

SCIENCE

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CONTENTS

<i>The Alcohol Program of the Nutrition Laboratory with special reference to Psychological Effects of Moderate Doses of Alcohol on Man:</i> DR. FRANCIS G. BENEDICT	907
<i>Cinchona as a Tropical Station for American Botanists:</i> PROFESSOR DUNCAN S. JOHNSON, PROFESSOR DOUGLAS HOUGHTON CAMPBELL, PROFESSOR A. W. EVANS, DR. C. H. FARR, DR. FORREST SHEREVE	917
<i>University and Industry</i>	919
<i>Dr. Ugo Schiff:</i> PROFESSOR WM. MCPHERSON.	921
<i>Scientific Notes and News</i>	922
<i>University and Educational News</i>	925
<i>Discussion and Correspondence:—</i>	
<i>The Accepted Facts of Dynamics:</i> PROFESSOR L. M. HOSKINS. <i>Electrical Action and the Gravitation Constant:</i> DR. E. H. KENNARD. <i>Gravitation and Electrical Action:</i> DR. C. DAVISSON. <i>Amblystoma not Amblystoma:</i> DR. M. W. LYON, JR. <i>Centigrade versus Fahrenheit:</i> PROFESSOR F. E. AUSTIN. <i>Safety Razor Blades for Hand Sectioning:</i> PROFESSOR GEORGE J. PEIRCE.	925
<i>Scientific Books:—</i>	
<i>Peters and Knobel on Ptolemy's Catalogue of Stars:</i> PROFESSOR R. H. TUCKER. <i>Piper and Beattie on the Flora of the Northwest Coast:</i> PROFESSOR LEROY ABRAMS	930
<i>Notes on Meteorology and Climatology:</i> DR. CHARLES F. BROOKS	933
<i>Special Articles:—</i>	
<i>A New Form of Phosphoroscope:</i> PROFESSOR EDWARD L. NICHOLS AND H. L. HOWES. <i>Scientific Queen Rearing:</i> CHARLES W. QUINN	937
<i>Societies and Academies:—</i>	
<i>The Biological Society of Washington:</i> ALEXANDER WETMORE, DR. M. W. LYON, JR. <i>The Anthropological Society of Washington:</i> DR. DANIEL FOLKMAR	941

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

THE ALCOHOL PROGRAM OF THE NUTRITION LABORATORY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF MODERATE DOSES OF ALCOHOL ON MAN¹

ALCOHOL in not too large doses, taken by the mouth, is undoubtedly burned in the body and in this burning gives off heat which replaces equivalent energy ordinarily derived from food or body substance. This has been absolutely demonstrated by Professor Atwater and his associates with the respiration calorimeter at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn. This scientific proof of the important rôle that moderate doses of alcohol may play in the human energy economy finds verification in the masterly, statistical studies of Armand Gautier in Paris, who has shown that there are certainly several million people who regularly receive in their daily diet somewhat more energy in the form of alcohol than they do in the form of protein. What has been demonstrated of the French is probably true of many others. Thus we see that a physiological study of alcohol is, on abstract, scientific grounds, essential to a complete understanding of the materials regularly ingested which serve as the sources of energy to the body.

Although protein, fat and carbohydrates have long been studied in a systematic manner, alcohol in recent years has, in spite of the agitation regarding its moral, economical and sociological importance, received but scant, irregular attention in a relatively few scientific laboratories. With regard to its physiological action there

¹ An address given before the New York Academy of Medicine on April 6, 1916.