

SCIENCE

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<i>The Evolution of the Horticulturist:</i> PROFESSOR T. H. MCHATTON	469	<i>Scientific Apparatus and Laboratory Methods:</i> <i>A Critique of the Serial Dilution Method for Quantitative Determination of Bacteriophage:</i> DR. A. P. KRUEGER. <i>A Simple Method of Rearing and Mounting Hookworm Larvae:</i> PROFESSOR F. S. ARANT and ROGER KNAPP	494
<i>The George Eastman Research Laboratories for Physics and Chemistry:</i> DR. KARL T. COMPTON	472	<i>Special Articles:</i> <i>Stimulative Effects of Illuminating Gas on Trees:</i> DR. CARL G. DEUBER. <i>Observations on Taste Blindness:</i> DR. PHILIP LEVINE and DR. A. S. ANDERSON. <i>The Distribution of Caecal Spirochetes:</i> DR. MINNIE B. HARRIS	496
<i>Obituary:</i> <i>Albert Perry Brigham:</i> RICHARD ELWOOD DODGE	479	<i>Science News</i>	10
<i>Scientific Events:</i> <i>Symposia at the Syracuse Meeting of the American Association; Nature Sanctuaries; Committee on Unemployment and Relief for Chemists and Chemical Engineers; Award of the Willard Gibbs Medal; Elections of the National Academy of Sciences</i>	480		
<i>Scientific Notes and News</i>	483		
<i>Discussion:</i> <i>What is a Publication?:</i> DR. TRACY I. STORER. <i>The Pathogenicity of Neisseria sicca:</i> DR. FREDERICK W. SHAW. <i>Chromosome Numbers in Althea rosea:</i> GEORGE W. BURKETT. <i>On "Academic Freedom in Spain":</i> DR. JOSÉ F. NONIDEZ	486		
<i>Reports:</i> <i>Recent Work on American Indian Languages:</i> PROFESSOR FRANZ BOAS	489		
<i>Science Service Conference</i>	492		

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THE EVOLUTION OF THE HORTICULTURIST¹

By Professor T. H. MCHATTON

GEORGIA STATE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

It was at the very dawn of our modern era, if we accept the historian's division of time, that Columella wrote:

I can not enough wonder why they who desire to learn eloquence are so nice in their choice of an orator, whose eloquence they may imitate; and they who search after a knowledge of surveying and numbers look out for a master of the art they delight in; and they who are desirous of some skill in dancing and music are exceedingly scrupulous in their choice of one to modulate their voices or to regulate the motions of their bodies; also they who have a mind to build send for architects, masons and carpenters; and they who resolve to send ships to sea send for skillful pilots; they who make preparations for war call for men of war; and everyone sends for a person from the society and assembly of the wise to form

his mind and instruct him in the precepts of virtue; but husbandry alone, which, without all doubt, is next to and, as it were, near akin to wisdom, is in want of both masters and scholars.

One who peruses the voluminous writings of Columella can but marvel at the keen insight he displayed concerning things agricultural and horticultural. So true was his statement that rural culture was looked down upon that this history of the very heart of Rome, this economic treatise of the times, has been pigeonholed and forgotten by the very ones who should have used its gems of living philosophy in expounding the humanities that they so loudly preach are necessary in cultivating the human mind. Even in the time of Columella, agriculture and horticulture were as teachable as any other subject of the period, but, because the luxury-loving landlords saw fit to

¹ Presidential address before the American Society for Horticultural Science.

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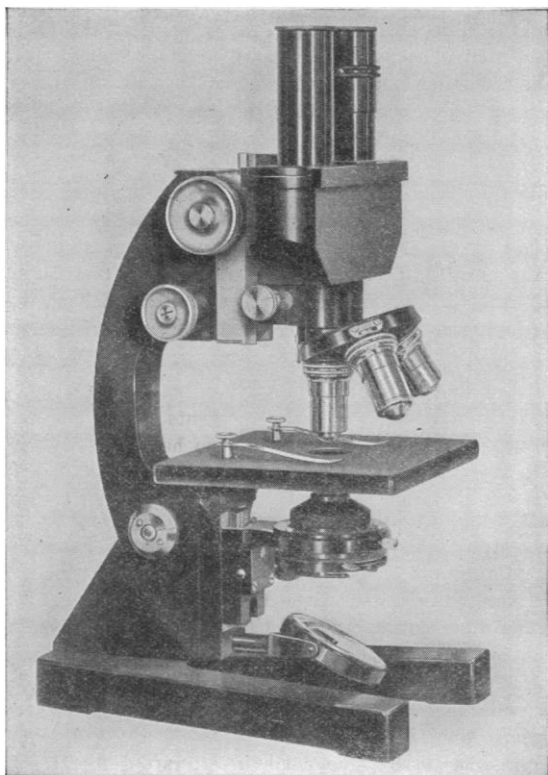
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