

SCIENCE

FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 1914

THE MECHANICAL, THE HISTORICAL AND
THE STATISTICAL

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MSS. intended for publication and books, etc., intended for review should be sent to Professor J. McKeen Cattell, Garrison-on-Hudson, N. Y.

I. PRACTICAL PURPOSE OF THIS MEETING

THIS meeting is the outcome of conversations which resulted from the recent book of Dr. Henderson on "The Fitness of the Environment." Yet this company is not called for the sake of discussing, on the present occasion, that book, or any of the scientific problems which it more directly considers. The connection, then, between Dr. Henderson's book and this evening's undertaking needs some explanation. As you know from the wording of the call to which you have so kindly responded, one principal purpose which I have in mind as I address you is practical. I shall ask you, before the evening is done, to give some thought to the question: Is it advisable for us to meet again occasionally, as opportunity offers, in order to discuss some questions of common scientific interest. You represent various departments of research. Is it worth while for you, or for some of you, at your own pleasure, to come together in such a way as the present one, in order to take counsel about different problems which belong, not only to a single science, and not only to some special group of sciences, but also to the realm which is common to a decidedly wide and varied range of scientific inquiries?

My part in this evening's discussion is determined by this practical question. I can not come here as a representative of any one department of research in natural science. I am limited in my present undertaking to such an appeal as a student of philosophy may have a right to address to