

SCIENCE

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GEOGRAPHY IN THE UNITED STATES.* I.

FOR twenty years past our section has acknowledged in its name an equal rank for geology and geography, but not one of the vice-presidential addresses during that period, or, indeed, since the foundation of the association over fifty years ago, has been concerned with the subject second named. Unless we cross off geography from the list of our responsibilities, it should certainly receive at least occasional attention; let me, therefore, depart from all precedents, and, even though geologists may form the majority in this gathering, consider the standing of geography among the sciences of the United States; how it has reached the place it now occupies, and what the prospects are for its further advance.

One measure of the place that geography occupies in this country may be made by considering the share that geographical problems have had in the proceedings of our association; here follow, therefore, the results of a brief examination of our fifty volumes of records. In the early years of the association there was no fixed division into sections. The meetings were sometimes so small that papers from various sciences were presented in general session. At least once in the early years the work of our predecessors was recorded under the general heading, 'natural history, etc.' As early as in 1851 there was a section of

* Address of the vice-president and chairman of Section E—Geology and Geography—of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, St. Louis meeting, December, 1903.

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