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**83 (12 July 1906) 43: The Life and Experiences of Sir  
Henry Enfield Roscoe .**

Written by Himself. New York: The Macmillan Co. \$4.

CSP, identification: Haskell, Index to The Nation. See also: Burks,  
Bibliography; List of Articles; MS L 159.273.

This makes the third autobiography of an English pupil of Bunsen, though one of the three never actually worked in that master's laboratory, and the reminiscences of another, a really great chemist, have only been privately printed. **Roscoe**, if not great, has been unquestionably eminent in inorganic chemistry. His memoir on vanadium is perhaps the most complete and admirable study of an element that has ever been made; for although it was made forty years ago, nothing additional of serious consequence has since been contributed to our knowledge of the chemistry of that metal, excepting the existence of certain compounds belonging to that class of complex inorganic acids which were first explained and as a class discovered by Dr. Wolcott Gibbs. We must not, however, forget the recent application of vanadium carbide to the production of steel having desirable properties. The photochemical researches of Bunsen and **Roscoe** are likewise deservedly famous, forming as they do one of the foundation stones of modern chemical dynamics. The interest of the present book, however, lies chiefly in the account it gives of the development in England of scientific education; for it has been in this and other public services that Sir Henry's life has been most valuable.

He joined the faculty of Owens College in its darkest hour in 1857, and labored for it through twenty-eight years, until largely--we may say, chiefly --by his effort, it had blossomed out into the University of Manchester. Subsequently, when the London University needed to be remodelled, he was called to its vice-chancellorship, and under him it

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took on new and better life. He it was who carried its home from Burlington Gardens to South Kensington. He has done a vast amount of truly patriotic work on several royal commissions on technical education, on secondary education, and on matters of hygiene. He sat in Parliament as an adherent of Gladstone for some ten years, and gives an interesting account of the great man's ascendancy and of its causes. In short, though  **Roscoe**  is a very different man from Playfair, and quite opposite to him in several characteristics (among which, we must warn his intending reader, is that of his anecdotes), yet the interest of his volume, beyond the picture it affords of a certain scientific circle, is mainly its carrying on further the narrative of English progress in scientific ideas that is contained in the Memoirs of Lord Playfair.

Mr. Galton has more than once noticed the strongly marked resemblances among the descendants of William  **Roscoe**  , author of the Lives of Lorenzo de Medici and of Leo X., as well as of a monograph upon the Ginger-Arrowroot (-Banana?) family of plants. He was Sir Henry's grandfather. Stanley Jevons was his cousin and intimate friend. He himself has decidedly the traits traditionally attributed to Englishmen (minus insularity, however), and, more specifically, of the Lancashire man, who is rather a downright, outspoken, uncompromising person, apt to air his peculiarities, yet easily taking the color of his environment. But even more than other Lancashire men, Sir Henry has always been a sympathetic and highly popular personality.

The dress of the book, like all  **Roscoe's**  publications, is pleasing. It contains over seventy reproductions of photographic portraits and views, which are exceptionally perfect as reproductions, as photographs, and as likenesses. The index, on the other hand, is so meagre as to be almost worthless.