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CONTENTS:
The Cultural Value of Engineering Education: PROFESSOR FRANK O. MARVIN 121
Physical Chemistry: PROFESSOR J. H. VAN'T HOFF 125
Psychology and the Medical School: PROFESSOR GEORGE E. DEARBORN 129
The Botanical Work Committee 136
The Function of the State University: PRESIDENT R. H. JESSE 138
Scientific Books:—
   Bigourdan on Le système métrique des poids et mesures: DR. T. C. MENDEHALL 143
   Lyons on Electromagnetic Phenomena: PROFESSOR M. F. O'Reilly: Jordan and Kellogg on Animal
   Life: S. H. G. General 149
Scientific Journals and Articles 149
Societies and Academies:—
   The Onondaga Academy of Sciences: H. W. Britcher 149
Discussion and Correspondence:—
   The Larynx as an Instrument of Music: PROFESSOR WILLIAM HALLOCK. 'Is Larynx Contagious?' H. S. GAUS 150
Current Notes on Physiography:—
   Glacial Corries in the Bighorn Mountains; The North German Lowland: PROFESSOR W. M. DAVIS 152
   Museum Reports: F. A. L 153
   The American Chemical Society 154
   Railway Time Table between the East and Denver 156
   Scientific Notes and News 157
   University and Educational News 160

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THE CULTURAL VALUE OF ENGINEERING EDUCATION.∗

At the very outset of this discussion is encountered a great difficulty. What is culture? The writer has been asking this of his friends. An answer has been sought for in the printed page where is recorded the best thought of the best minds. Great thoughts and lofty ideals have been disclosed, but nowhere has been found a satisfactory definition, a phrase or paragraph that succinctly and clearly sets forth the heart of the matter.

People often recognize, appreciate and reverence its possession without being able to fully analyze and set down its elements. There is something subtle and emotional about it that eludes a close pursuit.

The reason for this perhaps lies in its essential individual quality, in its being the result of a personal life, developed, it is true, on lines similar to those used in other lives, yet including something that pertains exclusively to the human unit that is different from all other units.

Nevertheless, there seem to be certain fundamental qualities which must be possessed before a man can be classed with cultured people, qualities which are only acquired after a considerable experience in

∗Address of the President of the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education, Buffalo meeting, June 29, 1901.