

board boxes on the market, although they are somewhat wider, which cost thirty cents.

The advantage of the open back and top is to remove any limit to the size of the reprints filed. The shelf dimensions with such a box constitute the only limit. The width of the box is its best feature. It is broad enough to stand alone and to permit labeling on the outside which is easily read with the box on the shelf. (Dennison No. 205 labels can be pasted on the outside.) On the other hand, the box is so narrow that it is very little work for one to go through all the reprints in a single box. For this reason it is not necessary in returning a reprint to the box to remove the other reprints and place the particular one with respect to the others. It is enough for one to know that the reprint is in a given box in order to find it quickly.

The small box also allows readily for the expansion of the series at any point, and for the collection of small groups of papers on a given subject or by a given author into a single repository appropriately labeled.

At present I have about 1,800 reprints filed by author in 210 of these boxes. With this distribution the boxes are not full and there is room for considerable expansion without the introduction of new boxes.

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THE PROFESSOR AND HIS WAGES

UNDER this caption appears an article in *SCIENCE* for August 24 that well illustrates the danger of theorizing without that judgment and knowledge of "how much" that only experience in the field dealt with teaches.

In the first place, the profits assumed for the merchant are much beyond the average, the orderly progress of success rarely exists and the incident worries and troubles and resourcefulness necessary to turn corners are hardly suggested. The risk of capital is quite lightly dismissed. Professor Slosson would doubtless be much surprised to learn that an insurance company, which attempted to underwrite this risk for all those starting in business for themselves, for a 50 per cent. premium, would inevitably bankrupt itself. Yet such is the case.

Of those who attempt business for themselves, even though they have more initiative and self-reliance than the average, fully 90 per cent. are failures and forced to drop out, generally with their capital completely used up. Men, therefore, who succeed in business for themselves, belong to the most severely selected class in the world and certainly not one professor in ten could stick in it. Apply the same severity of selection and the great majority of professors, lawyers, doctors, etc., would drop out, as the major-

ity of business men have. The average professor, then, should not be compared with the successful business man but rather with the latter's employees.

There are, rarely, professors with a genius for teaching—for imparting knowledge—that do work of value hard to estimate and all too little appreciated, and other rare research professors whose work is of inestimable value. These, unhappily, must needs be ill rewarded, largely because but few can appreciate their work or appreciate it during the life-time of the men. Unless a bit sensational, it makes small appeal to the public. But as for the majority, like the great majority of other classes, they get all they are worth to the community. But few of these audible books benefit the community as much as average clerks because their efforts are not directed and coordinated from outside as are those of the clerks.

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SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

Eighth Report¹ of the Committee for the Investigation of Atmospheric Pollution. Reports on Observations for the year ending March 31, 1922. London, 1923.

THE people of London and its environs wash their clothes on Tuesday and themselves on Saturday night. Thus the veil of domestic privacy is ruthlessly torn aside and the secrets of home life no longer held *in camera*. Which is characteristic of this age, for nothing now is hidden. Even the secrets of the structure of matter are pried into, electrons being knocked about by inquisitive physicists; and snug little constituencies known as atoms completely upset and disturbed by some high speed atomic nucleus.

We can prove that the good people of dear old London take their weekly tubbing on Saturday night, because there is a suspicious increase in the number of smoke particles in the air over London at this hour; and these undoubtedly come from domestic fires, lighted or kept going for the purpose of providing sufficient hot water. The Advisory Committee on Atmospheric Pollution have traced such inequalities in the load of suspended impurities to various sources and find that the common dwelling house chimney is the chief offender; even in cities regarded as manufacturing centers. It is not to be wondered at either, for *en masse* these little smokers pour out a vast volume of products of imperfect combustion.

This Eighth Report is the most ambitious effort yet made and shows that the Committee is getting into its stride and obtaining results of great value. The work differs from most pieces of experimental work in

¹ Previous reports have been reviewed in *SCIENCE*, June 2, 1922, April 22, 1921, and November 28, 1919.