

SCIENCE

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THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF BOTANY
IN AMERICA¹

CONTENTS

<i>The Present and Future of Botany in America:</i> PROFESSOR DOUGLAS H. CAMPBELL	185
<i>The Carnegie Institution of Washington</i>	191
<i>The Bureau of Mines</i>	200
<i>The University of Cincinnati Bureau of City Tests</i>	201
<i>The Retirement of Charles Horton Peck</i>	202
<i>Scientific Notes and News</i>	202
<i>University and Educational News</i>	207
<i>Discussion and Correspondence:—</i>	
<i>The Fundamental Equation of Mechanics:</i> PROFESSOR EDWARD V. HUNTINGTON. <i>Geologic History of Lake Lahontan:</i> HOYT S. GALE. <i>Botany in the Agricultural Colleges:</i> C. V. PIPER. <i>In Regard to the Poisoning of Trees by Potassic Cyanide:</i> PROFESSOR FERNANDO SANFORD	207
<i>Quotations:—</i>	
<i>The Organization of Science</i>	214
<i>Scientific Books:—</i>	
<i>Cabrera's Fauna Ibérica:</i> DR. W. J. HOLLAND. <i>Johnston on The Modern High School:</i> CLAYTON C. KOHL	214
<i>Plant Autographs</i>	218
<i>Special Articles:—</i>	
<i>Inheritance in the Honey Bee:</i> WILMON NEWELL. <i>Tillite in New Hampshire:</i> ROBERT W. SAYLES	218
<i>The Philadelphia Meeting of the American Anthropological Association:</i> ROBERT H. LOWIE	221

IF we go back a generation, say to the early '80's, we find up to this time most of the work published by American botanists was taxonomic. For some time before this, however, evidences of an awakening to other aspects of the science were evident and the next decade brought an extraordinary extension of botanical interest in other lines of work. Morphology, physiology, and especially cytology began to demand attention.

This was the period also when the government began to consider seriously the application of botanical science to the great agricultural problems of the country. Most of the agricultural experiment stations, date from this time, and it is unnecessary to point out the great influence which these have had in directing the activities of so many of the ablest workers in the field of botany.

As one looks back over this period of some thirty-five years one can not but be struck with the great increase in the number of botanical workers and the enormous number of publications recording the results of their work.

During the 70's and early 80's the opportunities for advanced work in botany, aside from purely taxonomic work, were very inadequate, even in our best universities; and students who were ambitious to avail themselves of the best instruction in botanical methods were almost perforce obliged to

¹ Presidential address of Professor Douglas H. Campbell, of Stanford University. Read before the Botanical Society of America at their dinner on December 30, 1914.