

# SCIENCE

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HIGHER ENDEAVOR IN SCIENCE<sup>1</sup>

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PHILADELPHIA, Princeton and Menlo Park are the beginning, the middle, and the end of a tiny strip of territory which is the cradle of American history. No other spot in the vast territory of these United States reminds us of so many great historical events. No names of Americans remind us of so many great events in the history of American science as the following names: Benjamin Franklin, of Philadelphia, Joseph Henry, of Princeton, and Thomas Edison, of Menlo Park. Just as the achievements of the continental congresses in Philadelphia, and Washington's victories at Trenton and Princeton laid the foundation of these United States, so the scientific achievements of Franklin, of Joseph Henry and of Edison laid the foundation and added some of the superstructures of earlier American science.

The tiny state of New Jersey and the tiny strip of its territory on which we are standing to-day can justly claim the lion's share of the glory of these great achievements. The Battle Monument at Princeton, speaking in accents modulated by the chisel of Macmonnies, tells the story of a great victory; these buildings the cornerstones of which we are laying to-day will be monuments which will tell a wonderful story of great achievements in American science and of a victory which was one of the crowns of these achievements. This victory, just like that of the battle of Princeton, was won right here at Princeton. It is seemly that on this memorable occasion I recite a bit of this story.

Prior to Franklin's time the natural philosopher riveted his attention upon electricity at rest. Franklin's discovery that lightning is a motion of electricity revolutionized the mental attitude of the natural philosopher of Franklin's time, and motion of electricity became the favorite subject of his inquiry. Just as during the century preceding Franklin the genius of Galileo and of Newton had revealed a new universe, the universe of matter moving in obedience to simple laws, so during the century which Franklin's discovery inaugurated a new universe was revealed; it is the universe of electricity in motion obeying simple laws of electrical action. The discovery and formulation of these laws are the greatest scientific glory of the century which began with Franklin's discovery.

<sup>1</sup> Address on the laying of the cornerstones of an engineering building and a chemical laboratory at Princeton University, on May 12, 1927.

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