

R. C. MOSSMAN: *The Meteorology of Edinburgh*. Transactions Roy. Soc. Edinb., Vol. XXXVIII., Part III., No. 20, 1896. Contains the reductions of observations made in Edinburgh during the past 132 years, with colored plates illustrating some of the principal features of the climatology of the city.

TH. ARENDT: *Die Bestimmung des Wasserdampfgehaltes der Atmosphäre auf Grund spektroskopischer Messungen*. Met. Zeitschr., Oct., 1896, 376-390. The results of an investigation carried on at the Potsdam Observatory during 1895 and 1896.

R. DE C. WARD.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

#### CURRENT NOTES ON ANTHROPOLOGY.

##### ARAUCANIAN STUDIES.

THE excellent studies of Dr. Rudolfo Lenz in modern Araucanian have already been mentioned in these notes. A new instalment of them includes dialogues in the Pechuenche dialect, some small original pieces in the Picunche and Huilliche dialects (Spanish and Araucanian) and a collection (72 pages) of Araucanian tales and stories published in German in Valparaiso. The latter are divided into mythological tales, animal stories, others of European origin and some songs. They are interesting examples of the present condition of folk-lore among these intelligent natives.

No other investigations into the language of the aborigines of Chili equal in method and accuracy these of Dr. Lenz. They are, in fact, models of their kind.

The language itself is one of beauty and strength. Indeed, in the last century the missionary Haverstadt was so impressed with its resources that in 1777 he published a work upon it ('Chilidugu') in advocacy of its adoption as an universal tongue for the world, a ready-made Volapuk.

The publication of Dr. Lenz can be obtained through Karl M. Hiersemann, Königsplatz 2, Leipzig, Germany.

#### RACE DEGENERATION IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.

AN unusually thoughtful article appears in the Bulletin of the American Academy of Medicine (Vol. II., No. 9), by Dr. John T. Searcy, superintendent of the insane asylum at Tuscaloosa, Ala. The subject treated is insanity in the South, and its relations to race were brought out prominently. Some of these may be noted.

The native American (white) when insane is more adaptable to his environment than any other stock. The American Indian is just the opposite—not at all adaptable to new conditions. Insanity is a symptom of a race-degenerating process. It is more observable in negroes since the Civil War, as, compared to the condition of slavery, "degeneracy is increasing in the majority of the negroes." The whites are less so, because "during the time of slavery brain idleness and brain injury prevailed to a greater extent among the whites than at present." Compared with his previous condition in Africa, the negro was much better off as a slave in America than he ever was before. This general improvement in his condition showed itself in the absence of mental degeneracy. His present types of insanity 'show the same race traits in the hospital which they do on the outside.' That is, they are more emotional, and yet his delusions are weaker and more transient.

D. G. BRINTON.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

#### NOTES ON INORGANIC CHEMISTRY.

In the last Chemical News Prof. Brauner, of the University of Prague, discusses the theory that argon is a polymer of nitrogen,  $N_3$ , and helium a polymer of hydrogen,  $H_3$ , or more probably a mixture of  $H_3$  and  $H_2$ . His argument is directed almost solely against the elementary nature of argon and helium and the arguments which have been put forward to show that argon is not  $N_3$ .