

# SCIENCE

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## THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF A UNIVERSITY NATURAL HIS- TORY MUSEUM<sup>1</sup>

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IN President Rea's address before the 1920 meeting of the museums association it is stated that 38 per cent. of the 600 museums of the United States are supported by colleges and universities, and that of this number but five expended \$1,000 or more in the year 1910. It is also stated that of this 38 per cent. the great majority are uncared for or ill cared for. With a few notable exceptions this statement is true of the natural history museums of 90 per cent. of the colleges and universities.

The reason for this deplorable condition is not hard to find. A generation or two ago the study of natural history, or "natural theology," centered about collections of natural history material—corals, shells, fossils, minerals, birds, etc.—and taxonomy was considered the *summum bonum* of science. As time passed, the wonderful discoveries in genetics, in evolution, in experimental biology, gradually superseded the previous systematic studies, museum specimens were used less and less, and finally, in many colleges, ceased altogether. The museums were nominally under the charge of a professor of zoology or geology, who gave little time to the care of the material. The collections in these colleges have thus gradually gone from bad to worse, and in many cases the perishable material is now of little or no value.

An instance is recalled that in one museum in a large university a collection of kangaroos had been received and stored in a room on the upper floor of a building, where they remained for a number of years. When examined it was found that moth larvae had eaten away the bases of the hairs and the whole back came off like a blanket when touched. This entire collection was thus completely ruined because of lack of funds to provide a tight case and some one to care for the material. In another university a valuable collection of insects had to be destroyed because of its infestation with dermestids. These examples could probably be duplicated many times.

What, then, is the remedy for this distressing condition which renders so large a percentage of our university and college museums ineffectual and a re-

<sup>1</sup> Contribution from the Museum of Natural History, University of Illinois, No. 30. Read before the American Association of Museums, May, 1922.

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# SCHOOL AND SOCIETY

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JUNE 30, 1923

*The Real "Educational Determinism":* DAVID SNEDDEN.

*Teaching "Literature" to Undergraduates:* FRANKLYN B. SNYDER.

## Educational Events:

*A National Code for the Lighting of Schools; The New Harvard Admission Plan; Acquisition of the Greist Property by Yale University; The Failure to appoint State Superintendent Finegan; The Resignation of President Meiklejohn at Amherst.*

## Educational Notes and News.

## Discussion:

*National Organization for Educational Research:* J. H. HOLST. *Intelligence Tests and Teachers' Estimates:* BENJ. B. JAMES. *An Experiment in Automatic Spelling:* HERBERT PATTERSON.

*Character Education:* MILTON J. BENNION.

## Educational Research and Statistics:

*The Intelligence Quotients of Mentally Retarded School Children:* CHARLES SCOTT BERRY. *The Retarded College Professor:* KARL J. HOLZINGER.

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*The Effect of Competency in Judges upon the Size of the Unit in Judgment Scales:* S. A. COURTIS. *Antioch College:* CHARLES W. ELIOT; ARTHUR E. MORGAN.

## Educational Events:

*Collegiate Schools of Business; At the University of Tennessee; The President of the American University of Beirut; Commissioner Graves in the Near East; The Chancellorship of Washington University; Newspaper Reports of the National Education Association Meeting; The World Conference on Education.*

## Educational Notes and News.

## Special Correspondence:

*The National Academy of Visual Instruction:* DUDLEY GRANT HAYS. *The National League of Nursing Education:* LAURA R. LOGAN.

## Discussion:

*The Normal School Curriculum:* CHARLES E. MARTZ.

## Quotations:

*International Education and Good Will.*

*A Message to Teachers:* VAUGHAN MACCAUGHEY.

*Conference of British and American Professors of English:* RAYMOND WALTERS.

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*The School and Public Health:* J. HOWARD BEARD.

*Pension Legislation:* IDA E. HOUSMAN.

*President Meiklejohn's Farewell Address.*

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*The Movement for a Federal Amendment Regulating Child Labor; Summer Sessions of Swiss Universities; The Summer School of New York University; The Guidance Study of the Cleveland Schoolmasters' Club; Educational Organization in Tennessee; The University of Arkansas and the Arkansas State Agricultural Schools; Censorship of Text-books.*

## Educational Notes and News.

## Special Correspondence:

*A Survey of the Renaissance:* ERNEST H. WILKINS.

## Quotations:

*Liberal Education.*

## Educational Research and Statistics:

*The Comparative Value of Certain Measures for Predicting Grades in College Physics:* JAMES VAUGHN.

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*What should be the Minimum Essentials of a Four-Year Curriculum for Teachers Colleges?* CHARLES H. JUDD.

*The Political Aims of American Education:* EDWARD O. SISSON.

*Freedom of Expression in the University:* FRANK J. GOODNOW.

*Commencement Address for Swarthmore College, 1923:* F. P. KEPPEL.

## Educational Events:

*Fifty Years of Education in Scotland; A Message from the Educators of Germany; The Financial Situation of the Boston Public Library; Intelligence Tests in Civil Service Examinations; Public Education in the South; The American Home Economics Association; Courses in Education at the Harvard Summer School; The Business Side of the National Education Association.*

## Educational Notes and News.

## Discussion:

*Elimination of the Unfit; a Problem of Waste in Public Education:* G. C. CAST.

## Quotations:

*Juvenile Unemployment Centers.*

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