

# SCIENCE

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## ADVENTURE, ROMANCE AND SCIENCE<sup>1</sup>

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MAX has struggled up a long trail from the past, leaving many competitors extinct along the way, and stands on the high peak of civilization that we enjoy to-day. Even in the old stone age there was plenty of adventure, with perhaps a little romance now and then—yes, and science, too. From the glimpses that ancient documents give into what went on in times long before they were written, and from conditions that obtain among primitive peoples to-day, it seems probable that there have always been scientists among men. These scientists were, and are, peculiar personalities that wanted to know about things. Even to-day they are often looked upon by many of their companions as men of “authority” and at times treated with respect.

In his life cycle every man roughly recapitulates the past, and (alas!) probably the future, history of the human race. This recapitulation is apparent in many ways, but, as civilized man is judged chiefly by his mind, the present discussion will be confined to mental qualities. A child sucks, feels and views his little world with wonder and admiration; thrills with new sensations—gaining in experience day by day. After a time he finds that he knows something, and becomes a delighted critic of his father's table manners and his little sister's English. Approaching maturity, he wants to do something—just what is uncertain—but something must be done. Man has an instinctive urge for a place in the world. Then the golden age comes—the man finds out what the greatest thing in the world is and begins his life work. He trains and works and looks for responsibility and plans, and—if Fortune smiles—may meet with success. After a life spent in labor, the man finds that he is not as important as he thought in the beginning. Then he takes a little time off now and then to enjoy himself, and sometimes develops a certain degree of toleration for others who are trying to live a life. Finally, man spends his old age feeling more or less apologetic for living at all. But hope never seems to die in the human breast and the old man, though left behind by the next generation and in his soul convinced of his perfect uselessness, does not despair. In fact, he gets considerable satisfaction by telling the rising generation about what he claims is a grand life

<sup>1</sup> Presidential address before the Wisconsin Chapter of Sigma Xi, May 2, 1923.

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