

SCIENCE

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CONTENTS

The American Association for the Advancement of Science:—

The History of the Fertilization Problem:
PROFESSOR FRANK R. LILLIE 39

The Work and Opportunités of a Department of Research Medicine in the University: PROFESSOR RICHARD M. PEARCE 53

Scientific Notes and News 63

University and Educational News 67

Discussion and Correspondence:—

The Determination of Nitrates in Soils: P. S. BURGESS. *A Simple Method for the Elimination of Protozoa from Mixed Cultures of Bacteria:* HENRY N. JONES 67

Scientific Books:—

Bulkeley on Cancer, its Cause and Treatment, Bainbridge on the Cancer Problem: DR. LEO LOEB. *Cooke on The Age of the Ocala Limestone:* PROFESSOR G. D. HARRIS 69

Special Articles:—

Peridermium Harknessii and Cronartium quercuum: E. P. MEINECKE. *A Simple Demonstration of the Reduced Vapor Pressure over a Solution:* DR. ARTHUR TABER JONES 73

The American Mathematical Society: PROFESSOR F. N. COLE 73

Societies and Academies:—

The Biological Society of Washington: M. W. LYON, JR. 75

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE THE HISTORY OF THE FERTILIZATION PROBLEM¹

WE come together at this season of the year to discuss the latest advances in our science and to listen to the announcement of new discoveries. This implies a philosophy of life, an optimistic philosophy; we would not work as individuals nor assemble as societies if we did not believe that science is worth while, and that human progress is both possible, and, for some inscrutable reason, worth working for. This was the philosophy of science in the time of the Greeks, and it is the philosophy of our science of scarce four hundred years' growth. Modern science, I need hardly say, was entirely European in its origin, as is our American scientific population; and all science is ours to promote and advance by right of inheritance no less than of intellectual sympathy. Now that the great war is so largely arresting the progress of science in Europe it is our bounden duty to see that there is no halting in America; we should hold fast to our faith and strengthen our efforts for the advancement of science.

As we all labor for progress in science, I thought it would not be entirely out of place if, instead of dealing with some new subject, I attempted to lay before you a picture of the total progress in some central problem of biology; it can be nothing more than a sketch, but it may perhaps

¹ Address delivered before the American Society of Naturalists, and the Zoological Section of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, December 30, 1915.

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