SCIENCE.

FRIDAY, MAY 3, 1895.

CONTENTS:

MSS. intended for publication and books, etc., intended for review should be sent to the responsible editor, Prof. J. McKeen Cattell, Garrison on Hudson, N. Y.

Subscriptions and advertisements should be sent to SCIENCE, 41 N. Queen St., Lancaster, Pa., or 41 East 49th St., New York.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES.

REPORT OF THE WATSON TRUSTEES ON THE AWARD OF THE WATSON MEDAL TO SETH C. CHANDLER.

ON the recommendation of the Board of Trustees of the Watson Fund, the Academy last year unanimously awarded the Watson medal to Seth C. Chandler, of Cambridge, Mass., for his investigations relative to variable stars, his discovery of the period of variation of terrestrial latitudes, and his researches on the laws of that variation. It is the pleasant duty of the Trustees to set forth the grounds on which this award was recommended.

It is a result of the well-known laws of dynamics relating to the rotation of a rigid body, as the earth is assumed to be, upon its axis, that the poles of the earth may be determined in two ways. Our globe, being a spheroid flattened at the poles and protuberant at the equator, has a certain axis passing between the points of greatest flattening. This axis has no direct connection with the rotation of the earth; it would exist if the latter, retaining its present form, did not rotate at all. It is called the axis of figure, being determined altogether by the shape of the earth.

But the earth has also an axis around which it rotates. Now, assuming the earth to be a rigid solid, there is no necessity that the axis of rotation should correspond to that of the axis of figure just described.