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The great and increasing rapidity with which scientific literature accumulates, and the consequent difficulty which investigators everywhere experience in maintaining familiarity with the literature of their specialities, has given rise to various efforts for the systematic and complete arrangement of titles in such a way as to render them directly available. Perhaps the most recent of these efforts is that represented by the newly reorganized *Botanisches Centralblatt*, which represents a complete summary of current botanical literature, together with short reviews indicative of the nature of the contents of each article. A somewhat earlier and more comprehensive effort is that represented by the present volume which expresses the final development of an idea, the origin of which carries us back very nearly half a century.

In 1855, Prof. Joseph Henry, of the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, U.S.A., suggested to the Glasgow meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, the desirability of publishing a catalogue of scientific papers. This suggestion bore fruit in the Catalogue of Scientific Papers issued by the Royal Society, the first of which appeared in 1867. This exceedingly useful publication now comprises twelve large quarto volumes, covering the period from 1800-1883, while the period embraced in the years 1884-1900 will be covered by volumes now in course of preparation. It soon came to be felt, however, that the scope of the work was much too restricted, and it was recognized that (1) an author's catalogue could not supply the requisite information, (2) that it was essential that scientific workers should be kept fully and quickly informed of all new discoveries by means of subject indexes, and (3) that