

MEN OF SCIENCE AND THE HUMANE SOCIETY.

As to the note in SCIENCE (Nov. 25, 1898, p. 748) urging 'Men of Science and Physicians' to write to Senators of the United States in opposition to a bill introduced to Congress by the Humane Society for the restriction of vivisection, we ought to hope that the advice may not be followed, without an investigation of the merits of the case, on the part of the scientific men who have hitherto accepted, without question, the dicta of their medical, physiological and biological friends on the subject. That a great many scientific workers know as little about the charges of 'wanton cruelty,' 'moral degradation,' and unrestricted abuse of experiment alleged by the anti-vivisectionists as the general public there can be no doubt. The necessary knowledge is out of their line of work and observation, and about the only public information on the subject that comes in the way of a busy man is presented in the tracts gratuitously presented and the bulletins and journals published by, for example, the American and Illinois Anti-vivisection Societies, 118 S. 17th St., Philadelphia, and 275 East 42d St., Chicago; the National Anti-vivisection Society of England, 20 Victoria St., London, S. W.; the Humane Education Committee, 61 Westminster St., Providence, R. I.; the Humane Societies and Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals of Boston, New York (10 East 22d St.), Philadelphia, etc.; the Audubon Society of Pennsylvania and various States publishing and disseminating *Our Fellow Creatures* (Chicago), *Journal of Zoophily* (Philadelphia), *Our Animal Friends* (New York), *The Zoophilist* (London), etc., and abundant tracts and pamphlets. Not unfrequently these materials, under prejudice at the start, stocking the mails together with a mass of modern second- and third-class postal matter, go generally unexamined into the waste-paper basket.

The quoted writer in SCIENCE, however, would assume that the question against the Humane Societies and opponents of painful experiments on living animals was fully settled in the minds of scientific workers in general, and it would appear from the unanimous vote (in the absence of the writer) against the agitation, at a recent meeting of the American Associa-

tion for the Advancement of Science, that he is right. Yet we believe that not one voter in twenty at the above meeting was qualified to vote, or, if challenged, would have said that he had given the question scientifically just consideration on its merits, either from having studied the nature and rights of animal life or from having investigated the experiments or experimenters as accused by the Humane Societies.

Our colleagues, we might as well admit it, are not exempted by their vocation from the weakness of Adam, and we know that those among them whose minds cannot always be said to be 'open,' too often, by superior activity, 'push,' etc., get the upper hand of meetings where 'resolutions' pass with little or no discussion. However this may have been at the above conference, we stand against the idea of the whole class room turning aside in an alleged important case, fit for their investigating specialty, to follow the advice or unquestioned ipse-dixit of a subdivision of their colleagues.

On the other hand, it seems that it might be commended to us as a phenomenon for wonder and psychic research that any man, by means of gratuitous work, worryment and sleepless nights, in order to limit his own food supply, restrict his range of clothes and adornment and prevent the doctor from curing his own pain, should work for the animals at all. To call the members of the Humane Society fanatics is as easy as to have applied that term to Socrates, Galileo, Wilberforce or Wendell Phillips. But without any prejudice in the matter, we think that the humane agitation, founded on the potent principle of sympathy or love for all living creatures, so omnipotent a factor in the management and development of mankind, will go on. By the truth of the fully heard case, Science will either judge or be judged.

H. C. MERCER.

SECTION OF AMERICAN AND PREHISTORIC
ARCHÆOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF PENN-
SYLVANIA, November 26, 1898.

[MR. MERCER appears to confuse the work of the Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals with the antics of the anti-vivisection

people. With the former all men of science are in substantial accord; against the latter argument is almost futile. It has been said that as everyone has a blind spot in his eye so everyone has an idiotic spot in his brain. Antivivisection is the idiotic spot of many estimable persons. Regarding the merits of the bill limiting research in the District of Columbia, now pending in the Senate, we cannot do better than refer our readers to a report adopted by the National Academy of Sciences. The report states that physiology must be studied by experimental methods. The physiologist, no less than the physicist and the chemist, can expect the advancement of science only as the result of carefully planned laboratory work. If this work is interfered with, medical science will continue to advance by means of experiment, for no legislation can affect the position of physiology as an experimental science. But there will be this important difference. The experimenters will be medical practitioners and the victims human beings. That animals must suffer and die for the benefit of mankind is a law of nature, from which we cannot escape if we would. But the suffering incidental to biological investigation is trifling in amount and far less than that which is associated with most other uses which man makes of the lower animals for purposes of business or pleasure. The men engaged in the study of physiology are actuated by motives no less humane than those which guide the persons who desire to restrict their actions, while of the value of any given experiment and the amount of suffering which it involves they are, owing to their special training, much better able to judge. When the men to whom the government has entrusted the care of its higher institutions of research shall show themselves incapable of administering them in the interest of science and humanity, then, and not till then, will it be necessary

to invoke the authority of the national legislature.—ED. SCIENCE.]

SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE.

Outlines of Sociology. By LESTER F. WARD. New York, The Macmillan Company. 1898. Pp. xii+301.

It is never too late to call the attention of competent readers to a work of the value of Dr. Ward's 'Outlines.' Dr. Ward is one of the few authentic scientists to be met with in the variegated crowd of the so-called 'sociologists.' Every contribution of his deserves, therefore, the most careful consideration.

The book contains twelve papers already published in the *American Journal of Sociology*. It is divided into two parts: (I.) Social Philosophy; (II.) Social Science. By the former Dr. Ward means the study of the relations of Sociology to the other sciences. By the latter he means the study of the laws of society. Hereby Dr. Ward has adopted Professor Robert Flint's view, according to which "each special science and even every special subject may be naturally said to have its philosophy, the philosophy of a subject as distinguished from its science being the view or theory of the relations of the subject to other subjects, and to the known world in general, as distinguished from the view or theory of it as isolated or in itself" (p. viii). We believe this distinction to be entirely misleading. Science means investigation of a well defined group of phenomena. Now, the very act of marking or of ascertaining and setting a limit to the field of inquiry presupposes the discussion of the relationship which the group of phenomena under investigation bears to the other groups of phenomena. Thus, on reflecting well, the task assigned to 'philosophy' by Professor Flint appears to be unavoidably co-extensive with one of the fundamental exigencies of the scientific research. As long as the discussion of the relationship of the subject to other subjects is carried out merely with the purpose of defining the boundaries of the field of inquiry, we do scientific rather than philosophic work. Philosophy begins only when the study of the relationship which one group of