

Mason Science College, to furnish an education that would fit men especially for developing the industries of the Midland Counties of England. It was at first intended that all mere literary and theological education should be excluded from this institution, but it has been recently determined to have it fully equipped for imparting instruction in all branches usually taught in colleges.

The centenary of the birth of George Stephenson, inventor of the locomotive steam-engine, was celebrated in England lately with great *éclat*. In commemoration, arrangements were made for the establishment of scholarships to place the advantages of a university education and special training in mechanical engineering within the reach of capable students whose circumstances would otherwise render such training impossible. The total number of scholarships and exhibitions will be fifty-two.

The comet which has of late received so much attention from astronomers was first astronomically observed in the southern hemisphere on May 29th, and appears to have been at its least distance from the earth about June 21st. Its brightness is about that of a star of the fifth or sixth magnitude. The majority of English and American astronomers seem to lean to the opinion that this comet has not been seen before this year, in modern times, at least. We notice, however, that at a late meeting of the Paris Academy of Sciences the opinion was maintained that the comet now visible is the same as that observed in 1807.

Since our last issue, two men of repute in the scientific world have passed away—Profs. Rolleston and St. Claire Deville. The former was Professor of Anatomy and Physiology at Oxford, whilst the latter was Professor of Chemistry in the *Ecole Normale* at Paris. To Deville the world owes the only process at present employed in obtaining aluminium and magnesium, as well as improved methods for obtaining sodium, whereby this metal is now comparatively cheap.

J. T. D.

LITERARY DEPARTMENT.

The second centenary of Calderon has this year been celebrated in Spain, and has occupied the attention of the Spanish literary and scientific societies and journals. Menendez Pelayo writes as follows of the Spanish Theatre, of which Calderon is the Shakespeare:—"What our theatre gains in nationality it loses in universality. We cannot hope to be admired and worshipped by the whole world of culture, as are Sophocles and Shakespeare; we smack too much of the soil for that; we are too exclusively national to appear natural to, and to arouse the sympathies of, another people. This is an advantage and a demerit. Our drama is perhaps the second, or at least the third, in the world. It may be invoked as a war-flag in the time of romantic (literary) revolution; but it cannot be adopted as a type or model of the beautiful, as is the case with the idealistic art of Sophocles, and with the realistic art of Shakespeare, the two equally admirable poles of dramatic Art."