

SCIENCE

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CONTENTS

<i>Linnæus as a Zoologist:</i> DR. J. A. ALLEN ..	953
<i>Scientific Books:—</i>	
<i>Hydrates in Aqueous Solution:</i> PROFESSOR LOUIS KAHLENBERG. <i>Lodge on Electrons or the Nature and Properties of Negative Electricity:</i> PROFESSOR H. A. BUMSTEAD ..	962
<i>Societies and Academies:—</i>	
<i>The Geological Society of Washington:</i> DR. FRED E. WRIGHT. <i>The Philosophical Society of Washington:</i> R. L. FARIS. <i>The Anthropological Society of Washington:</i> J. M. CASSANOWICZ. <i>The Chemical Society of Washington:</i> J. A. LEClerc. <i>The Torrey Botanical Club:</i> DR. C. STUART GAGER. <i>The Iowa Anthropological Association:</i> J. H. PAARMANN	965
<i>Discussion and Correspondence:—</i>	
<i>The First Species Rule—an Objection:</i> DR. F. A. BATHER. <i>The Great Inferior Tusks of Mastodon of the Loup Fork Miocene:</i> CHARLES H. STERNBERG. <i>Concerning Steno:</i> C. K. W.	970
<i>Special Articles:—</i>	
<i>On Sun-spots:</i> PROFESSOR CARL BARUS. <i>Does the Mammalian Heart obey the Law for Chemical Reaction Velocities as influenced by Temperature?</i> CHARLES D. SNYDER. <i>The Flanking Detrital Slopes of the Mountains of the Southwest:</i> PROFESSOR WILLIAM P. BLAKE	972
<i>Quotations:—</i>	
<i>The Presidency of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology</i>	978
<i>Current Notes on Meteorology and Climatology:—</i>	
<i>Meissner's 'Meteorologische Elemente'; 'Internationaler Meteorologischer Kodex':</i> PROFESSOR R. DEC. WARD	979
<i>Academic Salaries</i>	980
<i>Scientific Notes and News</i>	981
<i>University and Educational News</i>	984

LINNÆUS AS A ZOOLOGIST¹

CAROLUS LINNÆUS, later known as Carl von Linné, was born at Roeskhult, in the province of Smaland, Sweden, May 13, old style, 1707, and died at Hammerby, near Upsala, on January 10, 1778. His grandfather was a farmer; his father, a clergyman. Young Linnæus, the future naturalist, was intended by his parents for the ministry, and his early education was conducted with this end in view. At the age of ten, he was sent to the Latin school at Vexio, but after seven years at this school he was found to be so deficient in his scholastic studies that his parents thought of apprenticing him to a shoemaker.

While at Vexio, much of his time was devoted to the study of plants and insects, an inclination apparently favored by his master, who was himself greatly interested in botany. Fortunately young Linnæus was rescued from his threatened degradation by Dr. John Rothman, a physician of Vexio, who recognized his superior abilities and appreciated his interest in natural history. He took him into his own home, where for a year Linnæus continued his botanical studies, aided by the advice and library of his patron. At the age of twenty he entered the University of Lund, where he soon found himself without means of support, through the death of his patron and friend, the kind-hearted physician of Vexio. Fortunately he soon won the friendship of Dr. Kilian Stobæus, the pro-

¹Read at the exercises of the New York Academy of Sciences in commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of Linnæus.