SCIENCE

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1919.

CONTENTS

MSS. intended for publication and books, etc., intended for review should be sent to The Editor of Science, Garrison-on-Hudson, N. Y.

THE GENERAL BIOLOGY COURSE AND THE TEACHING OF ELEMENTARY BOTANY AND ZOOLOGY IN AMERICAN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES[1]

THE general biology, or elementary biology, course originated with Huxley about fifty years ago and was introduced into this country by the physiologist, H. Newall Martin, one of Huxley's earlier students. In the introduction to Huxley and Martin's little text-book on Elementary Biology, Huxley states as his conviction "that the study of living bodies is really one discipline, which is divided into zoology and botany simply as a matter of convenience"; that "sound and thorough knowledge is only to be obtained by practical work in the laboratory"; and, further, that through the study of a series of selected animals and plants "a comprehensive, and yet not vague, conception of the phenomena of Life may be obtained, and a firm foundation upon which to build up special knowledge will be laid." A more recent text-book (Sedgwick and Wilson's "General Biology") states that general biology "deals with the broad, characteristic phenomena and laws of life as illustrated by the thorough comparative study of a series of plants and animals taken as representative types."

In the average general biology course the laboratory material is selected more or less indiscriminately from both the plant and the animal kingdoms, but with animal material greatly preponderant. The study of animals thus alternates with the study of plants: now a few animals and then a few plants. The aim of such a course is not so much to bring out the fundamental characteristics of plants as plants and of animals as animals, but rather to demonstrate that the two are merely different expressions of matter in the living

[1] Contribution from the Osborn Botanical Laboratory.