

SCIENCE

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SCIENCE AND THE RATIONAL ANIMAL¹

By Dr. MAX MASON

PRESIDENT OF THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION

THE celebration of one's birthday, after a certain age, is probably sound psychoprophylaxis, but can hardly be met with unmixed feelings, even though "The Old Gray Mare" is not made the theme song of the occasion. One does not wish to be reminded of the passing of the milestones on a journey that is short and filled with interest and happiness. In early youth, however, the view is all to the future. At sunrise the mind and heart are absorbed with the joy of planning the day to come.

We are met to celebrate the fiftieth birthday of Sigma Xi, an institution which need never grow old and which now, on the time scale of the history of the race, is an infant drawing its first breath. Our interest

to-night is in its meaning for the future rather than in its brief past—its meaning as a symbol of the devotion of countless thousands and of countless millions to come to the life of science and to their faith in the scientific way of life. These are not mere phrases. There is a life of science in which we are united by fellowship in effort. There is a scientific way of living, and its attainment is the aim of all the sciences.

In accurate scientific knowledge there is power—power, as has been amply demonstrated, to release man from physical drudgery; power to release man from fear, that child of uncertainty, as he learns the story of the universality of natural law; power to determine his destiny as he understands himself to be a product of evolutionary processes and learns the psychological and physiological factors which condition his personality; power to give him peace and courage for life

¹ Address given on the occasion of the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Sigma Xi, Cornell University, June 19, 1936.

SCHOOL AND SOCIETY

EDITED BY J. McKEEN CATTELL

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