiquity of the Hominid in relation to the great Chalky Boulder Clay of southern England, a keen but futile search has been made for anything of the nature of a human artefact.

A. IRVING.

Bishop's Stortford, August 17.

The Prairie Wolf and Antarctic Dog.

IN my book on the distribution and origin of life in America, I stated that an intimate relationship existed between the prairie wolf of North America and the Falkland Island wolf. The reviewer of my book, however, remarks (NATURE, July 25) that this is a complete fallacy. Might I ask whether your reviewer would be good enough to mention the grounds on which he bases his assertion?

R. F. SCHARFF.

National Museum of Ireland, Kildare Street,
Dublin, August 2.

My reason for speaking as I did about the alleged relationship between the prairie wolf and the Antarctic dog was to prevent the mistake being passed any further into zoological literature, and my assertion that the two species are not closely allied was based partly upon some external features, but mainly upon the characters of the skulls, which show clearly that *C. antarcticus* must be affiliated with some of the Neotropical Canidae, and *C. latrans* with the wolves and jackals of the northern hemisphere. I will justify this opinion more fully elsewhere.

R. I. P.