

SCIENCE

A WEEKLY JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE, PUBLISHING THE
OFFICIAL NOTICES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1908

A TALK ON TEACHING¹

CONTENTS

<i>A Talk on Teaching:</i> PROFESSOR ARTHUR A. NOYES	657
<i>Some Principles in Laboratory Construction:</i> PROFESSOR CHARLES BASKERVILLE	665
<i>The American Bison Society</i>	676
<i>The Committee of One Hundred of the American Association on National Health</i>	676
<i>Scientific Notes and News</i>	677
<i>The Resignation of President Eliot</i>	681
<i>University and Educational News</i>	681
<i>Discussion and Correspondence:—</i>	
<i>The Garter Snakes of North America:</i> DR. HUBERT LYMAN CLARK. <i>A New Locality for Miocene Mammals:</i> PROFESSOR T. D. A. COCKERELL. <i>Education and the Trades:</i> STELLA V. KELLERMAN. <i>Provincial Museums:</i> DR. FRANK C. BAKER. <i>Milk Proteins:</i> PROFESSOR E. B. HART	682
<i>Quotations:—</i>	
<i>The Retirement of President Eliot</i>	685
<i>Scientific Books:—</i>	
<i>Tomkins on Marine Engineering:</i> DR. HORACE SEE. <i>Gray's New Manual of Botany:</i> PROFESSOR CHARLES E. BESSEY	686
<i>Scientific Journals and Articles</i>	689
<i>Moorehouse's Comet:</i> PROFESSOR EDWARD C. PICKERING	690
<i>Special Articles:—</i>	
<i>Note on the Occurrence of Rhodochytrium spilanthis Lagerheim in North America:</i> PROFESSOR GEORGE F. ATKINSON. <i>The Present State of our Knowledge of the Odonata of Mexico and Central America:</i> DR. PHILIP P. CALVERT. <i>Some Inversions of Temperatures in Colorado:</i> PROFESSOR FRANCIS RAMALEY	691
<i>Societies and Academies:—</i>	
<i>The American Physical Society:</i> PROFESSOR ERNEST MERRITT	696

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IN speaking to you to-day upon the subject of teaching, I shall try to present some considerations, suggested by my own experience, in regard to the application of educational principles to our own problems. Much of what I shall say will doubtless be familiar to a body of teachers like yourselves. Yet it is perhaps desirable that even the commonplaces of education be brought before us from time to time; for, though we recognize the abstract principles that should be followed, yet it is only by constant attention to them that we shall succeed in making them the real foundation of our courses of instruction.

Throughout our considerations we must keep in view the aim of the education for which the institute stands. In regard to this there is, I believe, little difference of opinion. The aim is to produce men who have the power to solve the industrial, engineering and scientific problems of the day—men who shall originate and not merely execute. The fundamental question is, then, How shall we develop this power? It is *power* that counts, and not *knowledge*. The ultimate test is what a man can *do*, not what he *knows*; and this is the test we should apply to our students upon the completion of each subject of in-

¹ Given at a conference of members of the instructing staff of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology on March 20, 1908. To Professor H. G. Pearson I desire to express my great indebtedness for his suggestions and assistance in connection with the preparation of this paper for the printer.