

the \$106,687 given as "The Annual Appropriation for Salaries of Instructing Staff" is actually spent for the salaries of the instructing staff.

The absurdity of the conclusions raises the question of what is meant by "The Annual Appropriation for Salaries of Instructing Staff," which has been used as the basis of classification of the American colleges and universities. One would naturally think that it means the money spent on the salaries mentioned. If it does mean this, it is clear that Bryn Mawr College has received too advanced a position in the classification.

With great latitude allowed, the phrase might perhaps be interpreted as meaning money available for salaries though not necessarily so spent. This interpretation is particularly improbable in the case of Bryn Mawr College. Its alumnae have been trying during the last few years to obtain gifts of money from the friends of the college for an endowment fund, the interest on which is to be used to increase the salaries of the professors. In order to retain the older and better known members of the faculty in spite of offers from other institutions, the alumnae wish to have the salary of a professor raised from \$2,500, which has been the salary attaching to that grade, to \$3,000. They have already accumulated nearly \$100,000 toward this fund. If in the foregoing calculation we insert \$3,000 in the place of \$2,500 as the salary of a professor, it appears that an annual appropriation of \$106,687, if available, would not only have met this increased demand but would also have sufficed to have given the instructors of lower ranks, namely, lecturers, readers and demonstrators, an average salary of \$2,412.46. Making similar changes in the two other academic years considered, this average salary could have been \$2,260.38 and \$1,871.50. The calculation leaves no doubt that Bryn Mawr College if it had \$106,687 actually available annually for the salaries of the instructing staff would be able, unaided, to raise the salaries as the alumnae desire.

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AIR-SHIPS, PAST AND PRESENT

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: In a review of "Air-ships, Past and Present" presented in SCIENCE, July 3, 1908, pp. 20-21, I notice that O. Chanute, the reviewer, gives 21,100 feet as the greatest altitude above the earth's surface heretofore attained by kites.

I do not know whether this statement was made in ignorance of the Weather Bureau kite flight of October 3 last, or not; but in any case you may wish to note in your journal, if not already there recorded, the following facts:

On October 3, 1907, one of the international dates for scientific kite flights, the Weather Bureau observers at Mt. Weather, Va., succeeded in raising a meteorograph to an altitude of 23,110 feet above mean sea level by means of kites. At that altitude the wind was WNW, the temperature — 5.4° F. For the flight 37,300 feet of piano wire was used and the number of kites required to lift were eight having a total lifting surface of 505 square feet.

CLEVELAND ABBE, JR.

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

Heredity. By J. ARTHUR THOMSON, Regius Professor of Natural History in the University of Aberdeen. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1908.

So much interest is now concentrating on the problems of heredity as a result of the abundant and important observations that have been carried on in recent years, following the leads of Mendel, DeVries and Galton, that a critical estimate of our present knowledge of the phenomena of inheritance can not fail to be of interest. Such an estimate Professor Thomson endeavors to give in the volume before us, which the author speaks of as an "introduction to the study of heredity," and which, it may be said at once, is a book well worth careful reading, bringing together as it does in a concise form the results of observations widely scattered in scientific periodicals, not always readily accessible and all more or less deterrent to the layman.

The author has endeavored to approach his subject *sine irâ et studio* and to a large extent he has been successful. He avowedly sails,