

SCIENCE

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CONTENTS

<i>The American Association for the Advancement of Science:—</i>	
<i>The Need of Conservation of Our Vital and Natural Resources as emphasized by the Lessons of the War: PRESIDENT HENRY STURGIS DRINKER</i>	27
<i>Chemistry and Medicine—a Tribute to the Memory of John Harper Long: PROFESSOR JULIUS STIEGLITZ</i>	31
<i>Scientific Events:—</i>	
<i>Biological Surveys of States by the United States Department of Agriculture; The Census Bureau; The Bureau of Standards</i>	38
<i>Scientific Notes and News</i>	40
<i>University and Educational News</i>	43
<i>Discussion and Correspondence:—</i>	
<i>Two New Instances of Polyembryony among the Encyrtidæ: DR. L. O. HOWARD. The Foundations of Mechanics: PAUL J. FOX. Tropical Enervation: VAUGHAN MACCAUGHEY</i>	43
<i>Scientific Books:—</i>	
<i>Young on Stoichiometry: PROFESSOR J. LIVINGSTON MORGAN</i>	46
<i>The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences: PROFESSOR EDWIN B. WILSON.....</i>	46
<i>Special Articles:—</i>	
<i>On the Nature of the Pigmentation Changes following Hypophysectomy in the Frog Larva: WAYNE J. ATWELL</i>	48
<i>The Paleontological Society: DR. R. S. BASSLER</i>	50
<i>The American Psychological Association: PROFESSOR HERBERT SIDNEY LANGFELD</i>	51
<i>The Optical Society of America: DR. P. G. NUTTING</i>	52

THE NEED OF CONSERVATION OF OUR VITAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES AS EMPHASIZED BY THE LESSONS OF THE WAR¹

THE great war, now ended, frightful as have been the evils it entailed on the world, should, from the standpoint of our country at least, be recognized as having brought to us an awakening in directions that will be of lasting benefit to the nation.

It has been a cheap and easy criticism to stigmatize our people as money-loving, self-centered, and materialistic, and this characterization, apparently generally held in Germany as a true picture of the people of the United States and of our national life, has, by some, even here at home, been more or less accepted as correct. The great soul of the American people, their intense patriotism and love of country, their devotion to ideals of right and of self-sacrifice and altruism, were not dormant but were hidden. We have enough of the Anglo-Saxon of our English brethren in us still not to seek to parade our better traits in boasting self-assertion—but when the time of trial and sacrifice comes, our people respond, and respond as a nation.

A marked instance of this national trait was given in our treatment of Cuba twenty years ago. It was incredible to some of our foreign critics that this country could enter into a war with Spain solely to remedy the abuses of her government of Cuba, and to free Cuba, yet the event showed that such was actually the case—and now the world recognizes that we entered into the world-war just ended, solely and only as a matter of high national duty—and with no thought of national gain in money, trade or territory, but only because we recog-

¹ Address of the Vice-President and Chairman of Section of Engineering of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Baltimore, December 26, 1918.