

SCIENCE

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CONTENTS

<i>The Prospect of Human Progress</i> : PROFESSOR R. D. CARMICHAEL	883
<i>Definiteness of Appointment and Tenure</i> : PROFESSOR E. D. SANDERSON	890
<i>The Porto Rico Survey</i> : DR. EDMUND OTIS HOVEY	896
<i>The Ninth International Congress of Applied Chemistry</i>	898
<i>The Russell Sage Institute of Pathology</i>	898
<i>Scientific Notes and News</i>	899
<i>University and Educational News</i>	901
<i>Discussion and Correspondence</i> :—	
<i>Sovereigns and the Supposed Influence of Opportunity</i> : DR. FREDERICK ADAMS WOODS. <i>Bacterial Blight of Alfalfa in the Salt Lake Valley</i> : DR. P. J. O'GARA. <i>Further Notes on Tamarisk</i> : W. L. MCATEE. <i>A Factor for the Fourth Chromosome of Drosophila</i> : HERMAN J. MULLER. <i>Dickerson on California Eocene</i> : DR. RALPH ARNOLD AND HAROLD HANNIBAL	902
<i>Scientific Books</i> :—	
<i>Loeb on Artificial Parthenogenesis and Fertilization</i> : PROFESSOR E. NEWTON HARVEY. <i>Clements's Rocky Mountain Flowers</i> : PROFESSOR CHARLES E. BESSEY. <i>Woodward's The Life of the Mollusca</i> : DR. WM. H. DALL. <i>Principia atmospherica</i> : PROFESSOR ALEXANDER MCADIE	908
<i>Navigation Without Logarithms</i> : WALTER D. ROBINSON	912
<i>Special Articles</i> :—	
<i>What Does the Medina Sandstone of the Niagara Section Include?</i> : E. M. KINDLE. <i>Sheep Thyreoid Experiment with Frog Tadpoles</i> : PAUL ASHLEY WEST	915
<i>Societies and Academies</i> :—	
<i>The Botanical Society of Washington</i> : P. L. RICKER. <i>The Anthropological Society of Washington</i> : DR. DANIEL FOLKMAR	919

THE PROSPECT OF HUMAN PROGRESS¹

My principal purpose this evening is to invite you to look forward to the time to come and to enquire as to the prospect of human progress which is thus opened to view. But it will be necessary to give a great part of our attention to the past in order to build, as it were, a lookout from which we can obtain a vision of the future.

We shall not be so rash as to attempt a prediction of events or even of discoveries; but we shall try to determine the sort of progress which the indications of the present and the teachings of the past lead one naturally to expect. This will certainly be a safe procedure, provided that we can find common elements of fundamental importance in the basic characteristics of each period; for it can hardly be supposed that the future will suddenly depart from the principles of progress which have been impressed upon the race throughout its long period of evolution up to the present.

It will be necessary for us to pass in rapid review the great stages of development by which man has changed from a beast-like savage to a cultured civilian. We shall find that these stages have been marked off by a few leading inventions, each of them giving a fundamental new element to the period of progress following its appearance. In this review we shall be guided primarily by the researches and conclusions of ethnologists.

It is probably impossible to conceive of man existing as man and not having the elements at least of language for intercourse with his fellows. Therefore, by com-

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

¹ An address delivered to the Graduate Club of Indiana University on the evening of May 7, 1914.