

SCIENCE

VOL. LIX

APRIL 25, 1924

No. 1530

CONTENTS

<i>The History of the American Association for the Advancement of Science</i> ; PROFESSOR HERMAN L. FAIRCHILD	365
<i>The Theory of Nervous Activity</i> ; DR. P. LASAREFF.....	369
<i>Plans for the Enlargement of the Marine Biological Laboratory</i> ; PROFESSOR FRANK R. LILLIE	371
Scientific Events:	
<i>British Botanical Conference; Fourth International Conference on Soil Science; The Committee on Grants of the American Association; The Installation of the Johns Hopkins Chapter of Sigma Xi; The American Chemical Society</i>	372
<i>Scientific Notes and News</i>	374
<i>University and Educational Notes</i>	377
Discussion and Correspondence:	
<i>Concerning the Variations of Atmospheric Electricity and Vertical Currents</i> ; DR. LOUIS A. BAUER. <i>Caverns in the Guadalupe Mountains</i> ; DR. CHARLES LAURENCE BAKER. <i>The Flashing of Fireflies</i> ; HESTER L. VAN VLECK. <i>Joseph Leidy</i> ; R. C. CANBY. <i>Exhibition of the Royal Geographical Society</i> ; A. J. NEWTON	378
Scientific Books:	
<i>Mellor's Treatise on Inorganic and Theoretical Chemistry</i> ; PROFESSOR GRAHAM EDGAR	380
Special Articles:	
<i>A Simple Method for Quantitative Studies of Ionization Phenomena in Gases</i> ; DR. IRVING LANGMUIR and H. A. JONES. <i>Plurisegmental Innervation of Skeletal Muscle Fibers and Implications concerning Fatigue</i> ; DR. MCKEEN CATTELL and DR. PERCY G. STILES	380
<i>Science News</i>	x

SCIENCE: A Weekly Journal devoted to the Advancement of Science, edited by J. McKeen Cattell and published every Friday by

THE SCIENCE PRESS

Lancaster, Pa. Garrison, N. Y.

New York City: Grand Central Terminal.

Annual Subscription, \$6.00. Single Copies, 15 Cts.

SCIENCE is the official organ of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Information regarding membership in the association may be secured from the office of the permanent secretary, in the Smithsonian Institution Building, Washington, D. C.

Entered as second-class matter July 18, 1923, at the Post Office at Lancaster, Pa., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

THE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE*

ORIGIN: EARLY EVENTS

THE American Association for the Advancement of Science had its inception in geology, and by the geologists of the New York Geological Survey. A bronze tablet on an old residence in Albany, New York, corner of Hudson Avenue and High Street, bears this inscription:¹

In this house, the home of
Dr. Ebenezer Emmons,
the first formal efforts were made, in
1838 and 1839, toward the organization of the
Association of American Geologists
the parent body of the
American Association for the
Advancement of Science
by whose authority this tablet is erected
1901

The several narratives of the early history differ only with reference to the credit for first suggesting the conference of American geologists. In a memorial to Lardner Vanuxem (1, 1848, 91-2) James Hall gave the credit to Vanuxem, and indicated that the purpose of the conference was the harmonizing of the Paleozoic stratigraphic nomenclature. At the Albany meeting of the association in 1856, Hall again describes the circumstances of the conversations, in 1838, 1839, of the New York Board of Geologists (10: 231).

The report of the committee on the Emmons House memorial (50: 392) quotes a letter, of date November 9, 1838, from W. W. Mather to Emmons, suggesting a conference, but saying that he had received the idea from Edward Hitchcock. And Hitchcock also recounted the early events in his address at the inauguration of the Geological Hall in Albany, Au-

* Address at the Seventy-fifth Anniversary Meeting of Association, Cincinnati, December 29, 1923.

¹ The association is indebted to Dr. John M. Clarke, for the conception and execution of the memorial project. The proposal was made through Section E in June, 1900. (49: 383). The expense was borne by a member and friend of the association, Hon. T. Guilford Smith. The story of the memorial tablet is told in the New York State Museum Bulletin, No. 52, pages 452-456.

Numerals in parenthesis, unless otherwise noted, refer to volume and page of the Association Proceedings.

Science

59 (1530)

Science **59** (1530), x-384.

ARTICLE TOOLS

<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/59/1530.citation>

PERMISSIONS

<http://www.sciencemag.org/help/reprints-and-permissions>

Use of this article is subject to the [Terms of Service](#)

Science (print ISSN 0036-8075; online ISSN 1095-9203) is published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1200 New York Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20005. The title *Science* is a registered trademark of AAAS.

Copyright © 1924 The Authors, some rights reserved; exclusive licensee American Association for the Advancement of Science. No claim to original U.S. Government Works.