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Scientific Notes and News 604
University and Educational News 603

CONTENTS

<i>The Vagaries of Beryllium:</i> PROFESSOR CHARLES L. PARSONS	569
<i>The Application of Scientific Method to Educational Problems:</i> SIR PHILIP MAGNUS ..	574
<i>Scientific Books:—</i>	
<i>Mann's Report on the Diatoms of the Pacific Ocean:</i> DR. GEORGE T. MOORE. <i>Kraepelin's Leitfaden für den biologischen Unterricht; Hough and Sedgwick's Elements of Physiology:</i> PROFESSOR CHAS. W. HARGITT. <i>Hawk's Practical Physiological Chemistry:</i> DR. JOHN H. LONG. <i>Jones's Elements of Physical Chemistry:</i> PROFESSOR H. W. FOOTE. <i>Wundt's Outlines of Psychology:</i> PROFESSOR RAYMOND DODGE	586
<i>Societies and Academies:—</i>	
<i>The New York Section of the American Chemical Society:</i> DR. C. M. JOYCE. <i>The American Philosophical Society</i>	589
<i>Special Articles:—</i>	
<i>Heredity of Eye-color in Man:</i> DR. GERT- RUDE C. DAVENPORT and DR. CHAS. B. DAVENPORT. <i>The Nomenclature of Dextral, Sinistral and Attentional Organs and Functions:</i> DR. GEORGE M. GOULD. <i>Color Varieties of Locustidæ:</i> DR. FREDERICK KNAB. <i>Cone in Cone:</i> G. C. BROADHEAD	589
<i>Quotations:—</i>	
<i>Externalism in American Universities</i>	597
<i>Current Notes on Meteorology and Climatol- ogy:—</i>	
<i>British Rainfall; Light and Bacteria; Phe- nomenal Rainfall in Suva, Fiji; Rainfall in the Lake Region; Variations in Level of Lake Chad; Roumanian Meteorological Work; Bright Sunshine in the British Isles; Symons's Meteorological Magazine:</i> PROFESSOR R. DE C. WARD	598
<i>The New Philippine Medical School, estab- lished by the Government of the Philippine Islands:</i> DR. PAUL C. FREER	600
<i>Some Astronomical Consequences of the Pres- sure of Light:</i> PROFESSOR J. H. POYNTING	602
<i>Scientific Appointments at the University of Wisconsin</i>	603

THE VAGARIES OF BERYLLIUM¹

As it has become a custom in the Ameri- can Chemical Society that the chairmen of the various sections, into which the sessions of the general meetings are divided, shall present an address upon some branch of their work in which they are especially inter- ested, I have decided to speak this morn- ing upon beryllium and especially upon those peculiarities of the element which stand out prominently as characteristic of itself. I realize fully the narrowness of the subject and fear that what I have to say will scarcely be of interest to all of you, but must plead as my excuse that, realizing fully the limitations of my own knowledge, I can select no other subject with which I am more familiar.

Even at its christening beryllium started on a vagarious career and its early sponsors as well as those who followed have recognized it under different names and have ascribed to it and to its compounds properties as widely variant as the condi- tions under which they worked. Referred to first by Vauquelin, its discoverer, as "la terre du Béril" the German translators naturally adopted Berylerde as the name of its oxide and although Vauquelin later ac- cepted, under virtual protest, the sugges- tion made that glucine be used on account of the sweetish taste of the salts of the element, the name never secured adoption

MSS. intended for publication and books, etc., intended for review should be sent to the Editor of SCIENCE, Garrison-on- Hudson, N. Y.

¹ Address of the chairman of the Section on Inorganic Chemistry, Toronto Meeting, American Chemical Society.