

Science or Sciences?

The old system of giving high school boys and girls courses in chemistry, physics, and biology merely in order that they may meet college entrance requirements is all wrong, in the opinion of Miss Louise Nichols, specialist in science teaching, of Philadelphia.

"A comparatively small percentage of high school graduates now go to higher institutions," says Miss Nichols, in a survey of the situation in *Progressive Education*. "The average student needs to have learned during his school years how science can assist him to better and fuller living rather than how it can assist him to pass a college entrance examination."

The newer method of teaching science, she explains, is to introduce the adolescent to science, rather than to special sciences. In the South Philadelphia High School, where she is head of the science department, students first study plants and animals, in which all boys and girls are interested, and also the scientific principles in everyday happenings.

From this, they advance to learning how elementary principles of science affect the life of a home and how they broaden and better the life and environment of a community. Students who take a fourth year of science are taught something of the influence of science on life in the past and future, including theories of evolution and heredity, and the changes in the earth's structure.

Courses in science should not only stimulate the imagination but should also develop habits of accurate observation and rigorous thinking, Miss Nichols declares.

Science News-Letter, October 30, 1926

GENERAL SCIENCE

Our Debt to the Past

The human mind enjoys today an enormous possession of ideas, heaped up, selected, sifted out by the centuries. The multitude of men have disappeared without contributing to this store a jot. Those who have had the fortune to add something, to leave something, should have their part in the glory and the recognition which is their due.—Bailly: *Histoire de l'As-tronomie Moderne*.

Science News-Letter, October 30, 1926

Violet is one of the most difficult scents to produce artificially.

Science News-Letter, October 30, 1926

Cicero on Gravitation

First let us examine the earth, whose situation is in the middle of the universe—solid, round, and conglobular by its natural tendency.

. . . What is most wonderful is that the world is so durable, and so perfectly made for lasting that it is not to be impaired by time; for all its parts tend equally to center, and are bound together by a sort of chain, which surrounds the elements; this chain is nature, which being diffused through the universe, and performing all things with judgment and reason, attracts the extremities to the center.

If, then, the world is round, and if on that account all its parts, being of equal dimensions and relative proportions, mutually support and are supported by one another, it must follow that, as all the parts incline to the center (for that is the lowest place of a globe, there is nothing whatever which can put a stop to that propensity, in the case of such great weights. For the same reason, though the sea is higher than the earth, yet because it has the like tendency, it is collected everywhere, equally concentrates, and never overflows, and is never wasted.

The stars have their revolutions in the sky, and are continued by the tendency of all parts towards the center; their duration is perpetuated by their form and figure, for they are round; which form, as I think has been before observed, is the least liable to injury.—Cicero: *Nature of the Gods*.

Science News-Letter, October 30, 1926

ARCHÆOLOGY

First Aid to Readers

Quotations from a glossary of technical terms running serially in *ART AND ARCHÆOLOGY*, since June, 1926. Edited by Arthur S. Riggs.

Ab: in Egyptian mythology, the heart, which at death enters the spirit-world alone, to testify to the deeds of its former owner.

Acrolith: in Greek art, a statue with wooden body, stone head and extremities, and textile draperies.

Ael: in Norse mythology, the nectar the dead heroes quaff in Valhalla, served by Freya.

Mousterian: the name given to the fourth subdivision of Paleolithic man; also to artifacts of the type first discovered in the cave of Le Moustier in the Dordogne, France.

Mycenean era: the most ancient period of Greek art.

Petroglyph: a diagram, picture or inscription cut upon a rock.

Science News-Letter, October 30, 1926

First Glances at New Books

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF ANTS.

By René Antoine Ferchault de Réaumur. Translated and annotated by William Morton Wheeler. New York. Alfred A. Knopf. 1926.

Written by one of the most remarkable scientists who ever lived, about one of the most remarkable of all insects, translated and edited by the foremost living authority on ants, this book stands as something really unique. The complete French text, hitherto unpublished, is printed, and the addition thereto of thorough-going biographical and scientific notes and a full bibliography of Réaumur's works make it as valuable to the student as its vividness and style make it interesting to the general reader.

AUTHORITATIVE STATEMENTS ON SCIENCE, EVOLUTION, RELIGION AND THE BIBLE. Compiled by Samuel S. Wyer. With Introduction by President Emeritus W. O. Thompson, Moderator, General Assembly, Presbyterian Church. Columbus. S. S. Wyer, 1014 Hartman Bldg.

A handy pamphlet consisting exclusively of quotations on the relations of religion and science by thinkers in both fields from Augustine to Fostick and from Galileo to Millikan.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE HORSE, by Frederic B. Loomis, Boston. Marshall Jones Company. \$3.00.

The history of the horse from "the little *Eohippus*" to *Equus*, "written so you can understand it," and blessed with brief but well-chosen chapter bibliographies.

LIBRARIES AND ADULT EDUCATION. New York. Macmillan Co. \$2.50.

The report of the Commission on the Library and Adult Education of the American Library Association which for two years has been studying the question of how to reach a wider public with systematic and well selected reading. Contains methods, practical advice, lists of book lists and references to the literature and agencies. An indispensable guide for all librarians and educators who want to keep up with this expansion movement.

Science News-Letter, October 30, 1926

The most primitive peoples discovered have all known the use of fire.

Policemen in Cincinnati have been given pocket cameras so that they can take snapshots at the scene of a crime.

Science News-Letter, October 30, 1926