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CONTENTS

<i>The American Association for the Advancement of Science:—</i>	
<i>Physical Exercise from the Standpoint of Physiology:</i> PROFESSOR FREDERIC S. LEE ..	521
<i>Departmental Organization for the Regulation of Physical Instruction in Schools and Colleges from the Standpoint of Hygiene:</i> PROFESSOR THOMAS A. STOREY	527
<i>The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching:</i> PROFESSOR J. McKEEN CATTELL	532
<i>Recent Steps in the Conservation Movement:</i> DR. W J MCGEE	539
<i>Science by Cable</i>	540
<i>Scientific Notes and News</i>	540
<i>University and Educational News</i>	543
<i>Discussion and Correspondence:—</i>	
<i>American Chemical History and Biography:</i> DR. ALFRED TUCKERMAN. <i>Notes on Fishes at Corson's Inlet, N. J.:</i> HENRY W. FOWLER	543
<i>Scientific Books:—</i>	
<i>Hutton's Mechanical Engineering:</i> PROFESSOR R. C. CARPENTER. <i>Kolbe's Introduction to Electricity:</i> PROFESSOR S. J. BARNETT. <i>Friedenthal's Experimental Physiology:</i> PROFESSOR LAFAYETTE B. MENDEL. <i>Titchener's Elementary Psychology of Feeling and Attention:</i> PROFESSOR W. B. PILLSBURY. <i>Chapman's Camps and Cruises of an Ornithologist:</i> WILFRED H. OSGOOD	544
<i>Botanical Notes:—</i>	
<i>Ganong's Plant Physiology; Economic Botany; Papers on Fungi:</i> PROFESSOR CHARLES E. BESSEY	550
<i>Special Articles:—</i>	
<i>The Otter in Eastern Massachusetts:</i> DR. WILLIAM BREWSTER	551
<i>Societies and Academies:—</i>	
<i>The Geological Society of Washington:</i> PHILIP S. SMITH. <i>The Philosophical Society of Washington:</i> R. L. FARIS. <i>The Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine:</i> DR. EUGENE L. OPIE. <i>The American Chemical Society:</i> C. M. JOYCE. <i>The American Mathematical Society:</i> PROFESSOR F. N. COLE	555

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE PHYSICAL EXERCISE FROM THE STAND- POINT OF PHYSIOLOGY¹

MYTHOLOGISTS tell us that Æsculapius, the god of healing, was slain by a thunderbolt from Zeus because of complaints which had reached that deity that Æsculapius had become so skilful in his art that Hades was fast being depopulated. His tragic end, however, did not deter his courageous daughter, the goddess of health, from carrying on a vigorous propaganda; and, whatever the immediate result of her efforts, I am quite sure that her followers, the hygienists of the present day, are even more successful than are the doctors in delaying the day of our entrance into a future life. It has been many centuries since offerings to Hygeia were laid on her altars on the Grecian hills, but the aim of her cult has not changed. This aim, as I conceive it, is to bring to, and maintain at, its highest efficiency the organic machine. An unhealthy body is a pathological body, and any method is a legitimate hygienic method which tends to keep the body in a physiological status. Hygiene has been well called applied physiology.

What are the criteria of efficiency in a living body? One criterion is that the body's chemical processes shall proceed

¹ An address delivered in a symposium on "The Regulation of Physical Instruction in Schools and Colleges, from the Standpoint of Hygiene" before Section K (Physiology and Experimental Medicine) of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Baltimore, December 29, 1908.