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OWNERSHIP OF AN AEROLITE.

A curious question was decided in a recent case before the Supreme Court of Iowa, *Goodard v. Winchell*, as to the ownership of an aërolite. The point was whether the owner of the soil on which it fell, or the first discoverer, was the owner of the stone. The Supreme Court decided in favor of the owner of the soil, and as to the correctness of this opinion, we think there can be no serious question. The following is the substance of the opinion:—

The subject of the dispute is an aërolite, of about sixty-six pounds weight; that "fell from the heavens" on the land of the plaintiff, and was found three feet below the surface. It came to its position in the earth through natural causes. It was one of nature's deposits, with nothing in its material composition to make it foreign or unnatural to the soil. It was not a movable thing "on the earth." It was in the earth, and, in a very significant sense, immovable; that is, it was only movable as parts of earth are made movable by the hand of man. Except for the peculiar manner in which it came, its relation to the soil would be beyond dispute. It was in its substance, as we understand, a stone. It was not of a character to be thought of as "unclaimed by any owner," and, because unclaimed, "supposed to be abandoned by the last proprietor," as should be the case under the rule invoked by appellant. In fact, it has none of the characteristics of the property contemplated by such a rule.

We may properly note some of the particular claims of appellant. His argument deals with the rules of the common law for acquiring real property, as by escheat, occupancy, prescription, forfeiture and alienation, which, it is claimed, were all the me-