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Science Reading

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SCIENCE BULLETIN

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A CORRECTION

In the December Science Bulletin in the article by Professor O. B. Read on "Exhibits As An Aid in Science Teaching", the J. T. Baker Chemical Co. was listed as having signified its willingness to supply exhibit material. Before we included a company in the list given, Professor Read wrote to the company asking permission to use their name. We thought from the replies received that all the companies listed had granted us their permission. However, we apparently misinterpreted the reply of the J. T. Baker Chemical Co., as we find upon further correspondence that they will not be able to supply this material, so their name should be removed from the list.

We wish to beg your pardon if we have caused you any inconvenience by this misunderstanding. It is, however, gratifying to us to know that our readers are making use of our suggestions.

SCIENCE READING

One of the purposes of science teaching in the high school should be to train the pupils to appreciate and to read intelligently and critically the articles of scientific interest that appear in the public press. There is much so-called science that is printed in newspapers that is so exaggerated and embellished to attract attention that it is distinctly unscientific. However, it is not necessary for an article to be uninteresting in order to be scientific. There should be available in every high school for reading some periodicals in which scientific subjects are presented accurately but in an interesting way. The following periodicals can be recommended: NATURE MAGAZINE, 1214 16th St., Washington, D. C.; THE SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, Science Service, Washington, D. C.; THE

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, 24 West 40th St., New York City; THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE, Washington, D. C.

Encourage your pupils to read these periodicals and report interesting articles. Help them to distinguish what is accurate and what is false. If you can create in your pupils an appreciation of scientific literature, you will have given them something that will always be of value to them.

It is now time to commence to keep your bird records in order to follow the spring migration of birds. A bird calendar kept in your laboratory will be very valuable and will create much interest in your biology classes.

THE AIR WE BREATHE

(Continued from page 3.)

ly fills the jar. This is explained by the fact that 21% or about one-fifth of the air is oxygen and is used up in the burning, its place being taken by the water. The white vapor is a compound of phosphorus and oxygen called phosphorus pentoxide. After some minutes this vapor is dissolved in the water and disappears. The space above the water now represents the remaining ingredient of the air, nitrogen. It is a colorless inert gas and does not support combustion. With a lighted match or splinter in readiness, raise the jar and thrust in the burning splinter. The gas does not ignite and the flame is extinguished. Because nitrogen is inert it plays a useful part in diluting the active oxygen in the air. It is used in the modern electric light bulb because it does not burn, although in its presence, the incandescent metal filament of the lamp gives a wonderfully bright light.

Many other demonstrations showing the applications of compressed air and atmospheric pressure are easily devised but this list will serve as an introduction to an extended study of the air and its importance in daily life.

S. F. Hersey.